AN ANALYTICAL CRITIQUE, DECONSTRUCTION, AND DIALECTICAL TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY APPROACH

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I hereby declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education, contains no material previously published or written in any medium by another person, except where appropriate reference has been made.

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Abstract

This thesis critically analyses, reconstructs and deconstructs the Living Educational Theory (LET) approach. It examines, challenges and modifies it, dialectically transforms it and offers a more suitable alternative to it. Whilst LET has not been well received in academia for two decades, this thesis is being written at a point in time when LET has greater recognition and influence.

The thesis is composed of three parts. The first part examines and reconstructs the LET approach as a theoretical possibility and a practical methodological and heuristic approach. It introduces the LET approach and its key features, components, intentions and practices. It examines and interrelates the writings of the developers of that approach and its history and development. It also relates that approach to educational, action, reflective practice, practitioner and ontological research and the work and educational development of this author.

The second part criticises, deconstructs and transforms the LET approach and proposes an alternative heuristic tool, solution and approach. It criticises the claim of living educational theorists that LET is an improved approach to the theorisation of a human existence and the educational, ontological, professional and epistemological development of practitioners. As well as criticising the new directions which the LET approach has recently taken, it introduces an alternative educational action research heuristic tool and approach that is based on self-dialectical reflective enquiry. The proposed alternative is based on creative and auto-phenomenological writing, self-dialectical and cathartic logging, public blogging and enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into the question: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself? It seeks to transform the LET approach into a deeper ontological, auto-phenomenological, and self-therapeutic auto-analysis, self-reevaluation and auto-empowerment.

The third part concludes the thesis and reflects on my learning from my engagement with the LET approach and my hopes and intentions for the future.

List of abbreviations

LET	Living Educational theory
SIG	Special Interest Group
S-STEP	The American or British Educational Research Association Special Interest Group of Self Study of Teacher Educational Practice,
AR	Action Research
AS	Alon Serper

Introduction

The Living Educational Theory (LET) approach has been poorly received by academics during the 1970s and 1980s, yet has passed three LET postgraduate theses in the late 1980s, eight more in the 1990s and dozens more in this decade. Nowadays the developers of the approach are publishing books on how to do, write and submit LET action research accounts for academic degree qualifications (Whitehead, 2009b; McNiff and Whitehead, 2009; McNiff, 2010) and giving workshops, lectures and seminars on the originality, significance and growth of the LET approach. I think the time is right to delve inside the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research. My aim is to explore the LET approach to human existence and discuss, critically judge, appraise and re-evaluate, its self-introduction and auto-explanation and practices of self-development and self-legitimation. My thesis deals with, relates to, and uses the LET approach in a wholly different manner than those which have already interrelated with it and discussed it. Rather than simply use the LET approach with a view to introduce, support it unconditionally, validate and legitimate it, this thesis does no such thing. Instead, it analytically examines the theoretical and methodological premises and suggestions of LET and re-evaluates and critiques them. After criticising its theoretical and epistemological assumptions and methodology, it explores a more suitable concrete, living, embodied, dialectical and dialogical educational theory heuristic tool, solution and approach to the re-evaluation and theorisation of value-laden practices and the development of human existence and the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world.

In this thesis I shall introduce my alternative heuristic solution, tool and approach to the problems in the social, human and educational sciences, which the LET approach has sought to solve since the 1970s. This is with a view for the author to develop it as a practical and experiential method that is to be taught to academics and practitioners. This is to be done independently of the LET approach.

My relationship with the LET approach is very much defined by my own objectives in regard to my own professional development and ontological self-fulfilment. This is wholly different from the field of interest and professional practice of the LET approach. I wish to present in this thesis a self-dialectical and auto-phenomenological educational action research account of the way my relationship with and critical analysis of the LET approach have enabled me to work out in the course of a seven years research programme at the University of Bath my own approach to educational action research (AR). This approach is more suitable to the heuristic theorisation of "a human existence" than Jack Whitehead's approach (Whitehead, 2009b; EJOLTS; 2008-9) and could constitute a more developed and evolved form of a concrete and applied, dialectical, living, embodied, and dialogical form of educational AR to the type originally initiated by Whitehead (2009b).

I encountered the LET approach at a point in my professional life where I fell into a complete impasse, which led to awful existential angst, dread, frustration and alienation, and ontological void, insecurity, and despair within my life and relationships. My intention was to further develop my prior postgraduate researches

(Serper, 1999, 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2009), criticising the traditional positivistic and post-positivistic approaches to the human subject and human existence in psychology and the social, human and educational sciences. I had come to the conclusion that all the mainstream approaches to the re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and human existence in psychology and the social and human sciences incline to reduce, mechanise, objectify, degrade and dehumanise the human subject within the wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated, generalising, profiling and predicting essence of their epistemological grounding and logic. I realised that a new type of approach to the re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world needs to be worked out. I shall present a type of ontological heuristic approach that is more authentic, concrete and applied, engaging, living and embodied than the existing approaches in psychology and the social and human sciences. It provides a way to follow the human subject in real-life situations as he/she is living and leading his/her life and his/her relationships with himself/herself, with others and the world in which he/she lives. I shall describe the type of ontological approach that enables the human subject to re-evaluate, explain, describe and account for his/her life to himself/herself as he/she is leading it and then to convey and share his/her reflections with others, attain their constructive feedbacks and possibly make others think about their own life, re-evaluate and process it and work out an ontological account of their own which they can share with others.

Alas, my proposal to work out such an alternative approach as a doctoral thesis has proved too ambitious, broad, overstretched and impractical for the Department of Education at Bath University. Instead, I shall present my ontological approach in relation to the LET approach

The conclusion I have reached in the course of my research at Bath has been that the human subject is an autonomous, living, embodied and developing Being-In-The-World (Heidegger, 1962; Binswanger, 1958, 1963; Boss, 1963, 1977; May et al., 1958; Dreyfus, 1991) who is working at constructing a more meaningful, hopeful, fulfilling, secure and empowering existence in, with, and towards the world, and relationships with himself/herself and other people. This includes learning to identify, re-evaluate and process situations in his/her life that provide him/her with the living and embodied experiences of existential angst, frustration, alienation and ontological void and insecurity, before being able to concretely, dialectically and qualitatively reverse and transform his/her life into a more meaningful, self-fulfilling, hopeful and secure existence in, with and towards the world and relationships between himself/herself and other people.

I have been working out this approach through directly enquiring into the question: how do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfilling my ontological values in the course of my professional practices? My self-dialectical, living, embodied and dialogical AR enquiry includes the four-folded act of:

    i.   identifying situations in which the enquirer has contradicted his/her ontological values;

ii. working out means of self-dialectically reversing these situations into ones where his/her ontological values are being successfully fulfilled;

iii. producing a self-dialectical, living, embodied, cathartic auto-dialogical (reflective) and dialogical educational action research account of how he/she has been doing this for himself/herself and others to learn from and engage with;

iv. feeling a cathartic release of tension, dread, ontological insecurity and existential angst, and lack of self-fulfilment that is holding up the enquirer and subsequently feeling a sense of energising elation, empowerment, purification, qualitative transformation and growth in one's life in, with and towards the world and the relationships with oneself and other people.

I have studied the developments and transformations of LET over my seven years of research at Bath. I saw LET shift from its previous position on the margins of educational research. Previously the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research was based on the ideas and writings of scholars such as Gadamer (1975), Habermas (1976, 1987), Polanyi (1958, 1966; Polanyi and Prosch, 1975), Freire (1996, 1973, 2004), Ilyenkov (1977, 1982), Foucault (1977, 1979, 1982, 1980) and Marcuse (1964). Since 2002/3, however, it has been systematically and continuously transforming itself into being an "inclusional" approach to AR, educational AR, and a human existence that is based exclusively on the ideas of Alan Rayner (Whitehead, 2009b). Whereas it has been grounding itself in the 1980s and 1990s within those authors I just mentioned in developing and constructing itself as an approach to dialectical educational research, since 2002/3 it has been grounding itself within the intention to improve on the dialectical logic in educational theory and educational AR (theorising educational research, development and knowledge) and constructing a more 'living, connecting, co-creating, reflexive, continuous, relational and flowing' form of logic and epistemology than the dialectics (Whitehead, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d, 2010; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006; Whitehead and Huxtable, 2006).

It has also shifted from attempting to aid educational practitioners improve their practices to declaring itself directed towards a 'significant contribution to the future of humanity' (Whitehead, 2004b, 2009b; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) and developing a new form of epistemology for educational, ontological, reflective practice and AR research by being based on 'inclusional' love and spiritual connections among individuals, the ideas of life affirming energy, non-sexual erotism and love, 'Ubuntu', 'Chi' and the like. Whilst Whitehead continues to reminisce about his past work into developing a new, practical and original form of dialectics, and to regard it as an important part in/of his educational, epistemological and professional development, since 2002/3 he regards his true intention, essence, calling and originality in the construction and development of an entirely new form of epistemology and logic for educational research, AR, practitioner research, educational AR and ontology. He calls this new form, 'inclusional' educational research and 'inclusional' educational AR, (Whitehead, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d, 2010; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006; Whitehead and Huxtable, 2006), and encourages the users, students and supporters of LET to follow him,

share his new passion and collaborate with him in working out this new form of educational research, AR and educational AR.

For three years, I protested against this movement very passionately and argued that this transformation, whilst attracting a few more people from around the world than before, is counterproductive for the persistence and continuation of the LET approach as an academic and scholarly approach. Consequently, my thesis is the first thesis to engage critically with and analyse the LET approach and convey the thoughts and impressions of a researcher who was once very close to it, yet who has gradually been moving his research over the last three years into a different area and type of research. I shall explain this throughout this thesis. I shall also reflect on LET's educational influence on me. Some of this influence has been a constructive one that has shown me new possibilities and boosted my confidence to experiment with and explore new challenges, critiques and alternative approaches, and some of this influence has alarmed me and taught me what to avoid in my efforts.

Having introduced this work, I should like to discuss briefly its aims.

i. Aims

This thesis presents an analytical critique and qualitative, dialectical transformation of the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research, reflective practice and human existence. It aims to introduce a more suitable approach to the re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject, in general, and the professional practitioner, in particular, and their living and ontological, educational, professional and epistemological developments, growth and empowerment. It also does so in order to reflect on the author's movement in the course of a seven years enquiry into and away from the LET approach. This thesis explains his attempt to work out an alternative approach to the traditional wholly propositional heuristic means of re-evaluating, theorising and conceptualising the person and his/her being, living and developing in, with, and towards the world.

It tells the story and educational and ontological AR expedition (Brody, 2009) of the transformation, learning, acquired embodied knowledge and developments and empowerment of a researcher who has focused and built up his hopes for a more meaningful professional practice, life and career on a particular theoretical idea and methodological approach that he has encountered by chance, was fascinated by and wanted to develop and improve. After becoming gravely disillusioned with the new developments and directions that the LET approach has been adopting recently, I came to regard this idea and its new developments as counterproductive to the field and even destructive for my personal and professional development, empowerment and self-fulfilment. Improving and analysing the quality, meaning, ontological security, empowerment and self-fulfilment of the researcher's life and professional practices as he/she enquires into them and re-evaluates them directly and in and on action, practice and praxis, systematically, critically and thoroughly, are, indeed, my values, unit of appraisal and methodology in this thesis and for my suggested heuristic, tool, solution and approach that I have developed out of the LET approach. I think and suggest that it complements, enriches and improves on the present LET

methodology and research that presently focuses on epistemologies of practice and practice improvement where presently the practitioner researcher does little more than bringing his/her embodied knowledge, learning and educational development, as amassed, acquired and inquired into, through the question, how do I improve my practice and fulfil my ontological, personal, and professional values as I practice and reflect on my professional practice and my overall intentions for it, and educational development as a professional and a human being?, to the open and to a body of knowledge that falls under the label "living educational theory/ies" research/es and which encourages a supporting dialectical, transforming and enriching, dialogue and a bonding inter-relationship among those who either have carried out LET research, are thinking about doing it, are doing it or supporting and encouraging it and those who are doing it.

The message of this thesis is that of hope. Often there is a way to methodologically and constructively turn experiences and situations of immense despair, angst, frustration, alienation, disillusion, insecurity and ontological void into situations and experiences of greater ontological meaning, fulfilment, security and engagement. One can choose between the counterproductive and non-educational practice of developing and nursing negative feelings of personal grudges and frustrations, or the far more constructive, educational and positive practice of calmly enquiring into the points and issues of disagreements and differences that tend to arise in the course of the critical engagement and the professional relationship between different scholars with different backgrounds, professional, personal, interests and approaches. Human beings, especially scholars, rarely agree on everything. The insistence on total agreement is the conduct of absolutists and gurus, not of scholars, and certainly not of true educators. It is by no means educational. It is far more scholarly and educational to use any disagreements, challenges and differences to work out qualitatively and dialectically a constructive and stronger thesis and ideas. I think that choosing the latter practice over the former one is the empowering, valuable, educational and enriching act of the wise and scholarly person, and of the true educator (Freire, 1996, 1973, 2004). This is whereas choosing the former practice over the latter practice is the counterproductive and non-educational act of the person who is insecure in himself/herself, his/her work and ideas and who searches by force and at all cost for justifications, excuses, motives, rationale and self-assurances. Such person is by no means a true educator. He/She is a pretender (imposture) whose inauthenticity and Sartrian ill-faith (mauvaise foi) is eventually to be detected and exposed.

ii. My Alternative Approach

My alternative to the LET approach is a concrete and applied, living and embodied, auto-phenomenological, autoethnographical and self-dialectical, auto-poietic, cathartic, auto-dialogical and dialogical form of AR. I shall explain these terms below. Over the last two decades I have worked out this approach in theory and practice as an alternative to the traditional approaches in the social, human and educational sciences, which I have claimed to be alienating, dehumanising and degrading the human subject.

What I sought to do has been to engage with and provide adequate responses and solutions to the following six issues:

i. A critique of both the traditional approaches in psychology and the human, social and educational sciences and the contemporary LET non-textual means of doing so;
ii. The development of non-mechanistic and more humanising and dignifying means to approach, study, theorise, re-evaluate and conceptualise the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with, and towards the world;
iii. The establishment of the superiority of ontology and dialectics over the wholly propositional logics and epistemological grounding in re-evaluating, theorising and conceptualising the human subject;
iv. Criticising contemporary LET alternative approaches to the wholly propositional means of theorising human beings, their professional, ontological, epistemological and educational developments and practices;
v. Qualitatively transforming existing LET approaches to self-dialectical, living, embodied and dialogical, action, educational and practitioner research into ontology, critical and clinical psychology, self-help creative auto-therapy and phenomenology;
vi. Contributing to critical, empirical, clinical and theoretical psychology and humanistic and Gestaltian educational research.

Heuristic tool, solution and approach

Heuristics stands for methods that help in problem solving, learning, discovery, advancement and transformation of knowledge and understanding. It also describes a means of constructing a theory, namely an explanation as for why a given phenomenon occurs and takes place, and strategies that are used to control and rationalise problem solving and work out adequate solutions for given problems. In psychology, heuristics are simple and efficient rules, innate or learned, that are worked out to explain how people make decisions, come to judgments, and solve problems, typically when facing complex problems or incomplete information. This process should be self-critical, well-structured and disciplined, systematic and methodological and leading to a rigorous enquiry and an increase and qualitative transformation in the understanding and knowledge of the phenomenon of interest that is under investigation. My approach presents an heuristic tool for the psychology of the human subject and human existence as a practice, discipline and set of rules that work out, explain, analyse and describe how a person is ought to engage, interrelate and deal with the world in a constructive and fulfilling manner for his/her well-being, ontological security and self-fulfilment.

My approach aims to tackle, re-evaluate, recreate, account for, explain, analyse and describe the ontological phenomenon of being, living and developing in the world and the concrete, creative and applied meanings and implications of being a person in the world. This involves examining the concrete, creative, mundane and human-all-too-human applied ontology of an individual who is reflecting on, identifying, processing and re-evaluating and recreating his or her life and how he or she could meaningfully progress, grow, transform, shift, empower, redirect and move forward in his/her life. I examine how he or she self-dialectically can reverse and qualitatively, creatively, and meaningfully transform disagreeable,

counterproductive and anguishing, lived and embodied experiences and situations of existential angst, solitude, frustration and ontological void, and insecurity and make life more constructive, worthwhile, meaningful, hopeful, engaging and agreeable and ontologically securing and fulfilling for himself/herself to lead. My approach offers, through a creative and systematic illustration and exemplification, a new, innovating and inventive, learned heuristic means for individuals to make and reach decisions and judgements and solve problems that are embodied in the self-dialectics of qualitatively, systematically, creatively and innovatively transforming and redirecting existential angst, despair and frustration and ontological void and insecurity into ontological/existential meaning, hope, security and self-fulfilment.

This approach to the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world, occurs through the practice of personal logging, self-dialectically and cathartically enquiring, dialoguing, recreating, processing, identifying, exposing, revealing and narrating for oneself in private the nature of the self-developments and auto-transformations that occur in one's life. This is as he or she is focusing on creative writing and blogging to be published, read, and re-evaluated by others, with the specific aim to make his or her life more meaningful for himself or herself, in relation to feedback from others. Through creative writing and blogging the producer of an ontological and dialectical AR account using my approach opens up and exposes a very personal, raw, fragile, sensitive, cathartic, creative, authentic and personalised, zealously protected, vulnerable, and embodied, dynamic, living, self-developing, recreating, redirecting and auto-transforming space. I hope this would eventually open up into an appreciative dialoguing, creative, relational, cathartic and engaging, blogging space in the public domain to be shared, read, identified, processed and critically and creatively engaged with by others.

Concrete and applicable

My approach is concrete and applicable. This means that the present, suggested heuristic means to approach the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world takes place, emerges and unfolds, within real life situations of a person who is genuinely seeking and working to construct, summon up, recreate and lead a more meaningful, full and complete, securing, pleasant, hopeful, self-fulfilling and self-actualising existence in the world for himself/herself. This practice implies creatively writing, logging, blogging and enquiring, self-questioning and communicating, dialoguing and interacting about one's own life with an aim to transform it. This approach is in direct contrast to the more traditional theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world.

Living

My approach emphasises an authentic, critical and analytical understanding of the "living" situation, enquiry and practice. This is achieved in practice by creatively reflecting on real-world situations. In making this point, I follow existentialists such

as Gabriel Marcel (1935, 1949, 1951, 1964) and distinguish "living" from "spectating". (See also Keen, 1966; Whitehead, 2004b).

Embodied

My approach is "embodied", in its most literal, mundane and axiomatic, meaning. This is namely to give a body to, incarnate and represent in a physical form and personify. Traditional approaches are "disembodied", which I see as the separation from the physical body and the creation of a representation of an abstract and generalising quality. What I mean by an embodied heuristic tool and approach to the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world is that the enquirer utilises and exemplifies it on his/her own being, living and developing in the world, and his/her practice, praxis, ontological enquiries and being and becoming full/er human and himself/herself (Freire, 1996, 1973, 2004), and recounts the way he/she uses it. Hence, my approach focuses on the question: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?

Auto-Phenomenological

My approach uses phenomenological analysis and the humanistic approach and school of psychology and psychotherapy, by reflecting upon the phenomenon of securing empowerment, self-actualisation and self-fulfilment in what one is doing in one's life. My approach is creatively and actively playing, deliberately breaking and violating and experimenting with words, language, linguistic and textual, communication and conventions and systematically and heuristically writing up, logging and blogging, enquiring into, conveying, re-evaluating, recreating, identifying, processing, accounting for, describing and explaining and developing one's own understanding of how one is transforming in real-life action and real-world praxis his/her being, living and developing in the world.

The word '*existence*' comes from and owes its existence to the Latin verb '*existere*', which means '*to stand out, to emerge*'. Human existence means, entails and implies the dynamic, living and active emergence of a human being/subject/agent. Human existence is an activity and practice that is dynamic and that unfolds and moves forwards and reflexively reflects backwards on itself. On its part, phenomenology (e.g., James, 1890; Shanon, 1993; Heidegger, 1962; Landsman, 2002) and ecological psychology - that is based on the mutual interrelationships between a cogniser individual human subject and the world, ecology and environment in which he/she lives (Gibson, 1950, 1966, 1979; Gibson, 1969, 1982; Gibson and Spelke, 1983; Shanon, 1993) - add and make it the/an emergence in the world. The humanistic movement in the human, social and educational sciences has incorporated philosophies of existence and phenomenology, whilst the death of Gibson has in my opinion prevented ecological psychology from fulfilling its full potential.

Hence, ontology, namely, being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 1962; Binswanger, 1958, 1963; Boss, 1963, 1977; May et al., 1958), is, as far as I am concerned, a dynamic and practical activity in the world. Being-In-The-World unfolds and shifts,

develops, progresses and moves forwards over, across and throughout time and space (Shanon, 1993) and needs to be done ethically, aesthetically and authentically (Kierkegaard, 1968, 1974). It reflexively, dynamically, actively and reflectively enquires into, re-evaluates and processes, develops, creates and recreates and theorises, explains and describes, and comprehends, internalises and conceptualises itself. This is as it moves about in the world, over and within space, time, enquiry, practice and praxis and the intention - which is its own since it has consciousness and consciousness of its own consciousness – to carry out the practice and activity well, correctly and meaningfully in its own terms.

Phenomenology describes how a person orients to a lived, living, embodied and situated experience in the world over time, space and action (Van Manen, 1990; Moustakas, 1981, 1990, 1994). It aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of individuals' everyday experiences of everyday phenomena. The individual delves inside the experience in its immediate, purest, rawest, most authentic, spontaneous and pre-analysed form and reflects on it and its implications for him/her and his/her being, living and developing in the world. Historically, James (1890) offered a phenomenological alternative to Wundt's (1896, 1873, 1893, 1916) structuralist view of empirical psychology and the human subject. James' (1890 p.183.) alternative phenomenological form of empirical psychology perceived the task and subject matter of empirical psychology as the study of "individuals who live in a defined environment", consisting of space and time, and whose minds are objects to be examined objectively and scientifically (Serper, 1999). More recently, Shanon (1993) offered a phenomenological alternative to the traditional Cartesian cognitive psychology, that he calls representational cognitive psychology, and to social constructionism.

Landsman (2002) has given us an excellent illustration of a phenomenological analysis of the Heideggerian dimensions of human ontology involved during the practice and the experiences of carrying out a given practice, and its occurrence and unfolding in the world over time and space. He provided a practical phenomenological analysis of his personal experiences of his co-operation, as an Orthodox Jew Israeli psychologist, of southern United States origins, with Palestinian mental health professionals in Gaza and Nablus in 1994 and 1995. This embraces both the phenomenological method of intentional analysis and the hermeneutic method developed by Dasein-analysts. Landsman described the former method as a phase of the phenomenological reduction originally developed by Husserl (1965), in an attempt to understand the personal and social meanings of a phenomenon, while bracketing out these aspects of experience and "peeling them off one by one, like an onion". The latter method was described by Landsman, based on Condrau (1988), as developed by Medard Boss, according to the existential/humanistic and phenomenological philosophy of Heidegger (1927/1962), with a view to understand human activities in terms of the six basic human dimensions which Heidegger calls "existentials", in the sense that they constitute the most basic modes of intuiting human existence, and lists as Spatiality, temporality, bodihood, attunement and mood, being-with-others (mitsein) and being-towards-death.

In contrast to phenomenological case studies of specific practices by specific individuals, the emphasis of the empirical use of phenomenology in qualitative methods in post-Cartesian empirical psychology and social and human science is on the experience and the generalisation and universalisation of the reflective accounts of various individuals of the experience under analysis that take place in order to provide a phenomenological account of that specific human experience.

Cresswell (1998 p. 57) noted that the basic purpose of phenomenology is

> to reduce individual experiences within a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (a 'grasp of the very nature of the thing,' Van Manen, 1990 p.177) of that phenomenon

and that phenomenologists focus on describing what

> all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon (e.g., grief is universally experienced). (p. 58)

Cresswell (1998) also explained that in phenomenological research, the inquirer collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon in question and under phenomenological analysis, and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all individuals. This description consists of 'what' they experiences and 'how' they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994).

My approach is phenomenological in the sense that the user/enquirer reflectively and reflexively analyses and re-evaluates his/her lived, living and embodied, experiences of leading an existence of existential angst, solitude and frustration and ontological void and insecurity and an existence of ontological meaning, security, hope, self-actualisation and self-fulfilment. He/she does so with a view to be able to self-dialectically, self-therapeutically, creatively and cathartically reverse and qualitatively transform, liberate, shift, redirect and release his/her lived, living and embodied, situations and experiences of existential angst, solitude and frustration and ontological void and insecurity into those of an existence of greater ontological meaning, security, hope, self-fulfilment, fullness and self-actualisation, cathartic auto-liberation and self-purification and self-dialectical qualitative transformation, empowerment and growth.

My approach is "auto-phenomenological" in the sense that there is no generalisation of experiences from individuals to humanity or population groups. The emphasis of my approach is on the autonomous living, embodied, self-re-evaluating, creative, creating and recreating and self-enquiring individual who is working on constructing the most securing, self-fulfilling, hopeful, full and complete and meaningful existence in the world for himself/herself.

Autoethnographical

Autoethnography is a methodology that is derived from phenomenology. In autoethnography a social, anthropological, psychological and human phenomenon, situation and event, is studied through the phenomenological, reflective and

reflexive analysis on the part of the individuals who make up and live these phenomena, events and situations, in addition to the traditional critical engagement with the literature that deals with these phenomena propositionally.

Ellis and Bochner (2000) defined autoethnography as a methodology that

> involves evocative, emotional, dialoguing and engaging writing…closer to literature and art than to science. (p.740)

They also suggested that autoethnography intends at

> working the spaces between subjectivity and objectivity, passion and intellect and autobiography and culture (p. 761),

and thereby at offering a more holistic, engaging, integrative and authentic picture of human existence.

They explained that autoethnography permits concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality and self-consciousness to feature and appear as relational and institutional stories affected by history, social structure and culture, which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought and language, bringing them to academic social research and social science. They argued that the writing of those personal life stories and reflective narratives vividly and creatively discusses, portrays and clarifies complex cultural, social, moral and healthiness issues and dilemmas embedded within and surrounding the given experience, as well as the human values and ontological principles, self-questioning, doubts, ambivalence and vulnerability that come into being in living this experience. They also suggested that the methodology does so from a position of an autobiographical, first-person, life story creative account of the individuals who undergo the experience firsthand, thereby making the authors and their personal experience a central focus of their research.

Moreover, Ellis and Bochner contended that this methodology permits the autoethnographer to enter inside the experience and systematically and creatively document the moment-to-moment concrete details of life. They added that they claim that it enables him/her to move and gaze back and forth between focusing on the social and cultural aspects of his/her experience through an ethnographic wide-angle lens and to look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is creatively moved by and may move through, retract, and resist cultural interpretations, blurring the distinctions between the personal and cultural and contributing to the better understanding of the experience. They also suggested that the reporting individual reflects upon the social, cultural and healthiness aspects of the given experience and communicates his/her creative personal account of his/her inner world and experiences with the given experience publicly in an engaging, creative, evocative, moving, empowering and enriching and educating dialogue with the readers. This is something that they call 'systematic sociological introspection'.

Furthermore, Ellis and Bochner also noted that this methodology also permits the generalisation of the learning process and the personal, firsthand, creative enquiry

into the lived experience to a larger group or culture, thereby creatively and constructively contributing to the social scientific knowledge of a human phenomenon and making it both a social science and an academic research.

They suggested that autoethnography takes the form of

> short stories, poetry, fiction, novels, photographic essays, personal essays, journals, fragmented and layers writings, social science prose and the like (p. 739).

Ellis and Bochner (2000, 1996) noted that the experiencing auto-ethnographer accounts for and conveys the effects of real-life human situations and their sociological, anthropological and psychological aspects and issues on him/her over time and place in a dynamic, creative, integrative, living, dialectical and embodied, analytical and phenomenological heuristic manner that aims and endeavours to creatively work out, account for and show and display a flowing continuity and to make sense of human existence as a whole.

What is more, Holt (2003) discussed his attempts to get an acceptance in a refereed journal using the autoethnographical approach and method in an intention

> to provide guidance for others wishing to produce evocative writing accounts (p. 4).

He also discussed the requirements of rigour, credibility, dependability and trustworthiness and "some type of paper trail in which the results of the study can be supported with data" (p. 9) on the one hand and the portrayal of clear relationships and patterns, completeness, clear focus, structure, plausibility and depth in the creative account and narrative which needs to "hold the phenomenon up to serious inspection", on the other.

Holt equally drew on Richardson (2000a) and differentiated autoethnography from other qualitative methods and methodological and heuristic approaches. He argued that autoethnography should be judged, examined and validated using different criteria to other qualitative research investigations that should focus on a constructive approach rather than evaluative one. This is even though this necessary act would condemn it to the margins of research and to alienation from the mainstream. Hence, Holt and Richardson (2000a pp.15-16) listed five different assessment criteria for personal narrative publications which focus on substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, impactfullness, expression of reality and engagement with the reader.

Alas, Holt (p. 3) also pointed out the methodology's essential (ontological) confinement to the use of the self as the only data source and his argument that this confinement is making autoethnographers appear to peers and colleagues from the academy as

> too self-indulgent, introspective, and individualized…and narcissistic and self-indulging (see also Sparkes, 2000).

I recall how as a result of reading Holt, I suffered a setback, disappointment and a profound concern, frustration and angst as I deeply feared a scenario whereby my approach could be dismissed in the academy as precisely the above: "narcissistic, self-indulgent, introspective, individualized and self-indulging".

Nevertheless, it was during this setback that I was also struck by the self-therapeutic, creative and cathartic power of autoethnography and its combination with a qualitative and meaningful epistemological, scholarly and pedagogical contribution to the understanding of an important and interesting social, anthropological and psychological phenomenon that was strongly evident and portrayed in Ronai's (1996, 1997) work.

Indeed Ronai (1997 p.3.) defined and perceived her research as a

> case study of having a parent with mental retardation

that which existed and set out to

> out myself, so to speak and embrace the discredited identity…[and] create and codify a forum where this and other stories like it can be told (p. 43)

and to break the "silence that still pervades the issue of mentally retarded parenting" and that is "keeping the stigma a secret" and to creatively provide "opportunities to construct the necessary formulas and recipes which enable interaction and problem solving" as well as

> opportunities for understanding on the part of researchers, policy makers and the public (p. 43).

Moreover, Ronai used and drew on an autoethnographical creative first-person narrative account of her own experiences and relationship with her mentally retarded mother as her primary focus and how she selected particular "moments" from her biography and the literature of mental retardation and mentally retarded parenting to creatively account for, convey, re-evaluate, recreate, identify and demonstrate both of these aspects of her relationship with her mother.

In fact, her research permitted her to conclude that

> both of these emotions merge into a flowing duality which creates a third emotional state—ambivalence (pp. 41-2).

I sympathised with her feeling and conclusion that

> By discussing lived emotional experience, readers are confronted with the things they have in common with the author and…are less likely to dismiss the situations of others as freakish and not their concern (p. 43).

In terms of methodology, Ronai (1997) borrowed and modified Ellis' (1991) development of sociological introspection as a tool that enables the construction for the reader of a creative narrative account whereby readers

> live their own experience of the phenomenon by reading the text and interpreting it through the filter of their own stocks of knowledge (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) (p. 6).

She in turn employed what she termed "layered account format" and described as

> a postmodern ethnographic reporting format which enables the researcher to draw on as many resources as possible in the writing process including social theory and lived experience (p. 7).

She also endeavoured to both

> emulate the structure of consciousness and to serve as an interpretive resource for the reader who experiences the woven vignettes together, within contexts that were meaningful to the author (p. 8)

and to

> bring social constructionist theory such as symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, ethnomethdology, post-structuralism and post-modern into the realm of practice, in general, and her writing practices, in particular, by presenting processual, non-linear, dialectical and n-dimensional consciousness that expresses lived experiences. (p. 8)

Furthermore, Ronai perceived her explicative, creative and descriptive auto-phenomenological and autoethnographical social constructionist account of her being the daughter of a mentally retarded woman to bring and tie together the many voices that contribute to the construction of her "self". She regarded the voices as "emergent identities whose boundaries are unclear" whilst contributing "to the dialectical that comprises" her "self whilst shaping each other" and bending, merging, blurring and separating again" as she moved "through social space" (p. 7).

She also suggested that whilst she was doing so she decentred her 'self' to

> become one voice among many contributing to the production of this text and eschewing the construction of new grand narratives on the mental retardation construct. (p. 7)

She noted how she creatively employed the voices "to recount the experiences of an academic, a mother, a wife, a friend" and the daughter of her mentally retarded mother and her diagnosed clinical sexual psychopath father who abused both her and her mother. This has indeed increased my feelings and experiences of gratification, relief, ontological security, empowerment and self-fulfilment as I was relating and interrelating Ronai's work with mine.

I was really taken and captivated by this type of creative narrating that I thought could take an enquirer deep into the phenomenological understanding and re-evaluation and conveyance of what it is to be a living person, creatively engaging with and self-dialectically and self-therapeutically and cathartically identifying, processing, contemplating, reviewing, re-evaluating, recreating and working out and reacting in public heuristic creative solutions to the angst, dread, frustrations, fears and problems that make up his/her identity. This would be made in response to deep existential and ontological questions, crises and uncertainties that are derived from being the specific person that he/she is and from leading his/her existence in and with the world and facing situations of existential malaise and dread and ontological insecurity and void within it.

I felt hope, gratification and fulfilment. I was energised in what I valued and sought to create, work out and achieve, and experimented with this type of creative narrating and studied illustrations of it. Yet, I experienced disappointment, frustration and anguish and incompleteness as this was not sufficient for me. It was indeed not enough for I also needed a specific tool and creative and innovative format thereby to submit this type of reflexive, auto-poietic, auto-phenomenological, self-dialectical, cathartic, creative and self-therapeutic, auto-dialogue and autoethnographical social introspection for an interactive dialogue and creative, dialectical and qualitative engagement. One that would creatively reveal, process, account for and exemplify to myself and others the self-dialectical transformation, creative development, emergence and unfolding of my approach.

Dialectical

What does "dialectical" mean? Dialectics is a method of qualitatively transforming an argument and the understanding of a given phenomenon under discussion. The qualitative transformation takes place through heuristic enquiry and creative dialogue and creatively using contradictions and questions and answers to strengthen the enquiry and argument. The theoretical abstraction of my approach relates to the dialectics of a direct, authentic, creative and living heuristic enquiry for the purpose of problem solving that draws on and uses the inevitable arise of contradictions and is designed to advance learning and discovery, reflection, re-evaluation, recreation and action and praxis.

My approach utilises the dialectics of drawing on the "fusion of opposites and an emphasis on an inherently interrelated system of ideas or thoughts" (Kahle et al., 2000) to qualitatively transform a response to and explication of a given phenomenon and problem. It draws on the ideas in Gadamer (1975) and Collingwood (1939) of a dialectical logic of heuristic enquiries and questions and answers, formulating and responding to and enquiring into the most appropriate questions for the understanding of and researching a given phenomenon. In particular, it has been reliving Gadamer's (1975) point that despite Plato we are not yet ready for the dialectics of questions and answers and self-transforming through series of well-formulated questions and answers. It also draws on Ilyenkov's (1977) and Whitehead's (1993, 1999) idea of living contradictions and the construction of a heuristic means to include contradictions in a theory of human practices and

behaviours. It makes use of the premises of the dialectics to draw on the contradiction of seeking to lead an existence of existential angst, frustration, ontological void, and insecurity (antithesis) within the intentional practice of working out a more meaningful, securing, hopeful, full and complete and self-fulfilling and self-actualising existence in the world for myself and the enquiry: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself? (thesis).

Moreover, the dialectical logic is used in my approach as an alternative to the traditional Aristotelian propositional logic of making propositional statements and abstractions in order to validate the most appropriate propositions and wholly propositional abstractions for the explanation and understanding of a given phenomenon. The argument is that by, exclusively drawing on the Aristotelian propositional logic and following Popper's (1963) complete dismissal of the use of the dialectical logic in the construction, presentation and validation of theories as based on nothing better than a loose and woolly way of speaking, propositional logic tends to reduce, mechanise and abstract the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world within the endeavours to authentically and rigorously theorise (explain and describe), re-evaluate and conceptualise (comprehend and analyse) him/her. Indeed, the struggles of individuals' working at making sense of their life in their attempts to transform experiences disintegrate and is meaningless in the traditional wholly propositional Aristotelian logic of academic discourses and research enquiries. The disintegration is the result of the exclusively propositional theories capable of holding either an analysis of problems or resolutions but not both together in a unity as contradictions. Hence, there is a need for a dialectical approach.

In contrast, the dialectical logic enables within its ontological essence and premises the inclusion of contradictions and even to use them within a qualitative and creative transformation, redirection and recreation of an examined phenomenon. Thus the analysis of the experiences and situations of existential angst, solitude and frustration and ontological void and insecurity could directly lead to a most profound hermeneutic analysis of the meanings and implications of leading a more meaningful, securing, hopeful and self-fulfilling existence in the world for oneself, and the qualitative transformation and cathartic, self-therapeutic, liberation, shift, redirection and release of existential angst, solitude and frustration and ontological void and insecurity onto a more meaningful, hopeful, securing, full and complete and self-fulfilling existence in the world for oneself.

Still, for the practical implementation of the theoretical idea of the dialectics for my approach, I am relying on dialectical approaches to therapy and psychology, such as:

1). Greenberg et al's (1993, p. 56) suggestion that

> In therapy a dialectical constructivist process involves constructing meaning from immediate experience and conceptually held views of how one expects that experience to be;

2). Cox and Theilgaard's (1987, pp. 23-4) idea of the poietic Aeolian mode of

the process whereby inner, emptiness, initially experienced as insecurity, fragility and hollowness, is gradually transmuted into affirmative depth; a phrase coined by Halliburton (1981) when he said 'we do not, after all, fall into void but into a kind of affirmative depth'- a cadence in which every connotation counts. Poiesis is inherent in creativity;

3). Linehan's (1993a; 1993b; et al, 1991, 1999) Dialectical Behaviour Therapy form of a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.

4). Riegel's (1973, 1975, 1976a, 1976b, 1979) creation of a dialectical psychology that focuses on the relationships between developing organisms and their changing environment.

Greenberg et al., (1993, p. 55) noted that

> Dialectics in its most essential form is the splitting of a single whole into its contradicting parts. The polar parts when brought into contact interact to produce transformation. Novelty then emerges from a dialectical synthesis.

They then made the above suggestion about therapy.

Riegel proposed that dialectical philosophy be used to devise a unique theory of human development. He created a dialectical psychology that focuses on the relationships between developing organisms and their changing environment. These relationships involve continual conflicts among variables from several levels of "being" (or levels of organisation of life phenomena). Riegel (1973, 1976b) argued that the Piagetian theory of human development could be transformed and added to by adding a fifth stage of cognitive development that is resulted by the dialectics to Piaget's last stage of formal operations.

A famous quote from Riegel (1979 p.39.) is,

> But what is the thing in itself? It is the totality of all the different, contradictory notions about it to which the thing in itself stands in contradictory relation. *Dialectical thinking* (Vernunft) comprehends itself, the world, and each concrete object in its multitude of contradictory relations. However, different properties are simply different properties.

Lerner (2002 p. 40.), on his part, whilst reviewing Riegel's work, and with reminiscence to Hegel, spoke of a dialectical change

> which is always in the same direction, that of a synthesis between two "conflicting" opposites (termed thesis and antithesis).

Similarly, Linehan has developed a Dialectical Behaviour Therapy form of a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approach that I shall briefly relate to, note and interrelate with in my description of creative enquiring-within-writing&b/logging.

In implementing and practicing my approach, I combined insights from Linehan's (1993a; 1993b; et al, 1991, 1999) clinical work into the development of a Dialectical Behaviour Therapy form of a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approach with a principle introduced by the type of auto-genic self-therapy that was put together by Bird and Pinch's (2002) auto-genic therapeutic approach. Indeed, the Dialectical Behaviour therapy approach is a rather distinctive clinical and therapeutic approach that is specifically intended as an approach to the treatment of borderline personality disorder. It is in fact a form of therapy that draws on the premises of the dialectics in order to summon up empowerment, autonomy, qualitative, creative and productive development and transformation in one's life and relationship, being, living and developing in, with and towards the world and good health and well-being (Lapidus, 2009) on behalf of its clients. It therefore acts to support the clients in their act of intentionally, systematically, creatively and methodologically, working to learn, recreate and adapt skills that could help them tolerate stress, regulate their emotions and improve their relationships with social and ecological others. At the same time, on its part, the type of auto-genic self-therapy introduced by Bird and Pinch (2002) involved the self-therapeutic, cathartic and creative practice of creatively and systematically engaging in daily exercises with a view to auto-poietically, cathartically and self-dialectically auto-empower and qualitatively self-transform in one's life and one's quest for a more constructive, productive, meaningful, self-fulfilling and ontologically securing, empowering and enriching life for oneself.

Combining these approaches involved working out a better, more constructive, creative, and meaningful, approach to relate to and interrelate, dialogue, interact and engage with other human beings in the world.

Auto-Poietic[1]

As for my use of the term "auto-poietic", it follows and implements the citation I summoned above from Cox and Theigaard's (1987 p.24.) idea of the poietic as

> the process whereby inner, emptiness, initially experienced as insecurity, fragility and hollowness, is gradually transmuted into affirmative depth; a phrase coined by Halliburton (1981) when he said 'we do not, after all, fall into void but into a kind of affirmative depth'- a cadence in which every connotation counts. Poiesis is inherent in creativity.

What emerges, as far my approach is concerned, is that auto-poiesis is a process whereby the individual works to self-dialectically transform by and for himself/herself the meaning and quality of his or her existence.

I also draw on the Greek term ποίησις, poesis, that implies "making" or "creating", and bears the linguistic root of the words poetry, poet, poetic and poem, and specifically on Heidegger's (1971, 1977) referral to poiesis as an active process of

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[1] Please do not get confused with the more biological use of the term of auto-poietic of Maturana and Varela (1980, 1987). My use of auto-poiesis is therapeutic, ontological, self-dialectical and cathartic.

'bringing forth'. I describe "auto-poiesis" as the process of generating, creating, recreating and amassing, a more meaningful, securing, hopeful, full and complete, auto-liberating, creative and self-fulfilling life in the world and a less anguishing, insecure, frustrating, empty, senseless and insincere existence for the user, as far as he/she is concerned and experiences and embodies. In using the term auto-poiesis in this manner, I also refer to the act and active process of working at creating, developing, illuminating, summoning up, recreating and bringing forth clarity, coherence and greater meaning, creativeness, innovativeness, catharsis and cathartic release, auto-liberation and self-fulfilment.

Catharsis and Cathartic

I am using catharsis as the practice of working at transforming unpleasant situations, experiences and feelings of tension, angst, frustration, anger and self-disappointment in a person's life into the more pleasant experiences, situations and feelings of satisfaction, empowerment, energy and life affirming energy and relief and more fulfilling and productive relationships with both oneself and one's social others.

Catharsis is a Greek word which means "cleansing" or "purging". The ancient Greeek infinitive verb *kathairein* (my italics) means "to purify or purge," and the anciet Greek adjective *katharos* (my italics) means "pure, clear or clean". Originally catharsis was a purely medical term meaning purging. However, this use was adapted to Literature and drama by the ancient Greeks and in that new context has now implied an extreme change in emotion resulting from strong feelings of sorrow, angst, dread, fear, pity, or laughter which has been described as a purification or a purging of such emotions. In this context, catharsis refers to the sensation, or literary effect, of a release of pent-up emotion or energy that would ideally overcome either the characters in a play, or an audience upon finishing watching a tragedy. Plato viewed catharsis as a pleasurable ecstatic release and explained that it is pleasurable because audiences of tragedies experience ecstatic relief from watching characters who suffer a worse fate than themselves. However, in his work *Poetics*, Aristotle maintained that poetry and tragedy make audience feel less, not more, emotional, by giving a periodic and healthy outlet to their feelings, emotions and situations and in turn has taken catharsis to mean a release of emotional tension, as after an overwhelming experience, that restores or refreshes the spirit and restores a good emotional balance. Furthermore, later on in the 18th century, Gotthold Ephraïm Lessing applied catharsis to mean a purification, an experience that brings pity and fear into their proper balance. He noted that tragedy could be employed as a corrective means for through watching tragedy the audience learns how to feel, experience and undergo powerful emotions, experiences and situations in the like of angst and fear at the proper levels and reverse an unhealthy excess of them back into greater happiness, well-being, ontological security, self-fulfilment, stability and virtousness than previously.

Psychologists and psychotherapists have been drawing on that idea and used catharsis as a technique to relieve tension and anxiety by bringing repressed and intensified feelings of angst, insecurity, void, dread, dissatisfaction and fear back to consciousness and into a healthy balance of greater satisfaction, health, healing,

well-being, personal development, growth and empowerment in one's life. Freudian psychoanalysis uses it to describe the act of expressing and experiencing the deep emotions of angst, dread, unease and terror and unhealthy unpleasantness which are often associated with disagreeable, anguishing and unhealthy situations in the individual's past, childhood especially. They are meaning unhealthy, unproductive and unpleasant situations and experiences which had originally been repressed into unconsciousnress or preconsciousness or ignored and never been adequately addressed or experienced and in turn emerged as neurosis or psychosis.

Auto-Dialogical

In using the term "auto-dialogical", I draw on what Dreier (1999, p. 12) called

> the personal ›dialogues with oneself‹ which we call reflection.

I describe an approach in which the user dialogues with himself/herself on the meanings and implications of the dialectics of: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?, and self-dialectically transforming his/her life.

In the practice of "de-reflection" (Frankl, 1978), the de-reflector looks at and re-examines himself/herself and his/her life and position in, with, and towards the world as a detached, uninvolved and disembodied third-person. The reflection or de-reflection is a very private and liberating conversation, self-analysis and auto-dialogue which is meant to be cathartic and auto-liberating one, where the participant lets off steam, frustration, self-dissatisfaction and anger. In the course of this free association, cathartic and auto-liberating auto-dialogue, the participant reflects on and re-evaluates his/her life and writes it all down. He/She is also thinking, contemplating and planning and working out creative ways to self-empower by constructively shifting and redirecting disagreeable and weak experiences and situations into more productive and empowering ones. Once this is contemplated and planned out, the plan is being activated and executed. Subsequently, once the plan is executed, the execution of the plan is reflected on and in action as it is activated and lived in real life situations. Then, once the execution of the plan is reflected on, ways are being sought and planned as for the improvement of its execution in a way that leads to greater experiences, situations and life of well-being, ontological security, self-satisfaction, empowerment and more productive relationships with oneself and others.

This is implemented in action in real life situations in the real world. This is reflected on and the cycle is repeated. This is all logged over and within time and the emergence and unfolding of time, space, both the places where the AR cycles and exercises are being activated. Online logging opens this up as blogging for the co-participating and dialoguing individuals who were designated by the b/logger as his/her support group and are there to read, comment on and interact, dialogue and engage with. I shall explain this in more detail below. I have based this idea of dialogue on the ideas and works of Buber, Freire, Rogers and a superb article by Heath et al., (2006) on dialogue.

Dialogical

I define "dialogue" in my approach as an exchange between persons that would qualitatively, therapeutically, creatively, psychologically and educationally, support, transform and empower the self-enquirer in his/her awful vulnerability and severe angst and dread of exposing and revealing himself/herself in such a manner. And in turn would enable him/her to qualitatively and creatively expand on and self-dialectically and qualitatively transform and auto-poietically, cathartically, creatively and self-therapeutically, transmute, shift and redirect his/her auto-dialogical self into a fully dialoguing Being-In-The-World (Dasein). By dialoguing with his/her engagers who, in addition to providing support to the enquirer, in the hope he/she will support those who have engaged with him/her in their own enquiry, would in turn be able to use it to learn about and better comprehend and creatively engage and dialogue with human insights, problems, struggles, frustrations, creativeness, innovativeness, fears and angst and issues that they are yet to fully embrace and internalise and work out and fully appreciate.

"Dialogical" means leading to a true dialogue of authenticity between a person acting as an enquirer-within-writing&b/logging and his/her intended audience and readership. My hope is that this would truly enable the enquirer to qualitatively and dialectically transform his/her cycles of blogging for the readers/engagers to genuinely learn something new about life through dialogue. Hence, in contrast to auto-dialogue which means a transforming reflective, epistemological, educational, ontological and cognitive soliloquy and a relationship and interaction with oneself, dialogue implies a transforming, cognitive, educational and epistemological, relationship and communication with social others (Shanon, 1993).

My hope for my approach is that a constructive auto-learning, self-comprehending and self-improving, auto-empowerment and a cathartic auto-liberation will be achieved by attaining and working out an authentic, creative, engaging and critical dialogue with the feedback of other human beings. This includes the practice of de-reflecting on and thinking about and illuminating these dialogical and dialectical feedbacks later on in a different time and situation. This should be done with fellow human beings who have gone through similar situations and experiences to the ones that the enquirer has been logging and blogging about in their lives. By doing this, blogging takes the form of a self-critical, creative and productive, auto-dialogical de-reflection on the logging of one's own actions, experimentations, struggles, works, achievements and failures and reflections and the reading of the logging and reflections later on as de-reflections. This involves maintaining personal accountability for one's life and asking the following difficult questions:
Where have I gone wrong?
What should have I done differently?
What would I do differently next time in similar situations?

Cissna and Anderson (1998 p.64.), have taken dialogue to mean

both a quality of relationship that arises, however briefly, between two or more people and a way of thinking about human affairs that highlights their dialogic qualities.

Similarly, Freire (1996 pp.57/8.) equally maintained that

authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about reality, does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication

and that subsequently

only through communication can human life hold meaning.

Freire (1996 p.77.) added that

"our role is…to dialogue with the people about their views and ours".

He explained that

often, educators or politicians speak and are not understood because their language is not attuned to the concrete situation of the people they address (p. 77)

and subsequently

we must never merely discourse on the present situation, must never provide the people with programs which have little or nothing to do with their own preoccupation, doubts, hopes, and fears – programs which at times in fact increase the fears of the oppressed consciousness (p. 77)

but rather

we must realize that their view of the world, manifested variously in their action, reflects their situation in the world. (p. 77)

This is whilst, Heath et al., (2006 p.346.), on their part, acknowledged the influence of Buber (1965) and perceived "dialogue, as viewed by Buber" to depend

on whether the participants have in mind the other or others in their present and particular being and turn to them with the intention of establishing a living mutual relation between themselves and the others.

They also suggested (p. 365) that

Dialogue often seems to be more a commitment to a set of values than a coherent set of concrete practices,

that,

many writers have agreed that dialogue must embody practices such as a reasonably balanced degree of inquiry and advocacy, along with a substantial amount of explicit reflection (April, 1999; Bronn & Bronn, 2003; Burson, 2002) (p. 365)

and that dialogue may result

in a *relational resolution* that develops from understanding each other's emotions, values, interests, and positions (pp. 367-8, italics in original).

Perry and Graat (2010) and Samuels (2010) defined psychotherapy as a relationship between two individuals who as part of the relationship involve themselves in each others and struggle to make a qualitative and positive transformation in their lives, improve their quality of their lives, as well as their understanding of and relationships with both themselves and other people and the world in which they live and grow, heal, transform and empower themselves and their being, living and developing in, with and towards the world.

Perry and Graat (2010 p.35.) in fact claimed that the therapist needs

to involve herself at an emotional level and that means actually struggling with the patient and with herself. It is not a light undertaking.

Hence, "dialogical", drawing on Heath et al., (2006), Habermas (1976) and Freire (1996, 1973, 2004), is communicative, enriching, value-laden, and inspiring for the participating bodies, thereby stimulating a dialectical, creative and qualitative social interaction for the sake of a qualitative transformation of a particular subject and knowledge and consciousness, in general. This turns a reflective, solitary and auto-dialogical person into a social, dialogical and relational human being in, with, and towards the world.

Heath et al's (2006) paper on The Processes of Dialogue; Participation and Legitimation is particularly interesting. They (p. 368) contended that

the call for dialogue became a core part of our sociality in the latter part of the 20th century, and it clearly continues as a social hope as we confront the problems of a new era.

They also made the argument that we

have entered more an age of negotiation than information (p. 368)

and that

Something like dialogue is certainly critical in our increasingly interconnected and multicultural context. (p. 368)

Moreover, they (p. 361) pointed out that

effective dialogue assumes three things: (a) that participants have the capacity to understand and acknowledge their own worldview and express it competently, (b) that participants are able to understand the worldview of the Other, and (c) that through discourse, participants develop common language and common ground.

Similarly, they (p. 369) argued that

a more developed communication-based conception of dialogue can (a) provide a communication based understanding of the complex social construction processes of organizational life, (b) direct the evaluation of existing organizational forms and activities, and (c) provide guidance for the education of members and the redesign of organizational structures and practices

and that we need to look more seriously at what such a theory might entail.

Furthermore, they (p. 367) also noted that

One of the challenges for dialogue…is the tension between being open to alternative outcomes on one hand and being goal oriented on the other hand

They added that

it is apparent from the dialogue conversation that openness to alternative outcomes is an important dimension of dialogue (p. 367)

They also suggested that dialogue is "a skill, that needs to be learned" and "is (or should be) part of a culture—*our* culture" and "is an element of social existence, and an important one…[since] without dialogue, civilization is not possible...[even though] Dialogue in a multicultural society must begin by deconstructing the structural and ideological constraints that shape both reality and dialogue itself" and thus "effective dialogue requires a critique of reality and a critique of social practices within that reality (Kersten, 2000)". (pp.359-62, italics in original)

Heath et al., have summed up the extent and merit, meanings, processes and implications of and concerns about dialogue and increased its ontological essence and intention from a mere act of communication amongst individuals into a vital ontological, epistemological, educational and cognitive dialectical process of real human transformation. This echoed the work of Freire who has been the person who has inspired me the most in planning the dialogical aspects of my approach. Freire's writings, ideas and insights have enabled me to move away from an auto-dialogical reflective mode of contemplating and thinking for myself and planning and acting upon my intentions to develop and qualitative transform my life and relationships with both myself and other people. This helped me move into a more meaningful dialogue with other people with a view to attain their feedbacks and constructive criticisms and qualitatively improve on and dialectically transform my work, communications, self-dialectical and auto-dialogical enquiries and accounts.

Indeed, like Freire, I regard dialogue as a means of complementing the 'I' and making it fuller and more complete by being compelled to explain, share and

interrelate myself with and to others and reflectively re-evaluate myself as it/he/she does so (Freire, 1973, 1996, 2004). I follow and agree with Freire (1996, 1973, 2004) and also with Buber (1923/1984, 1965, 1970), Cissna and Anderson (1998) and Heath et al, (2006) in saying this. Dialogue is essential to human existence, development and qualitative transformation in, with and towards the world.

Moreover, Freire (1973), in the essay *Extension or Communication*, has pointed out that

> for true humanism, to engage in dialogue is not to engage without commitment

and that

> dialogue is not to invade, not to manipulate, not to "make slogans"…it is to devote oneself to the constant transformation of reality.

Freire (1996, p. 71) also stressed that dialogue cannot

> exist without hope…[that] is rooted in men's incompletion…from which they move out in constant search – a search which can be carried out only in communion with others.

What is more, Freire pointed out that dialogue is the opportunity available to me to open up to the thinking of others, and thereby not wither away in isolation. In fact, Freire (1973) maintained, directly based on Buber's classic work of that very title, that "dialogue is an I-Thou relationship" which requires "a relationship between the two Subjects" and that consequently "each time the "thou" is changed into an object, an "it", dialogue is subverted and education is changed to deformation" and in turn "the period of instructions must be followed by dialogical supervision, to avoid the temptation of anti-dialogue on the part of the coordinators".

He also talked of dialogue as a "Critical, loving, humble and communicable stance for a position" which is renowned for "respecting another person's position". He argued that "the man who has made a radical choice does not deny another man's right to choose, nor does he try to impose his own choice" (Sic) and in turn "can discuss their respective positions" and whilst "he is convinced he is right", he nevertheless still "respects another man's prerogative to judge himself correct" and "tries to convince and convert, not to crush his opponents".

Also, Freire (1996 p.109.) warned us that

> to impede communication is to reduce men to the status of "things" – and this is a job for oppressors, not for revolutionaries.

Freire (1996 pp. 48/9) maintained the same stance that he has held for over a quarter of a century that

> when people are already dehumanised, due to the oppression they suffer, the process of their liberation must not employ the methods of dehumanisation

since the "correct method lies in dialogue" and subsequently

> critical and liberating dialogue, which presupposes action, must be carried on with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation.

Hence, he (1996 p.46) contended that
> to substitute monologue, slogans and communiqués for dialogue is to attempt to liberate the oppressed with the instruments of domestication

and that

> at all stages of their liberation, the oppressed must see themselves as women and men engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of becoming "more fully human.

Freire differentiated between dialogue and a dialogical theory and pedagogy which educates individuals to truly and significantly relate and contribute to themselves, other individuals and the world in which they live, and non-dialogue and a non-dialogical theory and form of education which does not.

He stated (1996 p.148) that whereas

> "in the theory of antidialogical action, conquest (as its primarily characteristic) involves a Subject who conquers another person and transforms her or him into a "thing",…"in the dialogical theory of action, Subjects meet in cooperation in order to transform the world".

He also stated that a "dialogical theory requires that the world be unveiled" and stressed that "no one can…unveil the world for another" and

> although one subject may initiate the unveiling on behalf of another, the others must also become Subjects of this act. (p. 149)

Something which implies that the

> adherence of the people is made possible by this unveiling of the world and of themselves, in authentic praxis. (ibid)

Furthermore, echoing his ideas throughout his life, Freire (1996 pp.73/4) stated that "without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education" and that "only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking", and that as a result

> the dialogical character of education as the practice of freedom does not begin when the teacher-student meets the students-teachers in a pedagogical situation, but rather when the former first asks herself or himself what she or he will dialogue with the latter about and preoccupation with the content of dialogue is really preoccupation with the program content of education.

Hence,

the teacher-student and the students-teachers reflect simultaneously on themselves and the world without dichotomizing this reflection from action, and thus establish an authentic form of thought and action.

Reflecting on themes from his life's work, Freire (1996 p.117) stressed that "Dialogue with the people is neither a concession nor a gift" since "dialogue, as the encounter among men to "name" the world, is a fundamental precondition for their true humanization" and subsequently "both education and the investigation designed to support it must be "sympathetic" activities, in the etymological sense of the word" in the sense that "they must consist of communication and of the common experience of reality perceived in the complexity of its constant "becoming".

Indeed, Freire (pp. 69-70) perceived true dialogue to be an

> encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized,

which in turn

> cannot be reduced to the act of one person's "depositing" ideas in another, nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be "consumed" by the discussants.

Similarly, Freire (1996 p.69.) also maintained that

> dialogue cannot occur between those who want to name the world and those who do not wish this naming – between those who deny others the right to speak their word and those whose right to speak has been denied them.

He in fact explained that "it is in speaking their word that people, by naming the word, transform it" and subsequently dialogue imposes itself as a way by which "they achieve significance as human beings". He pointed out that "Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it" and that "The dehumanisation resulting from an unjust order is not a cause for despair but for hope, leading to the incessant pursuit of the humanity denied by injustice". He (p. 71) asked the following questions: First, "How can I dialogue if I regard myself as a case apart from others-mere "its" in whom I cannot recognize other "I"s?". Second, "How can I dialogue if I am closed to – and often offended by – the contribution of others?" Third "How can I dialogue if I am afraid of being displaced, the mere possibility causing me torment and weakness?". He also claimed that "Self-sufficient is incompatible with dialogue" and that "Men and women who lack humility (or have lost it) cannot come to the people" and "cannot be their partners in naming the world". I certainly share these questions and statements with Freire and seek to creatively act upon them in my work, enquiries and professional and personal life and developments in, with and towards the world. I also share Freire's emphasis on the dynamism and historicism of human existence and the human subject in the world.

Indeed, like Freire, I was intrigued by the issue of human reduction, dehumanisation, objectification, oppression, degradation and mechanisation through the act and

practice of rendering them incapable of creatively speaking, recreating and communicating themselves for themselves and others and having their own autonomy, creativeness and voice to communicate and dialogue themselves to themselves and other people. I certainly subscribe to the Freirean association of dialogue with liberation and re-humanisation and his emphasis on dialogue as a true Buberian and Rogerian engagement and care for the social other. I have thus conducted my doctoral research as a concrete, meaningful, creative and constructive, criticism of the traditional mechanisation, objectification, reduction, dehumanisation and degradation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world, and an attempt to resolve the mistreatment of the human subject and human existence by empirical and clinical psychology and the social and human sciences.

I am also very sympathetic towards Freire's denunciation of relationships of power domination and one side/party controlling and exploiting another for the fulfilment of his/her objectives and needs. In particular, I care for the idea that the oppressed is to conceptualise himself/herself as a continuously developing, self-creating and self-recreating human subject and being-in-the-world in the process of constantly becoming more and fuller human. I also agree with Freire that each person needs to engage actively and creatively with the identification, re-evaluation and unveiling of the world's problems and that this practice inclines to increase and qualitative transform his/her humanity, his/her being-in-the-world and his/her humanisation. In doing so and following this agreement, I cannot but think of the Sartrian idea of 'engagement', or commitment, to which I am obviously very sympathetic.

I subscribe to Freire's stress on a creative dialogue of equal and on true participation and collaboration being the cornerstone of humanity, true humanisation, creativeness and the phenomenon of being human.

I am also extremely sympathetic towards and am embracing the Freirean idea of working *with* rather than *for* (my italics emphasis) people and his very humanistic and humanitarian form of education, engagement, interaction, creativeness and pedagogy. This definitely brings back my engagement with and the influence of the very useful insights in the paper by Heath et al., (2006) on my recent thinking and present work and enquiry and the long-standing influence of Buber, Laing, Laing and Esterson (1964), Schön (1987) and Carl Rogers and the Client-Oriented therapists, clinicians and practitioners on my thinking, creativity, development, recreation, enquiries and work.

iii. Intentions

The intention of this thesis is to delve inside the LET approach, reconstruct it and work out its essence, meanings, intentions and developments, and analyse them. We need to ask and answer three questions before expressing any opinion about the extent and merit of the LET approach:

 i. Is the LET approach the most appropriate means of theorising a human existence in terms of AR?

ii. Could a more suitable AR approach to human existence be found and worked out?

iii. Which one?

The LET approach is summarised, introduced and described on Whitehead's homepage (2009b, bold in original):

> **Action Research: What is a Living Educational Theory Approach to Action Research and a Human Existence?** In a living educational theory approach to action research and a human existence, individuals hold their lives to account by producing explanations of their educational influences in their own learning in enquiries of the kind, 'How am I improving what I am doing?' They do this in contexts where they are seeking to live the values they use to give life meaning and purpose as fully as they can. The living educational theories of professional educators and other practitioner-researchers usually explain their educational influences in the learning of their students and can also explain their educational influences in the learning of social formations. See www.actionresearch.net/writings/livtheory.html.

The LET approach was rejected in the 1970s and 1980s by educational theorists and researchers. Since the late 1980s, however, it has managed to fit into the margins of educational research and action and practitioner research by having research degrees, that used it as their methodologies, legitimated at the University of Bath, Limerick University, Kingston University, Brunel University, University of West England, Coventry University and the University of Worcester as an original, critical and publishable contribution to the particular subject of educational, action and practitioner research and knowledge. There is presently an intensive attempt by Whitehead and his supporters around the world to promote the LET approach as a legitimated research methodology in postgraduate research degrees and academic accounts of professional practices and educational research and developments and to increase its merit as a methodology in the theorisation of educational research and practitioners' embodied knowledge and professional and ontological and epistemological development, growth and practices.

In his 1988 presidential address to the British Educational Research Association, Whitehead (1989b) ironically noted that he has "failed to obtain my PhD on two occasions in 1980 and 1982 for my research on educational practice and its theory" and that these were "were total failures" in the course of which

> the examiners agreed that I couldn't conduct an original investigation or test my ideas against those of others…that there was no matter in the theses worthy of publication and that given the choice of reducing the award to MEd, the right to resubmit or the refusal to resubmit they unanimously decided that I should not be awarded an MEd or permitted to resubmit.

He added that "these judgements indicate the comprehensive nature of the failure", that "my examiners look like a role of honour of the educational establishment" and that "it took some courage to appeal against the first set of judgements in 1980" as

> I wanted to question the adequacy of the judgements of my examiners

since

> such experiences of academic judgements and the institutional arrangements for their legitimation have led to my interest in a study of my own educational development as I support the power of truth against the truth of power within our institutions of higher education.

Subsequently, he stated that

> I am curious about our responsibilities, firstly as examiners, to permit questions about our judgements on claims to educational knowledge and secondly as academic colleagues, to protect our employment as researchers. In developing my own enquiry in these areas I accept Foucault's point (1977, 1980, 1982) that the analysis, elaboration and bringing into question of power relations is a permanent political task inherent in all social existence. I believe he is correct in saying that a local, specific enquiry can take on a general significance at the level of that regime of truth which is essential to the structure and functioning of our society.

In effect, Whitehead (1993) presented an account of a very frustrated researcher who failed to gain recognition and legitimation in his field and place of employment and struggled continuously against systematic and persistent attempts to terminate his employment, formally discipline him and reject his Ph.D. thesis submissions. Similarly, Whitehead (1991, 1993) presented an attempt to create a dialectical AR approach in which the action researcher creates an educational, epistemological and ontological account of his/her educational development and learning through reversing his/her failures to fulfil his/her intentions and ontological values and including these failures in the belief that these intentions and failures are meaningful and worthwhile. Furthermore, Whitehead (2006, 2007, 2009b, 2010) discussed the rejection on the part of the University of Bath of his application for Readership and his appeals against this rejection.

Nevertheless, McNiff and Whitehead (2009, p. 1) wrote and told their readers that

> We authors, Jack Whitehead and Jean McNiff, have been working and researching together for almost 30 years. Between us we have supported nearly 50 doctoral programmes, hundreds of masters programmes and countless workplace-based programmes. The written accounts of practitioners now make up a globally influential knowledge base (see www.actionresearch.net and www.jeanmcniff.com, to which you can contribute through working your report).

Thus, my point and understanding is that the LET approach has moved, according to Whitehead, from being treated as a problematical idea and approach in its field, via an attempt to re-evaluate the reasons for it being so and amend and transform itself from an approach that is completely rejected, into one that is internationally accepted by LET theorists. However, I shall show that it remains in the margins of educational research as a narcissistic, self-indulgent and self-promoted approach and idea because instead of continuously and systematically re-evaluating and scrutinising itself in a self-critical fashion and following others' constructive criticisms and critical challenges, with a view to learn from these criticisms and challenges, Whitehead and the living educational theorists are presently working at

uncritically promoting themselves and increasing the numbers of followers and influence around the world, by only engaging with sympathetic and biased educational researchers. They are dismissing the concerns and criticisms of detached, disinterested and unbiased, academics, from the fields of philosophy, the philosophy, history and sociology of science, psychology, and the human and social sciences, as not falling within their field of 'inclusional educational, practitioner and action research'.

Nonetheless, despite its history of being rejected by academics, there is no attempt on the part of Whitehead and his supporters to engage critically with, analyse and examine balanced criticisms and constructive critiques and challenges of LET from impartial researchers. To date, all attempts to relate to the LET approach have either resulted in a complete dismissal of LET, in the manner of the ones described by Whitehead (1989b) above, as an approach with no value or significant contribution to its particular subject, field and knowledge whatsoever or they have been an unconditional and uncritical acceptance of it by LET proponents, without any efforts to evaluate it and contribute to its knowledge base. Whitehead and the LET group dismiss any constructive challenges and well-argued criticisms on the part of well-wishing academics for no other reason than that of these challenges and criticisms failing to conform to the principles of 'inclusional educational, practitioner and action research' (McNiff and Whitehead, 2009; Whitehead and Huxtable, 2006). This tends to alienate those researchers and further the exclusion of the LET approach from mainstream academia. I am deeply concerned about this.

However, my relationship with the LET approach does not fall within this polarity. By no means do I completely reject it. I do believe that, like most ideas and approaches, it has many merits, that could be learned from and drawn on, and it has flaws that are ought to be amended. I think it bears the potential of becoming a most valuable reflective practice and AR approach which is why I am offering my critiques, constructive criticisms and challenges, and conclusions, and my own AR and critical and theoretical humanistic psychology work here.

What makes my approach fall within AR is the systematic and cyclic reflection in and on action on problems, concerns, and what needs improvement that has been carried out in terms of and as AR cycles and through continuous auto-dialogue, as well as through dialogue with others. The aim of this approach is to aid the improvement of the aesthetic, ethical and authentic quality of life of the author, while writing up and carrying out this research and creative writing and to improve his professional, epistemological, educational and ontological development, his future AR expeditions in, with and towards the world and his fulfilment in what he is doing and seeking to accomplish.

This lead me to think that, given the problems with authentically presenting my research in the form of a doctoral thesis, I could present that part of my research that critically and analytically delves inside and examines the LET approach, criticises and transforms it into a more suitable tool and approach as a doctoral thesis. This thesis, in effect, presents a "pre-amble" to my research, the presentation of which will constitute my future work. In the course of my post-doctoral research (with less

time pressure, on the one hand, and a much needed Ph.D. degree qualification, on the other hand), I shall publish books and papers that explain the working of my alternative self-educational, cathartic and therapeutic tool in both theory and practice to fellow clinicians, practitioners, academics and theorists in order for them to be able to follow my teachings and practice my suggested and worked out tool in their own professional clinical, teaching and reviewing practices.

My intention is for the University of Bath and the other universities that have legitimated LET theses and dissertations to have a Ph.D. thesis on record that draws on a dialectical educational AR methodology and is critical and analytical towards the LET approach, within a truly authentic and sincere intention and desire to improve and develop it and enable it to fulfil its true potential as a reflective practice and AR approach. Rather than accept it at face value and draw on it unconditionally, I shall share, re-examine, reflect on, and re-evaluate the results of my experiences of and learning from my practice and educational, dialectical and ontological AR expedition of analysing, comprehending and internalising LET, criticising its meanings, history, developments, intentions and practices and relationships with the methodological, theoretical and philosophical orientations which influenced it and upon which it draws and publications and writings[2]. By the term "influencing orientations", I mean its relationships with the disciplines, areas and subjects of educational research and education, AR, reflective practice and practitioner research and ontology and theorising and re-evaluating the human subject and a human existence.

My hope is to save LET from falling into the trap of being perceived as a "cultish" and woolly approach that is used in educational theory, knowledge and research by a clique concerned only with the creation of AR research accounts that have no value outside of the clique that produces them. This perception tends to alienate all those researchers who do not completely subscribe to the LET approach and its circle of practitioners-researchers with shared values, history, intentions and objectives. Again, I am deeply concerned about this and wish to enable the LET group to truly reflect on what I am saying here in order for LET to improve its value-laden

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[2] The notion of 'influence' is crucial to Whitehead's research. Whitehead draws on Said (1997) for his research into educational influences in learning. He particularly draws on Said's (1997 p.15) suggestion that

> No word comes easier of oftener to the critic's pen than the word influence, and no vaguer notion can be found among all the vague notions that compose the phantom armory of aesthetics. Yet there is nothing in the critical field that should be of greater philosophical interest or prove more rewarding to analysis than the progressive modification of one mind by the work of another.

And on Said's (1997 p.15.) further insight, in relation to an example from the "Letter About Mallarmé", in which as a poet indebted to and friendly with Mallarme, "Valery was compelled to assess originality and derivation in a way that said something about a relationship between two poets",

> Valery converts 'influence' from a crude idea of the weight of one writer coming down in the work of another into a universal principle of what he calls 'derived achievement'.

practices which include a desire to really reach and dialectically and dialogically open up to and engage and work with those practitioners who are sympathetic to it whilst wishing to remain autonomous free-thinkers.

I believe openness to criticisms and constructive challenges, that truly aim and intend to work with it and improve it, could only contribute to extending LET's relationship with the world outside and to the engagement and learning of other researchers and scholars and improve its educational merit and capabilities. I think this thesis would help the LET approach to transform itself from a very close and detached clique, with its own journal (EJOLTS, 2008-9); web-spaces (Whitehead, 2009b, 2010; McNiff, 2010) and publications (Whitehead, 1993, 2004b, 2009b; McNiff, 1988, 2000, 2006; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006; McNiff and Whitehead, 2005, 2006, 2009), into an open academic, educational, and scholarly approach that is engaging with and inviting fair, unbiased and constructive scrutiny, critical engagement and examination. Nonetheless, in making the last point, I am by no means hiding the fact that like all human beings and professionals, I have my own agendas, embodied values, intentions and objectives and intentions for further AR expeditions that I should like to fulfil and implement in my life and what I do. I have my own opinion and feelings about the LET approach and my own experiences with it that I am conveying in this thesis, as authentically and sincerely as I can, with a view to help and enable the LET researchers improve their approach and their work and relationships and interactions with those researchers outside the LET approach and to further empower and fulfil their ontology, existence as essence, as authentic and true educators who truly value constructive and dialectical dialogue and to truly engage and work with others and themselves on their dialectical self-improvement and auto-transformation. Others may have their own opinion, feelings and experiences that are wholly different than mine and that I am looking forward to dialectically engage, look into and work with.

iv. Fulfilment of Intention and Practice

In this thesis I shall use my knowledge of LET in relation to my own constructive critical psychology of the human subject work and my own personal, embodied, self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological, cathartic and value-laden ontological and educational AR expedition. I shall reconstruct and analyse the LET methodological approach and theoretical idea and essence and describe its historical development and relationships with educational research, practitioner research, AR and ontological, clinical and psychological research. I shall present its constructive contributions to its field, knowledge and academia and its flaws and downsides. I shall explain my reservations about the new directions it has been adapting to and adopting and pursuing since 2002/3. Then I shall introduce the alternative approach that I perceive as more appropriate to the re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world.

My argument will be developed to show that LET should be reconstructed anew, keeping its dialectical, living, embodied, auto-dialogical and dialogical features, but transforming them via a transition to ontology, auto-phenomenology, auto-poiesis

and constructive critical psychology of the human subject. Its interest in being an approach to AR and a human existence should be focused on improving the quality of a human existence and one's relationship with himself/herself and other people; an act that would actually make it a concrete and applied, living and embodied approach to AR and human existence. Its movement to the transformation of 'the third logic and epistemology of inclusionality' should be reconsidered and revised, as should be its reliance on the method of submitting audio-visual clips to present its cycles and itself, its meaning, essence and methodology.

The first part of the thesis introduces and reconstructs the LET approach. It describes and re-evaluates my relationship with LET, since my initial encounter with it and discusses and examines the LET approach in relation to the works and developments of its two developers, Whitehead and McNiff, as well as to Schön's reflective practice approach to practitioner research, the AR orientation to research and its development and the ontological research of conceptualising (understanding) and theorising (explaining) the human subject and human existence. It will also explain and re-examine my own intention and work at developing an alternative approach. After introducing and discussing the works and writings of Jack Whitehead and Jean McNiff over four decades, it relates the LET approach to Schön's work and his development in the 1980s and 1990s of his alternative post-positivistic reflective practice approach to practitioner research and Whitehead's critique and criticism of it. It also discusses and examines AR and Whitehead's approach to it, the relationship of the LET approach with AR, and Dreier's (1999) appeal to a theory of the person and how he relates the LET approach to it. It discusses and examines how the direct dialogue with the writings of Schön (1983, 1987, 1991, 1995), Carr and Kemmis (1986), Winter (1989), Kemmis (1986), Gibson (1985) and Dreier (1999) have enabled Whitehead to convey and develop his LET approach. It examines and studies this dialogue in relation to my own intention of developing my own alternative. The first part concludes by briefly introducing Whitehead's movement from the dialectics and textual engagement in creating, communicating and presenting LET accounts into inclusionality and non-textual, audio-visual, clips and means of presenting, constructing and communicating LET. I shall explain and re-evaluate my feeling of unease and profound concern at this recent development, which I did not anticipate and which disappointed, frustrated and alienated me and my research from the LET approach.

The second part criticises the LET approach and the directions it has pursued and reflects on my reservations about these. It criticises the complete focus of the LET approach on epistemology and making a significant original contribution to the body of educational knowledge, practitioner research and educational research. It also criticises the perception of the LET approach towards non-textual, audio-visual and multimedia means as being superior and more suitable to the re-evaluation and theorisation and conceptualisation of the developments and professional practices and growth of practitioners and human beings than textual means. As well as criticising the shift and movement of the LET approach from the dialectics into inclusionality, I shall show how the LET approach can be transformed into a more suitable way of re-evaluating, theorising and conceptualising professional,

educational, epistemological and ontological developments and transformations of professional practitioners and human beings.

The thesis concludes itself in the third part. I shall reflect on and revaluate what I have learnt by examining for over seven years the LET approach and my self-development as a result of doing so. In particular, I shall reflect on and re-examine my decision to distance and alienate myself from the LET approach after being captivated by it and subscribing to it and believing in it and valuing it. I introduce here my plans for my new and alternative approach that I sincerely hope will improve, enrich, qualitatively transform and empower the LET approach and its extent and merit as an approach to educational, practitioner and ontological research and AR, reflective practice, and educational AR. I shall also present my future practices and describe my future plan to put my proposed alternative approach into practice on and for others, namely clients, trainees, fellow practitioners, mentors and the general public.

Part One:
A Critique of the Living Educational Theory Approach

Brief Introduction

In this part of the thesis I shall critique the theoretical argument, methodology, developments and developers of the LET approach and its relationships with educational research, practitioner research, reflective practice, AR, educational AR and the theorisation of the person. I shall also briefly note my relationship with the LET approach and what this approach is. I shall introduce the LET approach through the work of Jack Whitehead and Jean McNiff. I shall carefully look at and critically examine the main publications that Whitehead has conveniently placed for us, in chronological order, at the "*Jack Whitehead's Writings*" section of his homepage, http://actionresearch.net/, Whitehead (2009b), and that are generously accessible to us all free of charge at http://actionresearch.net/writings/writing.shtml. Through this textual analysis, I shall also look at the LET's movement from a dialectical critique of the traditional means of theorising and developing educational research into its claim to have formed a new form of "inclusional" epistemology and logic for educational research.

After relating it to educational research, I shall directly relate the LET approach to Schön's movement of reflective practice and the reflective practitioner model. I shall look at Schön's main body of work and movement from a critique of and challenge to the positivistic model of practitioner research and into offering a new epistemology of reflective practice and practitioner research that is grounded within Lewin's (1946) AR cycles. After that, I shall in turn also interrelate directly the LET approach with AR and educational AR. I shall explain what AR is and its development and principles. I shall also connect the LET approach to Dreier's (1999) call for a theory of the person and his criticisms of existing attempts to theorise and conceptualise the person within social science, post-positivistic psychology, social constructionism, sociology and feministic literature. I shall cite Whitehead's (2009b) responses to Dreier's paper. I shall show how Whitehead's direct engagement with Schön (1983, 1987, 1991, 1995), Winter (1989), Carr and Kemmis (1986), Kemmis (1986) and Carr (1990) and Dreier (1999) has led him to construct and develop the LET approach.

I shall introduce the movement of the LET approach away from dialectics and textual means of constructing, presenting and communicating LET towards inclusionality and non-textual, audio-visual, means of doing so. I shall provide the ground for the next part of the thesis which will include my criticisms and challenges of the LET approach and my movement away from it. This will then prepare the way for constructing and developing my own alternative approach to the theorisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world and how this improves upon educational AR, reflective practice and how we understand human existence.

1. 1. My relationship with the LET approach

Let me begin by presenting and accounting for my relationship with the LET approach. I know how much living educational theorists subscribe to autobiographical value-laden accounts of practices and also do not wish to conceal any of my own intentions, feelings and agendas. I first met Jack Whitehead at the University of Bath in February, 2003, when I begun working out a more engaging, humanistic, humanising and applied heuristic means of re-evaluating, theorising and conceptualising the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world than the traditional heuristic means of doing so in psychology and the human, social and educational sciences.

Five months earlier, in September, 2002, I had arrived at Bath to follow up my research carried out during the second half of the 1990s at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I wanted to examine the conceptualisation of the human subject in and by the various models and schools of empirical psychology. I analysed textually the history of the development of the discipline of empirical psychology from Wundt, James, Freud and Ebbinghaus, through the behaviourism of Watson, Skinner and Tolman, onto the Gestalt and humanistic psychologies and psychodynamic and psychoanalytical psychologies and cognitive psychology, up to social constructionism and post-positivistic critical psychology.

Between 1994 and 1999 I completed an Individualised Research Programme at the faculty of the Humanities in critical humanistic theoretical psychology. The Individualised Research Programme was constructed around my argument that in its focus on supporting or refuting a given proposition (hypothesis) on elements of the human subject and human existence, empirical psychology inclines to objectify, abstract and reduce the human subject into linguistic propositions and hypotheses that need to be supported or refuted.

My argument was that empirical psychology has focused on supporting or refuting these propositional statements and in turn neglected its main task and focus, which should be those involved in improving the quality of life of the human subject, his/her well-being, ontological security, self-fulfilment and productive relationships with both oneself and other people.

This culminated in a critical textual analysis of the founding mentalistic school of empirical psychology, the behaviouristic school and the traditional, Cartesian, representational, school of cognitive psychology (Serper, 1999). I selected the main texts of each school (model) of traditional positivistic empirical psychology and compared and contrasted each text with other texts from the model/school as well as with the chosen leading texts of the other models (schools). I also discussed the Piagetian school of developmental cognitive and moral psychology, the humanistic school of psychology and the social constructionist school in particular and the critical empirical psychology school of the new and emerging post-positivistic, post-Cartesian and qualitative paradigm, in general.

My intention was to demonstrate my hypothesis that all the various schools and models and theories and systems in and throughout the history of empirical psychology are identical in their heuristic mechanisation, dehumanisation, objectification and reduction of the human subject, whilst each model differs in its methodological, epistemological and philosophical underpinnings and views of the essence and intentions of the discipline, and its conceptualisation of the meanings and implications of the phenomenon of being a human subject.

My argument was that none of these schools has been able to engage fully with, re-evaluate and theorise and conceptualise the human subject as a wholly autonomous living, embodied, auto-enquiring, self-forming, creative, creating and recreating and auto-theorising, self-developing and auto-transforming agent/actor who is working systematically and methodologically at securing and auto-poietically developing and constructing for himself/herself the most meaningful, empowering, fulfilling, hopeful, full and complete and actualising existence in the world. These schools have not addressed how the human subject is capable of understanding his/her circumstances and dialectically reversing her/his ontological and existential malaise, despair, insecurity and void. My view is that this is part of the ontological essence of being a person in the world.

At first, I argued that this ongoing systematic shift every generation (twenty or thirty years) from one wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated, generalising, predicting and profiling model to another tends to reduce, abstract and objectify the human subject into the limited aspect that defines the dominating model of that generation. For example, during the domination of the founding mentalistic model of Wundt and Ebbinghaus, the heuristic theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject has been dominated by the reduction of the human subject into immediate experiences of objects of experiences carried out by the controlled introspection method (Wundt, 1896; James, 1890).

This initial domination of empirical psychology and its heuristic and methodological approaches to the theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject was weakened by James' (1890) development of a phenomenological and pragmatic model of empirical psychology that criticised the dominating heuristic tool, solution and approach and method of controlled introspection. This weakening has enabled the heuristic theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject to transform itself, upon the propositional model shift of the discipline of empirical psychology into behaviourism, into one that heuristically conceptualised and theorised the human subject as little more than a living organism that behaves in accordance with the principles of conditioning, either classical conditioning introduced and discussed by Watson (1913, 1930), or operant conditioning discussed by Skinner (1938, 1948, 1957, 1963, 1977, 1979). The radical and uncompromising nature of Skinnerian operant conditioning and its extreme limitation and over-simplicity has led to a paradigm shift into the representational cognitive psychology model. This allowed me to demonstrate how this wholly propositional model shift has led to the heuristic theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject to be based on controlled quantitative experimentation on individuals that aimed at summoning and examining innate cognitive faculties (Serper, 1999, 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2009).

I concluded that heuristic theorisation and conceptualisation has been weakened by the social constructionist model that has viewed the human subject as and within social, socio-cultural and discursive interrelationships and interactions among individuals. I examined this theoretical conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world, by qualitative means that opposed the traditional methodological and heuristic practice of subjecting the human subject to controlled experimentation (e.g., Billig, 1987, 1988, 1997; Billig et al., 1988; Middleton and Edwards, 1990; Antaki and Widdicombe, 1998; McGarty and Haslam, 1997; Parker, 1989, 1992, 1998, 2002; Parker and Shotter, 1990; Parker and Spears, 1996; Hepburn, 2002; Harré, 1981, 2002). I chose to include more natural observation within my approach to the theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject, therefore reliving the distinction in Wundt (1896, 1916) between empirical and Volker psychologies. Likewise I have also shown how the representational Cartesian model of cognitive psychology is being increasingly criticised and weakened by Wittgensteinian discursive (e.g., Billig, 1997; Edwards and Potter, 1992, 1993; Potter, 1996a, 1996b; Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Edwards, 1997; Parker, 2002; Hepburn, 2002), ethnomethdological (e.g., Garfinkel, 1967; Heritage, 1984; Sacks et al., 1974; Sacks, 1992; Potter, 1996b), ecological (e.g., Gibson, 1950, 1966, 1979; Gibson, 1969, 1982; Gibson and Spelke, 1983) and phenomenological psychologies (e.g., Smith, 1996; Smith and Osborn, 2003; Reid et el., 2005; Shanon, 1993; Giorgi, 1970, 1985, 1997; Landsman, 2002) and new developments in cognitive and socio-cognitive psychology that are based on the old Soviet school of Vygotsky and Luria (Vygotzky, 1978, 1986; Luria, 1976; Holland and Lachicotte, 2007; Wertsch, 1985a, 1985b, 1991, 1998) and the second cognitive revolution of scholars like Bruner, Haste and Harré (Bruner, 1977, 1983, 1986; Bruner and Haste, 1987; Haste, 2010; Harré, 1979, 1983, 2002; Harré and Gillett, 1994).

In my view, while the representational model of cognitive psychology that has replaced behaviourism in the 1960s and 1970s is still dominating the discipline, the present situation in empirical psychology is that of a Kuhnian revolution or even pre-science. This implies a situation in which no propositional model is completely controlling the heuristic theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject, and each researcher is able to choose and carry out his/her own methodological inventiveness provided that this act is done in a rigorous and well-rationalised fashion. Qualitative methods and empirical psychologies are gaining an increasing influence and radically transforming from scarce criticisms on the part of few critical psychologists to a movement in social and human science and the beginning of a paradigm (e.g., Harré, 1981, 1987, 2002; Gergen, 1985; Reason and Rowan, 1981; Billig et al., 1988; Middleton and Edwards, 1990; Hepburn, 2002). This is whilst quantitative and controlled introspectionist and behaviouristic elements (conditioning) are long-forgotten by practicing empirical psychologists and belong to the subject of the history of empirical psychology. Having said that, I do not think that critical, post-positivistic, post-Cartesian qualitative empirical psychologies could be completely ignored in an empirical psychology degree course in the way my Batchelor of Science course did, as did some graduate courses in empirical psychology I sat in during the early and mid 1990s, as if no other theory and heuristic tool, solution and approach existed.

What I argued and felt to be needed was a holistic and dialectic form of empirical psychology and a heuristic tool, solution and approach, to the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject: one that would combine, fuse and integrate the knowledge, insights, theories, contradictions and contradictory positions and rivalries, and methodological and heuristic tools, solutions and approaches, and practices of the entire system of wholly propositional paradigm shifts, that would in turn be completely dedicated to the self-dialectical, auto-poietic, cathartic and self-therapeutic empowerment and fulfilment of the individual person. It would also heuristically, concretely and applicably approach the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject through directly working on auto-poietically summoning up an empowerment and a meaningful, fulfilling, hopeful, full and complete, empowering and self-actualising existence for him/her in the world.

Once it is recognised that all these schools, models and approaches to empirical psychology incline to be propositional, abstract, disembodied, fixated, generalising, predicting and profiling in their essence and to objectify, mechanise, reduce and dehumanise and degrade the living, embodied and transforming human subject in their endeavour to offer a valid, reliable and scientific means of evaluating, theorising and conceptualising the human subject and human existence, it becomes clear we need a better approach. The way I conceptualised the human subject followed the humanistic, psychodynamic and Gestalt schools of psychology and education and was as an autonomous, living, embodied and developing human subject and agent who is working at constructing a more meaningful, self-fulfilling, ontologically secure and hopeful existence in, with and towards the world for himself/herself and more constructive, productive, meaningful and fulfilling relationships with both himself/herself and other people.

At the University of Bath, I was able to fulfil my immediate desire that was problematic at the Hebrew University and prompted my move back to the United Kingdom in the first place. The desire to move back into an empirical psychology department and creatively, meaningfully and constructively engage with empirical psychology work that would enable me to explore new ideas, innovations, creations, theories and methodological tools, solutions and approaches. At first, I wanted to get a firsthand insight into the state of present-day empirical psychology by carrying out an empirical study that used as much of its methodological means as possible. I was hoping that I could form as my doctoral research project a case-study account that could creatively reflect in and on action and live, relive and embody within it some important sociology, philosophy and history of science insights that would be interesting, creative and relevant to critical psychologists.

The plan, in September, 2002, was to design and carry out a series of empirical studies into a particular, interesting and relevant, phenomenon in empirical psychology. And then account for the treatment, approaching and engagement with the human participants by the traditional and existing wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated and generalising, heuristic tools, solutions and approaches, in empirical psychology. This was how I, formerly a theoretical

humanistic psychologist moved into empirical work to test out my beliefs and past theoretical and philosophical works, conclusions and insights.

My rationale in doing so was to follow up my wholly theoretical and philosophical humanistic criticisms of empirical psychology and its ill-treatment of the human subject. I thought I could avoid appearing to empirical psychologists as a wholly theoretical and philosophical criticiser of the discipline of empirical psychology.

I planned to do this from the inside of the discipline, whilst living and reflecting in action on the flaws of the traditional propositional approaches, and working out possible ways of amending these flaws, problems and issues of concern to me and my colleagues and peers. I also wanted to explore my personal conviction that the creative attempts of my post-positivistic and humanistic colleagues to develop and carry out a critical empirical psychology paradigm, that combines qualitative methods and post-positivistic, post-Cartesian, post-structuralist and social constructionist ideas and values, have been another paradigm shift into a different type of the traditional approach. However, I still agreed with their criticisms of the mechanistic, objectifying, abstractive and reductive nature of the positivistic heuristic tools, solutions and approaches (e.g., Shotter, 1975; Laing, 1967; Parker, 1989, 1992, 1998, 2002; Reason and Rowan, 1981; Harré, 1981, 1987, 2002).

What I thought was needed is a creative and qualitative transformation of the whole system of the traditional propositional theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject. This belief drew on an idea that I begun entertaining whilst concluding my wholly philosophical and theoretical critique of the discipline of empirical psychology and its heuristic means of approaching the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject and human existence in, with and towards the world. The idea of moving the heuristic theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject from the traditional Aristotelian and Popperian wholly propositional logic of validating a linguistic proposition and conjecture through the methodological and epistemological act of invalidating the opposite conjectures and establishing itself to be the most valid and appropriate response to a given problem and explanation of a particular phenomenon, and into the dialectics of drawing on "fusion of opposites and an emphasis on an inherently interrelated system of ideas or thoughts" (Kahle et al., 2000) to transform a response to and explication of a given phenomenon and problem. However, there seemed little prospect at this time of carrying out a limited-scale doctoral programme out of this idea since it is a very complex and large-scale project that ranges across several disciplines and arguments. I left it as a possible plan for postdoctoral research work.

Thus I spent most of 2003 designing and beginning to conduct a series of empirical studies in the field of socio-cognitive psychology to look at a person's interrelationships with his/her social (and phenomenological and ecological) world of social others. My hypothesis, influenced by my subscription to phenomenological and ecological cognitive and socio-cognitive psychology, was that educational and productive social interactions among individuals could enhance their embodied and intrinsic cognitive abilities, learning and internalisation.

However, this research programme overstretched what should have been designed as a very focused and limited-scale doctoral programme. Worse, I found myself drowning in the task without any previous acquaintance with the methodological side of empirical psychology, especially the qualitative side of the methodologies and the recruitment, selection and maintenance of participants. Many of the skills I learned, carried out and perfected in the course of my empirical psychology degree in London had become rusty during my eight years of wholly theoretical, philosophical and historical, critical work. I realised how my attempts to re-focus and organise my empirical research for it to suit the requirement and scale of a successful doctoral programme had turned the project into one that was designed to place experimental/empirical evidence in favour of the propositional theory that human learning and cognition could be enhanced through a successful and constructive social interaction among individual cognisers.

Furthermore, I had neglected my intended constructively critical humanistic psychology of the human subject work in favour of the practice of working out a complicated experimental design that includes two conditions: (1) groups of individual cognisers carry out collaborative social interactions[3] being exposed to a series of cognitive/educational tasks and prior to carrying out the same task again as individual cognisers and (2) using a different type of stimuli and a control condition without the collaborative social interaction phase. The collaborative social interactions were group tasks in the course of which the individual cognisers discuss and practice cognitive and educational tasks. I used the task of translating Shakespeare Sonnets into French and the task of discussing and recalling to details the IRA attack in 1983 of the Brighton hotel where the British Conservative party conference has taken place. I hypothesised that productive group collaboration would enhance the cognitive ability of its individual members. To examine my hypothesis empirically, I intended to assess the embodied cognitive ability of individual cognisers using traditional analytical and quantitative methods, such as statistical tests in the like of T-Test, ANOVA and MANOVA, and qualitative methods such as ethnography and discourse and conversational analysis.

I also planned to evaluate the quality of the group collaboration in terms of group dynamism, collaboration and interrelationship, in general, and degree and quality of communication among members, tension among members, domination of individual members and subordination of others, in particular. I sought to observe and videotape the group interactions for the active domination of certain group members over other members and the submission and passivity of others and the preference and reluctance of certain group members to work with certain other group members. I also planned to interview and follow the group members within and as part of a group discussion and individually and discretely, away from the group. I wanted to examine and re-evaluate how such relationships of power and tension affect the cognitive performance, learning and educational and cognitive development of the individual group members.

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[3] Individuals are working together in carrying out cognitive tasks as a group. They carried out the same type of cognitive tasks as isolated individuals prior to that.

I was hoping that carrying out such a complicated experiment would enable me to get a thorough look into the heuristic tools, solutions and approaches of and within empirical psychology and to re-evaluate the way these approach the human subject, in general, and my own conceptualisation of the human subject as a concrete and autonomous living, embodied, auto-enquiring forming and transforming individual being-in-the-world working on his/her own empowerment, fulfilment and actualisation, in particular. However, I saw myself drowning in the task of carrying out an empirical study for its own sake and abandoning my plans of constructively criticising the manner in which the discipline heuristically and methodologically approaches the theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject in an intention to be able to work out my alternative heuristic means of approaching the theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject. Worse still, I saw myself getting into the absurd situation of carrying out and using a particular logic and epistemological structure within a study that has taken upon itself to criticise it constructively.

Thus I have found myself utilising the very same wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated and generalising, heuristic tools, solutions and approaches that I have been criticising as mechanistic, reductive and degrading towards the human subject. This is in a study that has taken upon itself to look for and enquire into heuristic means to re-humanise empirical psychology and the social, human and educational sciences and offer an alternative heuristic solution to the problems of the abstraction, mechanisation and objectification of the human subject. I was appalled to realise that my research actually perpetuates the very approach that I was criticising. Instead of demonstrating and revealing to peers and colleagues the flaws of empirical psychology, I was repeating them while reporting my own experiences as the researcher and those of the participants, who in addition to carrying out an exhausting and tiresome tasks over two different days, with a week interval in between, had to fill in an elaborated questionnaire and undergo a detailed interview about their experiences of carrying out the experiment at different phases and throughout the experiment. For example, they had to convey whether or not and how their interaction with the group has enabled them to improve on their translation skills in translating the Shakespeare Sonnets into French and their memory recall in better recalling the events connecting to the 1983 IRA attack on the British Conservative party conference.

The fact that potential participants, although being interested in the theoretical ambition of the project, were disinterested in participating once they realised the commitment required given the complexity of the experiment, indicated to me how difficult it is to pass on a personal commitment and zeal to others, especially when a large sample is required for the statistical validation and reliability and to maintain a disinterested and dispassionate stance as a researcher. I reflected on my failure to impart my enthusiasms, values and, intentions and interests to potential participants, without compromising the impartiality of the research. This awareness, combined with my concerns that I was repeating the flaws of empirical psychology, led me to the conclusion that I needed to abandon the empirical approach and move towards a more theoretical and reflective approach.

In the summer of 2003 I abandoned empirical psychology and realised that I need a complete change of direction. Seeking a human subject, I looked at myself and began my search for an alternative approach by developing a theoretical and philosophical analysis based more on critical self-reflection and creative auto-phenomenological self-analysis, self-enquiring and auto-dialogue.

I identified the required heuristic solution to need to take the form of an inventive, creative, and rational approach to the question of how to re-evaluate, identify, process, theorise and conceptualise the human subject, as I conceptualise him/her, approaching the subject, in this case myself, in a more engaging, authentic, applied, creative, applicable, humanising and dignifying manner than the traditional approach. Learning from my experiences of life as a doctoral student at Bath University (sometimes exasperating, other time enjoyable) and from the academic processes involved in performing doctoral study, I gained valuable insight into the difference between the humanities and the social and human sciences and about myself as a researcher and a human being. I did not want to leave the city and the life I constructed and recreated for myself in it and that I grew to love and enjoy, yet I was frustrated, uncertain, worried, pessimistic and anguished about the/my future. I saw myself unable to progress towards developing my alternative approach to the re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with, and towards the world. I was despairing and pessimistic about my future and became alienated from Bath and the psychology department.

It was then that I became acquainted by pure chance at Bath with the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research that has offered an alternative concrete, creative, applied and applicable living, embodied, dialectical, reflective and dialogical heuristic means of theorising, re-evaluating and conceptualising the professional practitioner (usually a practicing teacher/educator). It gave me hope and optimism. It also raised my prospects of finding a social niche of like-minded researchers, practitioners and scholars to engage with, interest, collaborate and dialogue with on projects of mutual interests and value. LET promised to be an alternative to the traditional disciplines approach to educational theory and the wholly propositional epistemological and methodological tool, solution and approach, of the reflective practice model initiated by Schön (1983, 1987, 1991) and Lewinian (1946) AR cycles. It has offered its heuristic alternative within specifically-formulated AR cycles of a direct heuristic enquiry into the question: how do I improve my practice and fulfil my ontological values in my practice and educational, epistemological and ontological development as a practitioner? (Whitehead, 1993, 1995, 1999, 2004a, 2009b).

I was taken by the direct and constructive challenge that seemed to be offered by the LET approach to the traditional methods, and instead offering a dialectical, living, embodied, auto-dialogical and dialogical heuristic and methodological tool and approach. At the invitation and encouragement of Jack Whitehead, I formally transferred my Doctor of Philosophy programme from the Department of Psychology to the Department of Education. Nevertheless, I made it very clear to the living educational theorists and to myself that I am not a professional

practitioner, in the like of a practicing educator or a clinician, who seeks to improve his/her practice through explaining his educational influences in the learning of others and the learning of social formations. Rather, I remained a constructively critical psychologist of the human subject who seeks to offer an alternative approach to the reduction, mechanisation, alienation and dehumanisation and degradation of the human subject by the traditional approaches in the social, human and educational sciences.

Henceforth, I set upon the task of studying the LET approach in order to be able to dialectically transform it from education and educational research to ontology and constructively critical psychology of the human subject. However, as I shall discuss below, I soon discovered serious misgivings and concerns about certain aspects of it and the directions it has taken. Little by little, my reservations grew. It seemed to me that the LET advocates were adopting a somewhat doctrinarian approach and were more concerned with recruiting a like-minded following than with critically developing LET. In the account below, I shall describe my growing alienation and movement away from LET and introduce my alternative to it. This will prepare my description in the second part of this thesis of how the LET approach had moved away from its original intentions, arguments and practices developed since the 1970s.

1.2. What is the LET Approach?

The LET approach is a specific and inventive form of and approach to action research, educational research, reflective practice and practitioner research and ontological research. What originally has distinguished the LET approach from the other forms of AR enquiries has been its being grounded, lived and embedded within the epistemology of the living educational theorist directly working on and within the dialectics of reflectively working on transforming and improving his/her own practice. This is as the researcher that he/she wants himself/herself to become and be with his/her value-laden practice and ontology. I shall discuss below in detail what Whitehead means by dialectics.

Hence, living educational theorists bring their embodied, lived and living, knowledge into the academy for legitimation through studying the process of its evolution in enquiries of the kind: 'How do I improve my practice?' and 'How do I fulfil my values as a practitioner and a human being within what I am doing and my development as a practitioner?'. Legitimation means being accepted by fellow peers as making a significant and original contribution to a particular subject and to knowledge. They embody their AR in the dialectics of asking themselves the question: how do I improve what I am doing? and living and implementing this enquiry in their practice and development as practitioners. They draw on their failure to implement and fulfil their values in their professional practice and educational developments as practitioners. They observe this failure and work out plans and cycles to reverse, shift and redirect this failure and qualitatively and self-dialectically transform it into a more productive form of practice and educational development where they are able to fulfil their values in their practice and educational development as practitioners. They follow AR cycles that are directly

embodied in the question: 'How do I improve this process of education here?' and that draw on the dialectics of 'how I experience problems when my educational values are negated in my practice'.

In this context an AR cycle means a repeated phase of action-reflection-re-evaluation in which the practitioner-researcher reflects in and on action and re-evaluates his/her professional practice and development with an intention to improve them. It goes as follows: I imagine ways of overcoming my problems. I act on a chosen solution. I evaluate the outcomes of my actions. I modify my problems, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations. I come up with a LET account that describes, explains and shows how this process is carried out and account for my professional practices and educational, ontological, epistemological and professional development as a value-laden practitioner. For example: Pound (2003) accounted for her development as a health visitor who is seeking to fulfil her ontological value of 'alongside' in her professional practice; Naidoo (2005) accounted for her development as a nurse and health practitioner who is seeking to implement her ontological value of 'passion for compassion' in her professional practice; Finnegan (2000) accounted for his teaching practices within his working to fulfil his religious ontological values.

Thus, in this approach to AR, individuals hold their lives to account by producing explanations of their educational influences in their own learning in dialectical enquiries of the kind, 'How am I improving what I am doing?' (Whitehead, 2009b; EJOLTS, 2008-9). They do this in contexts where they are seeking to live the values they use to give life meaning and purpose as fully as they can. The living educational theories of professional educators and other practitioner-researchers usually explain their educational influences in the learning of their students and social formations. The primary focus of the LET approach is mostly epistemological given that its main intention is the contribution to an epistemological transformation of educational knowledge. It is based on the dialectics of including and even drawing on living contradictions to transform the explanation, analysis and evaluation of a phenomenon and practice. For example, in constructing a dialectical living educational AR account of his development as a practitioner, Whitehead (1991, 1993) was using and including the living contradictions of a rejection and dismissal by his peers and colleagues whilst being convinced that his work is valuable to the field.

Jack Whitehead has developed the LET approach in response to what he criticised as wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodying, fixated, generalising, limiting, confining and mechanistic forms of education and educational research, action and ontological research and reflective practice research that incline to dehumanise, disembody, abstract, objectify, alienate and mechanise the practitioner from his/her educational development, values, intentions and practices.

In his doctoral thesis, Whitehead (1999 pp.24-5) spoke of the LET approach as

> the development of a new view of educational theory which is constituted by the
> descriptions and explanations which individual learners are producing for their own

educational development" and which can be characterised as a 'living' educational theory because "it is embodied in yours and other learners living practice.

This explains Whitehead's earlier perception of LET (1989a) as "a description and explanation of practice" which "forms part of the educational practices of the individuals concerned" and "is part of the living form of the practice itself" and therefore is to be distinguished from a "theory which can be constituted into a propositional form". He also suggested, in that publication, that living educational theory accounts are "descriptions and explanations of individuals' practice as 'the descriptions and explanations of their learning in educational enquiries of the kind: 'How do I improve what I am doing?'". He noted that "the evidence for the integration of the above insights in the work of other researchers is now firmly embedded in MEd, MPhil, and PhD degrees".

Similarly, in the book, *The Growth of Educational Knowledge*, Whitehead (1993, p. 9) described and defined the LET approach as,

> a form of rationality which has emerged from the dialectical tradition…a tradition which stresses educative conversations and processes of question and answer…, embraces contradictions and…engages with the social relations…within which the knowledge is being produced and legitimated

and constitutes

> a form of dialogue which has profound implications for the future of humanity because of the values it holds and because it is embodied in our practical lives in our workplaces and wider society (p. 9)

and wherein

> the medium we are working on is ourselves. (p. 9)

Likewise, Whitehead (1989a), in the short section **"3) HOW DO WE SHOW OUR VALUES IN ACTION?"** (capitalisation and bold in original) noted that

> This approach to educational theory is being developed in a community of educational researchers who are committed to forming and sustaining a dialogical community (Bernstein 1983) and who are willing to offer, for public criticism, records of their practice which are integrated within their claims to know this practice (Lomax 1986).

Furthermore, according to Whitehead (1989a), in section **"6) WHICH POWER RELATIONS INFLUENCE THE ACADEMIC LEGITIMACY OF A LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY? - A QUESTION OF THE POLITICS OF TRUTH"** (capitalisation and bold in original)

> In order to construct an educational theory for professional practice" professional practitioners "will have to face the practical and theoretical implications of asking ourselves questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?'.

He was suggesting in section "**3) HOW DO WE SHOW OUR VALUES IN ACTION?**" (capitalisation and bold in original) that

> a form of question and answer can also show how to incorporate insights in the conceptual terms of the traditional forms of knowledge whilst acknowledging the existence of ourselves as living contradictions as we refer to the records of our practice.

Indeed, in accordance with Whitehead (1985a, p. 97), "educational theory occupies an ambiguous position in the educational profession" in the sense that on the one hand "its importance is due to the fact that a profession supports its skills and techniques with a body of systematically produced theory" whilst "on the other hand, teachers tend to decry educational theory because of its lack of relationship to their practical skills and techniques". He also contended that for educational theory to be directly related to educational practice it must have the power to explain an individual's development and that one of the major problems which has led to the discrediting of traditional forms of educational theory was that they could not produce adequate explanations for the educational development of individuals.

He added that he uses (p. 98)

> the term a 'living form of theory' to distinguish the suggested approach from the 'linguistic form' in which traditional theories are presented for criticism.

He also argued that "The individual can…generate a personal form of educational theory" and "submit it for public test". He conceptualised this personal form of educational theory as one which is "grounded in the lives of professional educators and their pupils" and has "the power to integrate ethics of directly and firsthand embodying oneself".

According to Whitehead (2004a),

> teacher-researchers have the capacity to create and test their own educational theories through their self-studies of their teacher-education practices (Whitehead, 1972). (Introduction)

He (2004b, p. 1, Introduction) defined living educational theories as

> action research accounts, in which individuals explore what they really care about in their lives as they explore the implications of asking, researching and answering, questions of the kind: How do I improve my practice? in ways that connect with the enquiries of others and with influencing the education of the social formations within which the actions are located.

Furthermore, in the section *Evidence from s-step research* (bold and italics in original) Whitehead (2004a) pointed out that

> Because everything that we do can be seen to be influenced by the social formations in which we are living, the extension of one's cognitive range and concerns in

understanding these influences can be a part of the individual's educational development

and that as a result

learning to enhance one's influence in the education of such social formations can also be part of this educational development. (ibid)

What is more, Whitehead (1991, in 1993 p. 69) referred to his LET approach as,

the idea that researchers should be showing what it means for themselves to be living more fully their values in their workplace…and how they are enabling the 'researched' to speak on their own behalf which I am offering as a basis for socially orientated, educational action research.

He explained that "By a 'living' theory" he means

that the explanations generated by the theory to explain the educational development of individuals contain an evaluation of past practice and evidence of present practice which includes the "I's" intention (a human goal) to produce something valued which is not yet in existence. (p. 68)

He then made the claim that it is possible to construct such a theory from the explanations which individuals produce for their own educational development (Whitehead 1989b).

Furthermore, Whitehead (1989b, in the eighteenth paragraph) clarified that he was

proposing an organic view of educational theory which is living in the public conversations of those constituting professional practice

and thus

growing in the living relationship between teachers, pupils and professional researchers and embodied within their forms of life (ibid)

and presumed

that educational theory is being created through the theorising of individuals about their own professional practice as they attempt to improve the quality of their own and their pupils' learning. (the nineteenth paragraph)

He characterises the approach as a "living approach to educational theory" which is to be distinguished from "a linguistic approach which is contained within propositional relationships and captured texts on library shelves".

On his part, Whitehead (1989a) spoke of his view of a living educational theory which is grounded in the explanations which individuals produce for their own educational development and that in the course of producing it they propose a unit of appraisal and standards of judgement for use in judging the validity of such a claim

to knowledge and show how a living educational theory can be understood as part of a process of social transformation which is guided by values constituting a good social orders and how such a view of theory can engage directly with those persons (which may be oneself) and conditions which are negating the values of good order.

In addition, Whitehead (1993, p. 3) clarified that LET

is a theory that is not simply an abstract and a conceptual form of a theory

but one that is

embodied in practice (p. 3)

and

embedded and living in the…commitment to live my values as fully as I can in my workplace (p. 6)

and in the

attempts by individuals to communicate the way in which they are giving a form to their lives as a form of art (p. 4)

which implies the

struggle to find authentic ways of communicating truths about what it means to be human. (p. 4)

He directly asked his readers in Whitehead (1991, in 1993 p. 81) in the subsection **FURTHER QUESTIONS** (bold and capitalisation in original)

Can you substantiate a claim to be 'educational researchers' without an examination of your own or another's educational development?.

Moreover, Whitehead (2004a) in the section *Significance of the question* (bold and italics in original) noted that

The dialectical approach is characterised as a process of question and answer in which an individual 'I' exists as a living contradiction in questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?'

In suggesting this, he reiterated a claim made in Whitehead (1985a, p. 104) in which the author stated that,

By beginning with questions, I want to emphasise the dialectical ground of my educational enquiry. By dialectics I mean a process of coming to understand and know through question and answer. In this process, I exist as a living contradiction, and the meanings of my values emerge through time and practice within an immanent dialectic.

He contended (ibid., italics in original) that,

> The dialectical nature of my enquiry, 'How do I improve my practice?' can be distinguished from other approaches to action research as it is an attempt to answer the question of contradiction posed by Ilyenkov, *"Contradiction as the concrete unity of mutually exclusive opposites is the real nucleus of dialectics, its central category ... If any object is a 'living contradiction', what must the thought/statement about the object be that expresses it?"* (Ilyenkov,1977*).* In looking at video-tapes of my own teaching I came to appreciate that 'I' existed in my question as a living contradiction in Ilyenkov's sense that I hold two mutually exclusive opposites together in practice. I could experience myself holding certain educational values whilst at the same time denying them in my practice. For example I could experience myself valuing my pupil's capacities to learn by enquiry whilst at the same time closing down their opportunity for doing so by the way I structured my lessons (Whitehead 1977).

Similarly, Whitehead (1993, p. 8) claimed that this form of AR enquiry

> can be distinguished from other approaches to AR in its being an attempt to answer the question of contradiction posed by Ilyenkov, "Contradiction as the concrete unity of mutually exclusive opposites is the real nucleus of dialectics, its central category...If any object is a 'living contradiction', what must the thought/statement about the object be that expresses it?" (Ilyenkov, 1977).

He wrote that

> in looking at video-tapes of his/her own teaching, a practitioner could come to appreciate that his/her 'I' existed in his/her enquiry, how do I improve my practice?, as a living contradiction in Ilyenkov's sense that he/she holds two mutually exclusive opposites together in practice and that he/she could therefore experience himself/herself holding certain educational values whilst at the same time denying them in his/her practice. (ibid)

Likewise, Whitehead (1995 p.127) argued that

> whilst action researchers claim to know their own educational development as they attempt to improve their practice, their understanding of their practice and the social context in which their practice is located (Elliott 1989; Kemmis and McTaggart 1988; Altrichter 1991),

they

> do not appear to have created a new form of educational theory from which it has been possible to clarify its epistemological and methodological underpinnings (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991).

He expressed his hope that the ESRC sponsored seminars (Hamilton 1992 and 1993) with their focus on methodology and epistemology in education research may contribute to this clarification.

He clarified in that publication that he thinks of

an educational enquiry in which the art of living is expressed by individuals as they form their own lives with positive regard for qualities of relationship and action which are contributing to some extent to bring human values more fully into the world.

In fact, drawing on existentialists such as Gabriel Marcel (cf. Keen, 1966; Marcel, 1935, 1949, 1951, 1964) who distinguish between "spectator" truth and "living truth, Whitehead (2004a, Introduction) made a distinction between

the traditional forms of scholarship that produce theory as a 'spectator' truth in the form of interconnected sets of propositions, and new forms of scholarship that produce theory as 'living' truth in explanations formed from embodied values.

He suggested that the former is generated by disciplines (e.g., experimental science, psychology, sociology) which rationalise reality and impose on it a framework which helps them to understand it but at the expense of oversimplifying it and that

such general explanations can be achieved only by standing back from and "spectating" the human condition from a distance, as it were, and by concentrating on generalities and ignoring particularities which do not fit the picture. (ibid)

He contended that

whilst such a process is very valuable, it is also very limited because it is one step removed from reality. (ibid)

According to Whitehead (2004a), educational theoreticians can communicate the content of the embodied knowledge in their practices "in a way that transforms it into public knowledge".

He added that he perceives

these educational theories to be the descriptions and explanations of their learning in educational enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'.(ibid)

He noted that

The "living" "authentic" truth of a situation can be fully understood only from within the situation though the picture that emerges will never be as clear-cut as that provided by "spectator" truth (Burke, A.1992, p.222). (ibid)

He also pointed out that he utilises the term a 'living form of theory' to distinguish the suggested approach from the 'linguistic form' in which traditional theories are presented for criticism and that

in a living approach to educational theory…teacher action-researchers present their claims to know how and why they are attempting to overcome practical educational problems in this form.

Furthermore, Whitehead (2004a), in the subsection *Significance of the Question* (italics and bold in original) noted that he is assuming that those researchers who conduct a self-study of their educational practices can be seen as postmodern writers in Lyotard's sense that in producing our accounts they are giving a form to their lives as they express their arts as educators and self-study researchers.

He then introduced the following Lyotard's citation,

> *A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he (*or she*) writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by pre-established rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgement, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work. Those 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, 1984. p. 81). (Italics in original).

He told the Teachers' Self-Study Special Interest Group of the American Educational Association that they

> will find the accounts of learning in educational enquiries of the kind, How am I improving what I am doing? in the context of seeking to help students to improve their learning (Section *Is there evidence of influencing the education of others in s-step research?,* italics and bold in original)

and that

> each researcher transformed their own embodied knowledge as a professional educator into the public knowledge of a contribution to educational theory. (Section *Evidence from s-step research*, bold and italics in original)

How did LET relate to my own research? Throughout 2003 I was captivated by the idea that a person can theorise his/her own personal and professional life and developments through the dialectics of direct enquiry and working on self-improvement which he/she is then conveying and accounting for to others in a dialectical dialogue (Freire, 1973, 1996; Buber, 1965, 1970; Rogers, 1965, 1967). I thought such a dialectical possibility can provide the answer to the reduction, abstraction, mechanisation, objectification and dehumanisation and degradation of the human subject in his/her traditional heuristic re-evaluation and theorisation by the traditional approaches. I thought it can provide the individual with the ability of theorising and re-evaluating his/her own life, practices and values to himself/herself and others through direct theories of a human existence and the professional, ontological, educational and epistemological, value-laden developments and learning of a particular practitioner/theorist.

I was particularly captivated by Whitehead's (1989a) citation of the conversation between Giles Deleuze and Michel Foucault in which the former tells the latter

> You were the first to teach us something absolutely fundamental: the indignity of speaking for others. We ridiculed representation and said it was finished, but we

failed to draw the consequences of this 'theoretical' conversion - to appreciate the theoretical fact that only those directly concerned can speak in a practical way on their own behalf (Foucault 1980).
Section **6) WHICH POWER RELATIONS INFLUENCE THE ACADEMIC LEGITIMACY OF A LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY? - A QUESTION OF THE POLITICS OF TRUTH.**
Capitalisation and bold in original)

as evidence to what he views as

the necessity for the practitioner of speaking on his or her own behalf. (Ibid)

I was also taken by the possibility of the researcher's dialogically conveying his/her own theory of his/her life and developments, learning, embodied knowledge and practices and fulfilment of his/her value-laden intention in his/her professional practices.

Indeed, according to Whitehead (1985a, p. 102), in affirming or rejecting the claim to knowledge as embodying an aesthetic form of life, the reader needs

to judge whether the quality of the actions presented in the claim to knowledge have violated the integrity of an individual or the unity of humanity as a whole.

He suggested that

just as the artist attempts to give a form to his or her material, so teachers, who are practicing the art of education, are giving a form to their own lives in education and assisting their pupils to do the same. (p. 103)

He maintained that in judging the aesthetic form of a claim to know another individual's form of life in education, the reader must attempt to identify with the process in which that individual struggled to give a form to his or her life in education in a similar way to the one in which "the artist presents his or her work" and the appreciation of it arrives "as the viewer spends time 'reliving the work of its creator' (Lipps in Holbrook, 1979)".

In fact, in accordance with Whitehead (1993 p.9),

in considering art to be the giving of form and content to whatever medium the artist is working with, I am working at giving form and content to my own life in education and like Foucault, recognise the importance for my educational development of my aesthetics of existence

and imagine that

in making a holistic judgement on whether my enquiry constitutes a good quality human enquiry,

the dialoguing engager would experience himself/herself

making an aesthetic judgement on the quality of my art as a dialectician and my form of life in education. (ibid)

These ideas have really captivated my imagination and I went on to research what LET and its developers and practitioners are all about. I have collected all of Whitehead's public writings and publications that were conveniently available to all at the "*Jack Whitehead's Writings*" section of his homepage, http://actionresearch.net/, Whitehead (2009b), and the writings, suggestions, publications and drafts of writings for publications that have been sent by Whitehead to his LET group of students, former students and followers. I critically analysed their meanings and implications and deconstructed them.

1. 3. The Development of the LET Approach by Jack Whitehead

i. Who is Jack Whitehead?

Jack Whitehead initiated and developed the LET approach. The LET approach has emerged partly as a result of the personal and professional movement of Jack Whitehead from being a practicing school teacher and educator, who applied to his educational practices in the classroom the theories and ideas of educational theorists, into becoming a lecturer and researcher at the University of Bath. He is an academic who is criticising traditional ideas and concepts in the fields of education, educational research and theory which he was trained to adapt in his educational practices and in turn developing and working out an alternative to them.

Whitehead's reasons for moving from a career as a school teacher to that of an academic who is working out and developing the LET approach are first discussed in Whitehead (1977) where he had made the point that whilst

> a central function of in-service education is to improve educational standards within schools, (p. 30)

there are

> few case studies which show how particular forms of in-service support have influenced improvements in classroom practice. (ibid)

Hence, Whitehead moved to educational research and theory from educational practice in order to shift the subject of educational research from the explanation of educational practices to the improvement of the quality and standards of educational practice. I very much subscribed to the idea of theorising a practice and subject through working at improving its quality and explaining how this improvement is being worked out and achieved. This resonates with my own experience. In the course of my criticising the way the human subject and the phenomena of being a human subject and how human existence in, with and towards the world are being theorised in and by the traditional approaches, I have also entertained the belief that these phenomena are best theorised within the intention and practice of improving the quality of life.

Thirty years later, as a result of applying for a Readership at the University of Bath in 2005, Whitehead reiterated publicly these reasons, as part of his AR inquiries, and stated that

> underlying my reasons for sustaining my research programme into the nature of educational theory is the belief stated by Kilpatrick in the first issue of Educational Theory in 1951 that educational theory is a form of dialogue that has profound implications for the future of humanity.

In this application Whitehead reflectively noted that while he was studying for his Master's dissertation in the psychology of education in 1971 he became aware of limitations in the the dominant educational theory.
He then reflected in this application on how he

> expressed a belief that has remained with me that enhancing professionalism in education requires an appropriate educational theory.

He noted in that application that

> this motivated me to change my vocation from being a teacher to being an educational researcher with a focus on the reconstruction of educational theory[4].

Whitehead (1989b) maintained that

> I want to stress that I examined these concerns in relation to my classroom practice as I tried to improve the quality of my teaching in a school. That is, from the perspective of a teacher researcher.

Moreover, Whitehead (1989b) reflectively noted that

> As a teacher I needed to feel confident that the profession possessed an educational theory which could relate directly to educational practice in classrooms,

yet

> when I compared the dominant disciplines approach to theory, with my reflections on my classroom practice…this approach failed to produce a description and explanation for my professional practice.

Furthermore, in his 1988 presidential address to the British Educational Research Association, Whitehead (1989b) described his professional practice as one in which

> Teachers are being supported in the generation of a form of educational theory which can be directly related to the process of improving education within schools. Thus helping to improve the quality of practitioner research.

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[4] In fact, Whitehead (1992) spoke of his academic work at Bath as illustrating

> how a living educational theory can be understood as part of a process of social transformation which is guided by values constituting a good social order.

Similarly, Whitehead (1993, 3) viewed himself

> as an educational researcher who is trying to reconstruct educational theory in a way which can produce valid descriptions and explanations for the educational development of individuals

and

> make an acknowledged and scholarly contribution to knowledge of…education (ibid)

which he believes

> needs a theory which can adequately describe and explain the educational development of individuals (ibid)

and in the course of creating it

> educationalists, through studying their own attempts to answer questions such as, 'How do I improve my practice?', are constructing a living educational theory within which the work of Hirst, Carr, Elliott, Habermas and Gadamer, is usefully integrated (Eames 1987, Larter 1987).

Hence, Whitehead (2004a) spoke of his

> commitment to a view of research-based professionalism in education in which it is a responsibility of the researcher to submit her or his work to public tests of validity

and noted that he relates (italics in original)

> this commitment to MacIntyre's view that, *the rival claims to truth of contending traditions of enquiry depend for their vindication upon the adequacy and the explanatory power of the histories which the resources of each of those traditions in conflict enable their adherents to write.* (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 403).

Whitehead (2004a) also pointed out that his particular concerns

> have focused upon the academic legitimacy of an individual's claim to know his or her own educational development.

Furthermore, Whitehead (2004a) also noted that within his investigation of his own claims to know his own educational development he has

> explored the nature of a form of educational theory which is directly related to educational practice

and that he wishes to present the evidence that a logic of educational enquiry is also emerging from the self-studies of teacher-education practices that display contributions to the growth of educational knowledge which include his own self-

study, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', as a teacher-educator and educational researcher at the University of Bath between 1973-2003.

Whitehead (1989a) talked about his intentions for the development of the LET approach to be three-folded:

> i. The creation of educational theories which can be directly related to the processes of improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools.
> ii. Knowledge of the standards of judgement which can be used to test the validity of the claims of individual practitioners to know their own professional practice.
> iii. The application of the standards of judgement to the Action Research and Educational Theory Case Study Collection to establish what constitutes 'good' quality case studies of the lives of professional educators.

He then noted that these case studies will be made accessible to teachers and researchers through the Resources Centre of the School of Education and that the explication of a new form of educational knowledge in which the epistemological and methodological assumptions of educational theory could be related directly to teachers' professional practices.

I was captivated by this idea of explaining, describing and accounting for practices and phenomena through explaining their improvement and what this improvement means to the practitioner-theorist and how it is approached and carried out directly within the values, intentions and the fulfilment of these intentions by the practitioner-theorist. I have modified and transformed these ideas to my own fields and intentions and shall show how I have done so in the next part of the thesis.

I should now like to examine Whitehead's development of LET. I shall start with his criticism of the traditional means of theorising educational practices and educational development and learning. I shall then introduce his/her dialectical LET alternative. Subsequently, I shall introduce his/her LET methodology. After that, I shall introduce the way Jean McNiff complemented Whitehead's work. Then, I shall relate Whitehead to reflective practice, AR and the theory of the person and show how he has shifted and essentially abandoned the dialectics.

ii. Jack Whitehead's criticism and rejection of the traditional approach to educational research

The LET approach has been initiated by Jack Whitehead as a challenge to the traditional ways of theorising educational practices and research and the development and transformation of the embodied knowledge and ontological and educational development of the professional practitioners, namely, educators and educational researchers.

In his presidential address to the British Educational Research Association, Whitehead (1989b) expressed his intention to treat as problematic the 'canons of enquiry' which many researchers believe to be well established and in particular

to raise questions about the propositional nature of educational theory and the criteria we use to judge the validity of claims to educational knowledge.

He also expressed his desire to

> fight for this integrity by presenting a living approach to educational theory, by challenging the canons of systematic enquiry which are, 'well established.

Whitehead referred here to the "disciplines approach" to educational theory.

Whitehead (1995, italics in original) defined the 'disciplines approach' to educational research within the three principles which Richard Peters used to determine the selection and presentation of educational theory

> *1) Though it must be presented in a differentiated way the different disciplines must also mesh in with and be seen to mesh in with each other in relation to matters of educational policy and practice. 2) Selection from the content of the basic disciplines must, in the main, be determined by what is relevant to the practical problems and interests of teachers in training. 3) The differentiated modes of thought about education, though harnessed to practical issues, must also be presented in a way that they intimate, and are seen to intimate, problems, at a more fundamental level in the disciplines themselves, and the forms of enquiry necessary for their solution."* (Peters, 1964 p.177).

Similarly, Whitehead (2004a) indeed drew on the following two statements which he cited from Hirst and Peters, (1970 pp.15/6) in order to emphasise the need to exercise a philosophical imagination in developing a logic of s-step enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?',

> It is the purpose of this book to show the ways in which a view of education must impose such a structure on our practical decisions…The thesis of this book, therefore, has relevance at a time when there is much talk of 'integrated studies'. For one of the problems about 'integration' is to understand the way in which 'wholeness' can be imposed on a collection of disparate enquiries…All it attempts to do is to sketch the ways in which this conception of education must impose its stamp on the curriculum, teaching, relationships with pupils, authority structure of the school or college community. (Hirst & Peters, 1970 pp.15/16).

In describing his reasons for working out his LET approach to educational research, Whitehead (2004a) explained that he needed a different logic of educational enquiry to the traditional one which structured their 'disciplines' approach to educational theory and led its proponents to impose a conceptual structure on practical decisions and the activities of s-step researchers as well as a "wholeness on disparate entities" and "its stamp on the curriculum".

He noted that this has become the

> self-study enquiries of practitioners into their own professional practice which are directed at improvement appear to be open to the possibilities that life itself permits (ibid.,).

Nevertheless, Whitehead (1985a, p. 97) has noted that

> The form I suggested…for the presentation of our claims to know our own educational development has the capacity to allow the inclusion of the concepts from the disciplines of education whilst being itself irreducible to the form of any of the present disciplines of education

and that as

> the individual presents a claim to educational knowledge the academic community will be able to judge whether or not the work demonstrates an understanding of contemporary accounts in the different disciplines of education. (ibid)

Describing his objections to the disciplines approach to educational research, Whitehead (2004a, italics in original) reflected that

> When I began teaching in 1967 the disciplines approach was already well established and was based on the wholly admirable desire to, *"… make an end to the undifferentiated mush that is often perpetrated under the heading of educational theory before the different types of question have been distinguished; but we must make sure that the research and training carried out under the aegis of the different disciplines is brought together again in an integrated conversation on matters of common concern. In fact I am making in a concrete way the logical point that 'integration' is inseparable from 'differentiation'.* Peters, 1964 p.77'.

What is more, Whitehead (1995, p. 144) also reflected that

> as a student at the London Institute of Education (1968 - 72) I was presented with the differentiated forms of thought in the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education as if these disciplines constituted 'educational theory'.

Similarly, Whitehead (1995 p.145.) explained

> that the dominant view, known as the 'disciplines' approach was constituted by the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education

and that he has rejected this view because it could not produce an adequate explanation for his educational development and the development of the pupils he taught.

He also contended that

> I have sought to replace the view that educational theory is constituted by the disciplines of education with the view that educational theory is constituted by the descriptions and explanations which individual learners produce for their own educational development as they answer questions of the kind, 'how do I live my values more fully in my practice?'. (ibid)

Moreover, Whitehead (1989b) reflectively noted that as a teacher he needed to feel confident that the profession possessed an educational theory which could relate directly to educational practice in classrooms, yet

> when I compared the dominant disciplines approach to theory, with my reflections on my classroom practice…this approach failed to produce a description and explanation for my professional practice.

Likewise, he also noted that his concern is that over thirty years have been wasted by academics in the development of educational theories which did not have a dialogical form and that by this he means

> that they did not describe and explain education as a process of coming to understanding through question and answer. Instead of working at this insight academics working in the dominant paradigm in the 1950s chose to examine education with methods derived from positivist science.

Hence, the reason for Whitehead's rejection of the "disciplines approach" to educational research is its being grounded and embedded in propositional logic and forms.

Whitehead (1989a) contended that he is

> arguing that the propositional form is masking the living form and content of an educational theory which can generate valid descriptions and explanations for the educational development of individuals.

He still nevertheless maintained that

> this is not to deny the importance of propositional forms of understanding" for "I am arguing for a reconstruction of educational theory into a living form of question and answer which includes propositional contributions from the traditional disciplines of education.

Whitehead (1989b) indeed explained and clarified that in constructing an alternative to the disciplines approach he has sought to show where insights from this approach can be integrated within the living alternative and that

> this has required the rejection of fundamental assumptions. I am thinking of the rejection of propositional forms of educational theory. The rejection of the clarification of the meaning of values solely through conceptual analysis, and the rejection of a solely linguistic approach to generalisability.

He defined generalisability as "something which applies to or can be used by all" and contended that

> to the extent that a community can be shown to be sharing a form of life in their research activities I would say that the approach was generalisable.

Whitehead (1991; in 1993, p. 81) in fact noted that

my worry is that you have replaced the ideological hegemony of the disciplines approach with the hegemony of your own critical/interpretative and thus propositional forms which are clearly identified through their organising concepts as a philosophy of education (Carr 1989 and Carr and Kemmis 1986, Rudduck 1989), a sociology of education (Whitty 1986) a history of education (Hamilton 1989, 1990) and a psychology of education (Calderhead 1988).

He explained that he views these texts as having "value for my educational discourse" but at the same time also as texts which "contain no synthesis which enables education to be viewed in a way which is holistic and dynamic".

Whitehead also argued that even the originators of the "disciplines approach" to educational research and theory no longer support it and thus Whitehead's criticism is well placed.

Whitehead (1995 p.127.) indeed pointed out that one of the originators of this approach (Hirst 1983) acknowledged his mistake in believing that educational theory was constituted by the disciplines of education and subsequently went on to advise educational researchers to focus their attention on operationally effective practical discourse as the basis for generating and testing educational theory. Likewise, Whitehead (1989a) cited Hirst's (1983) acknowledgment of his own mistake in advocating the 'disciplines approach to educational theory'.

The citation from Hirst (1983) used by Whitehead (1989a, italics in the original) is,

> *It is not so much that what I wrote in 1966 was mistaken as that what I omitted led to a distorting emphasis. Educational theory I still see as concerned with determining rationally defensible principles for educational practice.*" (Hirst, 1983).

Whitehead (1989a) then went on to criticise Elliott (1987) for treating Hirst (1983) rather gently and choosing a statement which does not fully acknowledge Hirst's mistake in advocating the 'disciplines approach to educational theory'.

In fact Whitehead (1989a) suggested that

> Because our views about educational theory affect the way we see human existence I believe it is imperative to acknowledge that mistakes have been made and to understand the nature of these mistakes so that we can move forward.

He then noted that Paul Hirst has in fact made a most generous acknowledgement that he was mistaken in his view of educational theory.

He pointed out that

> In many characterisations of educational theory, my own included, principles justified in this way have until recently been regarded as at best pragmatic maxims having a first crude and superficial justification in practice that in any rationally developed theory would be replaced by principles with more fundamental, theoretical, justification. That now seems to me to be a mistake (Hirst 1983).

Similarly, Whitehead (1991, in 1993 p.91.) contended that

> the disciplines approach to education research (dominant in the 1960s and 1970s) was both mistaken (Hirst 1983) and exercising a damaging influence on the views of teachers and academics" due to "the ideological power of its proponents.

Indeed Whitehead (1989a) also contended that "both Hirst and Elliott are making a mistake in their view of rationality" since

> they both subscribe to a view of rationality which leads them to use a propositional form of discourse in their characterisations of educational theory.

He noted his desire to advocate

> that the propositional form of discourse in the disciplines of education should be incorporated within a living form of theory [which] should not be seen in purely propositional terms [but rather] to exist in the lives of practitioners as they reflect on the implications of asking themselves questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?'.

This form of criticism has led Whitehead (1989a) to introduce his own living, embodied, dialectical, reflective and dialogical heuristic and methodological tool, solution and approach, to educational, action and practitioner, reflective, research.

Whitehead (1995, p. 4) clarified that

> I have called this view, 'living educational theory', because I see it as an explanation of a present practice in terms of an evaluation of the past together with an intention to create something which is not yet in existence

and that

> It is the inclusion of an intention, in the sense of a commitment to project oneself into the future in a way which is believed will improve matters, which constitute the explanation as 'living'. (ibid)

He explained that what makes it an alternative to the traditional educational theory is that it is

> constituted by the descriptions and explanations which individual learners are producing for their own educational development

rather than by what Whitehead (1989a) described as

> a general explanatory framework which can generate descriptions and explanations for empirically observed regularities and the behaviour of individual cases

that are offered

in the conceptual terms of propositions which define determinate relationships between variables…[which] involve grasping principles thus ensuring that theories are presented in general terms.

Consequently, Whitehead (1989a) noted that he wished to differentiate between his own activities as the developer and user of the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research and the activities of a philosopher, psychologist, sociologist or historian because, although he valued "their contributions to education", he was not convinced that "an educational theory can be adequately characterised by any of them". Indeed Whitehead (1995 p.152.) explained his movement from the traditional "disciplines approach" to educational theory and research into a more personal, dialogical and dialectical approach to and form of educational theory and research.

Peters, one of the developer of the disciplines approach to educational theory that Whitehead criticises, has used a Kantian form of transcendental deduction to justify his ethical principles, while Whitehead claimed that he tended to ground his principles in his personal knowledge in Polanyi's sense that he has made a decision to understand the world from his point of view as an individual claiming originality and exercising his judgement and responsibly with universal intent. Whitehead noted that that as a teacher he accepted this responsibility.

Furthermore, in the section **6) WHICH POWER RELATIONS INFLUENCE THE ACADEMIC LEGITIMACY OF A LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY? - A QUESTION OF THE POLITICS OF TRUTH** (bold and capitalisation in original) Whitehead (1989a) noted that

> In his work on Educational Theory and Social Change, Pritchard (1988) says that the questions are: "How much do we wish to see, How much do we wish to understand? What conceptions, and alternative conceptions, of human practices do we have that will enable us to enhance and significantly enrich life and well-being?

He added that "Pritchard argues that we urgently need studies within educational theory which will serve to demystify institutions and to unmask ideologies" and concludes that,

> *It is evident that the attempt to 'raid' the disciplines of education and to use materials drawn from these areas without considerable theoretical understanding and support is ill-advised and, ultimately, is based upon an incoherent conception of the theory of education.*" (italics in original).

I was taken by Whitehead's reflections about the need for a different logic to the traditional one and for a different heuristic and methodological means of theorising human practices and developments. I could very much relate to this reflection within my own conclusions from my critical psychology work from the 1990s in the course of developing my critique of the traditional approaches to theorising the human subject.

iii. Whitehead's dialectical alternative

Discussing dialectics, Whitehead (2009b, italics in the original) wrote that whilst

> the propositional logic of 'if this-then' that reasoning, can be appreciated in the statement: *If you permit that report to go to Senate in that form you are denying the fundamental responsibilities of being an Academic...*the nucleus of living contradiction in dialectical logic can be experienced in my pausing at the door feeling totally defeated and then in the surge of the values-energized response that includes my propositional if-then logic. *If you allow that report to be made public you are denying some of the fundamental* values of what it means to be a scholar and academic. If you don't recognize the pressure to which I've been subjected to in this institution since I came here in relation to my research you are opening the doors to other abuses in relation to this institution.

Consequently, he clarified that the second epistemology, after the first and the traditional propositional epistemology is grounded in dialectical logic as set out by Ilyenkov (1977).

> Contradiction is the nucleus of dialectics and change is explained in terms of the Law of the Unity and Conflict of Opposites, the Law of the Negation of the Negation and the Law of the Passage of Quantitative Change into Qualitative Change. In asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' I could see and feel myself, with the help of video-tapes of my practice, existing as a living contradiction as I held together my values together with their negation in my practice. I have explicated my dialectical epistemology in a creation of a discipline of educational enquiry in my doctoral thesis (Whitehead, 1999). Eames' (1995) thesis includes conversations in which he is showing the growth of his understanding of dialectics within our conversations in which I am focusing on Ilyenkov's meanings of dialectical logic.

Instead of the traditional propositional grounding, Whitehead has offered for thirty years since 1970 dialectics as a more suitable grounding for research and theorisation of educational research, educational knowledge, and epistemological, educational and ontological development of educators and educational research. He sought to turn the dialectics into a living, embodied and developing form of theory and the theorisation of educational practices and the developments of educational researchers and practitioners.

He told his supervisees in his series of notes from October, 2006, that

> there is a history of some 2,500 years of debate between formal logicians and dialecticians about the validity of their logics. Formal logicians reject dialectical logic on the grounds that it is based on nothing better than a loose and woolly way of speaking and entirely useless in theory. Popper (1963, p.317) has given a very clear demonstration of how the laws of propositional logic exclude dialectical logic as a valid form of reasoning. However, dialecticians such as Marcuse (1964) claim that propositional theories mask the dialectical nature of reality and offer persuasive arguments to show the limitations of propositional theories for comprehending the nature of reality.

Whitehead drew on Popper's and Marcuse's understanding of dialectics (which permits the use of propositions and the propositional logic, while the propositional logic tends to reject the dialectical) in his critique of the propositional logic as being limited and mechanistic in educational research and development. He was influenced by and repeating Collingwood (1939) and Gadamer (1975) as I shall show below. This formed a significant part in my attraction to and use of LET in 2003 and 2004.

However, alas, since 2003 he has gradually and systematically been abandoning the dialectical approach and claiming that he has been able to transform the dialectics into a more suitable grounding for LET approach which he defines as "inclusionality".

I disagree with this movement away from the dialectics into this 'third logic and epistemology of inclusionality', and consider it to be counterproductive and even destructive for the development of the LET approach. In my view, 'inclusionality' provides a poor analysis, re-evaluation and explanation, and seeks to draw and base itself on the emotional response of the engager rather than on his/her intellect. This movement alienated me from the LET approach and my initial intention of directly developing, improving and transforming it from the inside. Instead, I moved back into critical psychology and applied therapy and catharsis as I thought this act could extend the influence of LET from education and educational research to psychology and psychotherapy. I shall discuss and show this movement and transformation of the LET approach from the dialectics to 'inclusionality' below and also show and discuss my reservations about the 'third logic and epistemology of inclusionality'.

Whitehead (1989a) in the section **2) A QUESTION OF ACKNOWLEDGING ONE'S EXISTENCE AS A LIVING CONTRADICTION** (capitalisation and bold in original) contended that

> rather than conceive educational theory as a set of propositional relations from which we generate such descriptions and explanations I am suggesting we produce educational theory in the living form of dialogues (Larter 1987, Jensen 1987) which have their focus in the descriptions and explanations which practitioners are producing for their own value-laden practice.

Whitehead then maintained that

> this capacity of the dialectical approach to integrate within itself the insights from a propositional form is what gives the approach its power to integrate the concepts of the disciplines of education (ibid)

and that

> this power rests upon the imaginative capacity of individuals to relate the concepts to their practical concerns. (ibid)

Accordingly, he outlined the way he believes

a professionally credible educational theory could be generated and tested from a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in educational contexts in order to improve the rationality and justice of: (a) their own educational practices, (b) their understanding of these practices, (c) the situations in which the practices are carried out. (ibid)

He also clarified that he introduced an educational analysis which was focused upon the nature of the validity of an individual action-researcher's claim to know his or her own educational development and that

outlines a form of educational theory which can be generated from professional practice and which can integrate the different contributions of the disciplines of education. (ibid)

He pointed out that although most researchers may find it strange to take a unit of appraisal as their claim to know their educational development, he himseld maintains that the unit is clearly comprehensible.

Similarly,in the section **5) HOW CAN WE MOVE FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE UNIVERSAL? - A QUESTION OF GENERALISABILITY,** (bold and capitalisation in original) Whitehead (1989a) explained that

Instead of thinking of an educational theory in terms of a set of propositional relationships between linguistic concepts I am proposing a view of educational theory as a dynamic and living form whose content changes with the developing public conversations of those involved in its creation (Whitehead & Lomax 1987)

and that the theory is constituted by the practitioners' public descriptions and explanations of their own practice, and is located not solely within these accounts but in the relationship between the accounts and the practice.

He also maintained that it is this relationship which constitutes the descriptions and explanations as a living form of theory and that in being generated from the practices of individuals it has the capacity to relate directly to those practices.

Whitehead (1985a, p. 103) explained that,

the main difference between the traditional view of educational theory and the dialectical approach is that the traditional view was presented in a propositional form which excluded dialectical logic

whilst the dialectical approach

is presented in terms of the forms of life of individuals in education and shows how propositional forms exist within the forms of life. (ibid)

and (1980, p. 4) contended that

education is a process in which individuals are changing and that the logic which can comprehend change, in terms of negating the experience of a negation, is a dialectical logic

and that

the formal logic of the disciplines approach does not include a dialectical logic. (ibid)

In his view, educational theory "is essentially transformatory" in the sense that

structures may exist in the process of transformation but they must not be imposed on the individual. (ibid)

He perceived, in that early publication, the field of educational theory to

exist in the aggregate of explanations for the form of life of individual educators in the educational practice. (p. 5)

At the end of the 1980s, Whitehead (1989a) believed that "the limits of philosophers, whose work I have benefited from, such as Elliott, Carr (1986) and Hirst, are limited by the propositional form of their discourse" since

as philosophers, rather than educationalists, they have not taken the leap necessary to comprehend the nature of educational theory. (Section **6) WHICH POWER RELATIONS INFLUENCE THE ACADEMIC LEGITIMACY OF A LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY? - A QUESTION OF THE POLITICS OF TRUTH)**

He pointed out that he is arguing for a reconstruction of educational theory into a living form of question and answer which includes propositional contributions from the traditional disciplines of education and which whilst existing within the explanations given by practitioners in making sense of their practice do not "characterise the explanation" which is instead

characterised by the logic of question and answer used in the exploration of questions of the form: 'How do I improve my practice?'. (ibid)

This continued into the 1990s, during which Whitehead (1993) was interested in trying to create a dialectical form of educational theory for producing valid explanations for the educational development of an individual.

He elaborated on this point (1993 p.114) when he explained that

Kemmis (1985) meets each criticism clearly and persuasively. Where I see a problem however is with the logical form of both these discourses in that they are purely propositional. Both Gibson and Kemmis appear to believe that they can communicate the nature of action research through the sole use of the propositional form. In my own view of action research, educational knowledge has a dialectical

form which is not amenable to systematic representation in a purely propositional form (Whitehead and Lomax 1987).

Moreover, in his *Advanced Bluffers Guide to Action Research* Whitehead (1995 p.153.) insisted that

> if you wish to test the validity of these propositional claims I am making about my logical standards of judgement I think you will have to study the evidence I have presented to show how my dialectical logic can hold propositional logic within the transition structures of a process of transformation.

All of this continued his late 1980s view (1989a) in the section **2) A QUESTION OF ACKNOWLEDGING ONE'S EXISTENCE AS A LIVING CONTRADICTION** bold and capitalisation in the original**,** that

> Dialecticians claim that the propositional form masks the dialectical nature of reality (Marcuse 1964)

and he explained that

> I traced the tension between these logics to differences between Plato and Aristotle. In Phaedrus, Socrates…says that those thinkers who can hold both the one and the many together he calls dialecticians. Aristotle, on the other hand demands, in his work on interpretation, that the questioner puts his question into a definite form and asks whether or not a person has a particular characteristic or not. Aristotle's propositional logic eliminates contradictions from correct thought.

For Whitehead (1985a, p. 103),

> By beginning with questions, I want to emphasise the dialectical ground of my educational enquiry. By dialectics I mean a process of coming to understand and know through question and answer.

Whitehead (1989a) in the section **6) WHICH POWER RELATIONS INFLUENCE THE ACADEMIC LEGITIMACY OF A LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY? - A QUESTION OF THE POLITICS OF TRUTH** (bold and capitalisation in original) referred to Gadamer (1975) and Collingwood (1939) and noted that

> I certainly see this model embedded in the institutional context of my professional life where it is part of the power relations which structure research and practice

and also in the normative curricula of his professional colleagues in schools because

> even when I question the model of technical rationality, as a practitioner, educator and researcher I am aware that I may be colluding with an institution that perpetuates it. (ibid)

In fact, for Whitehead (1989a) it was crucial to ask the right questions in Collingwood's sense of moving our enquiry forward and that

> Gadamer (1975) points out that despite Plato we are still not ready for a logic of question and answer. He says that Collingwood (1978)…points out that if the meaning of a proposition is relative to the question it answers, its truth must be relative to the same thing. I agree with his point that meaning, agreement and contradiction, truth and falsehood, do not belong to propositions in their own right, they belong only to propositions as the answers to questions. (ibid)

Whitehead then talked of Gadamer's (1975 pp.330-333.). He cited Gadamer's point that

> we come back to the point that the hermeneutic phenomenon also contains within itself the original meaning of conversation and the structure of question and answer (p. 330). (ibid)

Furthermore, reflecting back to his development of the LET approach, Whitehead (2004c) noted that he wished to emphasise his sustained commitment to enquiry learning by going back to his 1980 writing on the ideas of Gadamer that he liked as he could identify with Gadamer's emphasis on the importance of forming a question. Whitehead then recited his 1980 writing that for Gadamer, questioning is a 'passion' and questions are forced upon human beings when our experiences differ from our preconceived opinions. He explained that Gadamer referred to dialectic as the art of conducting a real conversation and sees the art of dialectic as the art of questioning and seeking truth. He added that Gadamer contended that it is not an art in the sense that the Greeks speak of techne (a craft that can be taught and pass the knowledge of truth) and that he (Gadamer) by no means perceives the art of questioning as the art of avoiding pressure of opinion.

Whitehead also pointed out that Gadamer distinguished the unique quality of the art of dialectic using Plato's *Seventh Letter* and stressed that the art of dialectic is by no means the art of being able to win every argument as it is possible for someone who is practising the art of dialectic to come off worse in the argument in the eyes of those listening to it (Gadamer, 1975. p.330). He noted that for Gadamer, dialectic, as the art of asking questions, is only valid and valuable when the person who knows how to ask questions is able to persist in his questioning. He added that he (Whitehead) values this persistence as it enables to preserve one's openness to the possibilities that life itself permits and that the art of questioning is that of being able to continue with one's questions.

I was very much captivated by Whitehead's use of Collingwood and Gadamer's dialectics. I had studied Gadamer's *Truth and Method* in the course of my research at the Hebrew University and considered it to be a masterpiece in hermeneutics and ontology. I was also inspired by Collingwood and his ideas. Whitehead's use of these two authors in his dialectics sparked my imagination and made me want to explore Whitehead's ideas and dialectics.

Gadamer's (1975 pp.330-3) explanation of this point was that arguing that the dialectics is the art of conducting a real conversation and noting that to conduct a conversation does require that one "does not try to out-argue the other person, but that one really considers the weight of the other's opinion". He noted that the dialectics is an art of testing which in turn is the art of questioning since questioning implies laying open and, contrary to the solidity of opinions, making the object and all its possibility fluid. He stressed that as a result a person who

> possesses the 'art' of questioning is a person who is able to prevent the suppression of questions by the dominant opinion. (the section, ***What is my ontological commitment to enquiry learning?***, italics and bold in original)

He added that adequately interpreting an historical text always involves the interpretation which relates to the question it had asked of the interpreter and that this in fact means that the text is able to ask a question of the interpreter and that to understand it implies to understand this question which in turn takes place through achieving the hermeneutical horizon that is now could be seen as the horizon of the question within which the sense of the text is determined. He contended that a person who wants to understand needs to question what lies behind what is said and to understand it as an answer to a question. He added that to go back behind what is being said requires asking questions beyond what is being said. He stressed that in order to fully comprehend the meaning of a text, it is imperative to acquire the horizon of the question which includes other possible answers and thus the meaning of a sentence is comparative to the question to which it is a reply to and goes beyond what it is being said in it.

He concluded that the logic of the human sciences is therefore the logic of the question even though despite Plato we are not very ready for such a logic.

Gadamer (1975 p.333.) pointed out that Collingwood's brilliant and cogent critique of the 'realist' Oxford School had developed the idea of a logic of question and answer, but unfortunately never developed it systematically. Collingwood's (1939) critique and idea of a logic of question and answer appears in the Fifth Chapter, entitled QUESTION AND ANSWER.

It is specifically where Collingwood (1939 pp.33/4.) noted that

> Here I parted company with what I called propositional logic, and its offspring the generally recognized theories of truth. According to propositional logic (under which denomination I include the so-called 'traditional' logic, the 'idealistic' logic of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the 'symbolic' logic of the nineteenth and twentieth) truth or falsehood, which are what logic is chiefly concerned with, belongs to propositions as such

and added in pages 36 and 37 that

> For a logic of propositions I wanted to substitute what I called a logic of question and answer. It seemed to me that truth…was something that belonged not to any

single proposition, not even, as the coherence-theorists maintained, to a complex of propositions taken together; but to a complex consisting of questions and answers.

This important point regarding the rationalisation of the use of the logic of question and answer in the creation of rational and creative scholarly accounts followed Collingwood's point in page 31 that explains to his readers that

you cannot find out what a man means by simply studying his spoken or written statements, even though he has spoken or written with perfect command of language and perfectly truthful intention. In order to find out his meaning you must also know what the question was (a question in his own mind, and presumed to him to be yours) to which the thing he said or written was meant as an answer.

This point in itself is explained in page 35 where Collingwood wrote that

When Plato described thinking as a 'dialogue of the soul with itself', he meant (as we know from his own dialogues) that it was a process of question and answer, and that of these two elements the primacy belongs to the questioning activity, the Socrates within us. When Kant said that it takes a wise man to know what questions he can reasonably ask, he was in effect repudiating a merely propositional logic and demanding a logic of question and answer.

This rationalisation and validation of the construction of a reflective and creative, auto-dialogical self-dialectical account on the part of Collingwood is followed by Collingwood's (1939 p.37.) explanation that

The structure of this complex had, of course, never been studied by propositional logic; but with help from Bacon, Descartes, and others I could hazard a few statements about it. Each question and each answer in a given complex had to be relevant or appropriate, had to 'belong' both to the whole and to the place it occupied in the whole. Each question had to 'arise'; there must be that about it whose absence we condemn when we refuse to answer a question on the ground that 'it doesn't arise'. Each answer must be 'the right answer to the question it professes to answer'. By 'right' I do not mean 'true'. The 'right' answer to a question is the answer which enables us to get ahead with the process of questioning and answering. Cases are quite common in which the 'right' answer to a question is 'false'; for example, cases in which a thinker is following a false scent, either inadvertently or in order to construct a *reductio ad absurdum*.

This in turn is followed by Collingwood's points in pages 38 and 39 that

What is ordinarily meant when a proposition is called 'true', I thought, was this: (a) the proposition belongs to a question-and-answer complex which as a whole is 'true' in the proper sense of the word; (b) within this complex it is an answer to a certain question; (c) the question is what we ordinarily call a sensible or intelligent question, not a silly one, or in my terminology it 'arises'; (d) the proposition is the 'right' answer to that question.

Collingwood stressed that determining and knowing whether a given proposition is true or false, significant or meaningless, depends on what question it was meant to answer and in turn requires finding out the question that it had sought to answer. He

claimed that this means that establishing a proposition as either 'true' or 'false' requires the knowledge of the question it had intended to answer and the acceptance that a 'true' proposition could be thought of as 'false' by an individual who had made an effort to excogitate a question to which it would have been the wrong answer, and who had convinced himself/herself that this in fact was the question it was meant to answer. He added that a significant proposition could be considered as meaningless by any one who had convinced himself/herself that it was indeed intended as an answer to a question which, if it had really been intended to answer it, it would not have been answered at all, either rightly or wrongly.

Moreover, Collingwood then added the following points. He contended that the question that is being asked by the original writer could merely be reconstructed historically, often not without the exercise of considerable historical skill. He pointed out that the question 'to what question did So-and-so intend this proposition as an answer?' constitutes an historical question, and consequently cannot be settled other than through the use of historical methods. He explained that writing in a distant past is generally very difficult as writers always write for their contemporaries, and particularly for those who are 'likely to be interested'. He attributed this difficulty to the fact that this involves those who are already asking the question to which an answer is being offered and in turn implies that a writer could hardly ever explain what question he/she is seeking to answer. He noted that this happens since subsequently, when the writer becomes a 'classic' and his/her contemporaries are all already long dead, the question has been long forgotten. Collingwood then claimed that this is particularly true in cases where the answer which the writer had given was generally accepted as the right one as in that situation people have ceased to ask that particular question and in turn began asking the question that arose next.

Overleaf Collingwood wrote that

> A great deal of the popular dislike of metaphysics is based on grounds of this sort, and is ultimately due to critics who, as we say, did not know what the men they criticized were talking about; that is, did not know what questions their talk was intended to answer; but, with the ordinary malevolence of the idle against the industrious, the ignorant against the learned, the fool against the wise man, wished to have it believed that they were talking nonsense.

Then, in pages 42-3 Collingwood explained his failure to properly develop his critique of the 'realist' Oxford School and the idea of a logic of question and answer in that

> All this, during my spare time in 1917, I wrote out at considerable length, with a great many applications and illustrations, in a book called *Truth and Contradiction.* I went as far as to offer it to a publisher, but was told that the times were hopelessly bad for a book of that kind, and that I had better keep it for the present. The publisher was right on both points. Not only were the times unpropitious, but I was still a beginner in the art of writing books.

A claim that no doubt has led Gadamer to conclude that "Despite Plato we are not very ready for such a logic".

However, Whitehead was not content to merely adapt Gadamer and Collingwood's dialectics of question and answer as more suitable to theorising educational research, practice and development than the traditional propositional logic.

He went a step further and (1985a, p. 101) pointed out that

> The most difficult problem to be overcome in presenting my ideas to others in a comprehensible way concerns the logic of my position. As a dialectician I am aware of the attacks on dialectical logic by such eminent Western philosophers as Karl Popper. Popper (1963) dismissed the use of dialectical logic in the presentation of theories as based on nothing better than a loose and woolly way of speaking. His case rests on the way he thinks about contradictions. The point at issue has been clearly put by Ilyenkov (1977): *Contradiction as the concrete unity of mutually exclusive opposites is the real nucleus of dialectics, its central category . . . but no small difficulty immediately arises as soon as matters touch on 'subjective dialectics', on dialectics as the logic of thinking. If any object is a living contradiction, what must the thought (statement about the object) be that expresses it? Can and should an objective contradiction find reflection in thought? And if so, in what form?* (italics in original).

Hence what Whitehead noted here is that this problem in fact occurs at the point where a creative direct self-dialectical heuristic enquiry into the question, how do I improve my practice?, cannot be embraced and validated within a traditional wholly propositional validation of the account. Thus the problem of rejection, namely invalidation, appears where the traditional wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated, predicting, profiling and generalising, essence of the heuristic account of a particular phenomenon is dismissing the suggested living, creative, embodied, dialectical, auto-dialogical and dialogical logic of the submitted enquiry, as contradicting the very ontological, epistemological and methodological, essence of the mode of validation. As the propositional logic and epistemological structure in its very essence cannot include contradictions and inclines to validate a particular explanation based on its manner of invalidating the contradictory explanations for the phenomenon under scrutiny and explanation, it cannot include a logic that contradicts itself (the propositional logic, epistemological structure and form of validation).

Whitehead drew on two ideas in his way of heuristically solving this issue. The first idea is his entertainment of the possibility of a limitation in Ilyenkov's (1977 p.9) perception of the dialectical logic as

> The concretisation of the general definition of Logic presented above must obviously consist in disclosing the concepts composing it, above the concept of thought (thinking). Here again a purely dialectical difficulty arises, Namely, that to define this concept fully, i.e. concretely, also means to 'write' Logic, because a full definition cannot by any means be given by a 'definition' but only by 'developing the essence of the matter. (ibid)

Whitehead's criticism of Ilyeknov is practical and simple. Since 2004 he has been reflecting back on and reviewing his academic practice of developing the LET approach and clarifying it for himself and others. He (2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d) has been noting that he is using propositional, dialectic and living/inclusional logics to provide a coherent rationale for understanding values and energy as explanatory principles, which emerge through the enquiry and the development of accounts that communicate them. Going back to reflect on the influence of the dialecticians on him, he argued that the limitation appears in terms of

> Ilyenkov's commitment to 'write' logic, rather than to explore the implications for the development of a living logic in his own form of life (Whitehead, 2007).

The living logic is derived from Whitehead's second influence from Marcuse's (1964 p.105.) view of logic

> as a mode of thought that is appropriate for comprehending the real as rational.

In his dialectical stage of LET, Whitehead believed that Ilyenkov's decision to 'write' logic, constrained Ilyenkov to work within the limitations imposed by the elimination of contradictions between statements in the Aristotelian Law of Contradiction, even while writing about contradictions and that Ilyenkov in turn became stuck with the problem of finding an appropriate form of representation for a living contradiction.

Whitehead's heuristic solution is grounded and embodied within the practice of creatively carrying out the professional practice under scrutiny and explanation and the endeavour to relate to it within the question: how do I improve my practice?, so as to actually summon up, develop, create, recreate and transform a real and well-rationalised practice improvement. It is a practical and pragmatic type of research that is included within the theoretical and philosophical suppositions of the methodological tool, orientation and approach of AR. As such, it is assessed and re-evaluated by the quality of its response in real-life action to the research question, the quality of the systematic and creative reflection in and on action, and the extent and merit of its achievement of valuable, creative and practical results that amount to real-life improvement of practice, coupled with the quality of its dialogical, creative and self-dialectical explanation, analysis, re-evaluation, description and rationalisation to peers and colleagues of the entire process of enquiry.

iv. The construction, legitimacy and validation of LET Accounts

Most of Whitehead's practice and publication is about the development of appropriate standards of judgement and unit of appraisal for the legitimacy and validation of the LET approach and the construction of living educational theories, namely the explanations of educational practices and developments by professional practitioners who turn evaluators and theorists of their own educational practices and professional, ontological, educational and epistemological developments.

For Whitehead (1989a),

> Questions of validity are fundamentally important in all research which is concerned with the generation and testing of theory (section **'4) HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WHAT THE RESEARCHER SAYS IS TRUE? - A QUESTION OF VALIDITY'** bold and capitalisation in original

and

> researchers need to know what to use as the unit of appraisal and the standards of judgement in order to test a claim to educational knowledge. (ibid)

In the early 1990s, Whitehead (1991,in 1993 p. 67) reflected that his

> attempts to gain academic legitimacy for this dialectical approach to educational knowledge developed into questions concerning the good order and politics of truth in a University (Whitehead 1985b)

and that

> these have led to the questions in this paper concerning educational action research and social evolution (ibid)

and his exploration of

> the potential of an individual's action research, for linking educational theory and the politics of educational knowledge with social evolution, in the context of academic and institutional management. (ibid)

Furthermore, in his *Advanced Bluffers Guide to Action Research*, Whitehead (1995 p.138.) reflected that

> So much of my research has been focused on epistemological questions concerning the appropriate standards of judgement for testing the validity of an individual's claim to know their own educational development.

What is more, Whitehead (1985c) added that he used

> methodological, logical, ethical and aesthetic standards to judge the validity of the claim to knowledge (Whitehead and Foster 1984) within this specific unit of appraisal.

According to Whitehead (1985a p.104.), education is a

> form of art in the sense that the individual is attempting to give a form to his or her life in a way which does not violate the integrity of other individuals.

He used the term aesthetic in relation to the art of the dialectician in holding together both the one enquiry and the many enquiries. He pointed out that he used in judging

the authenticity of the claim to knowledge an approach which he terms, following Holbrook (1979), 'indwelling' and which

> use involves an ability on the part of the reader to empathize (through written, aural and visual records) with another individual's form of life as it is presented in a claim to knowledge and, through 'delicate intuitions, imagination and respect' (Russell, 1916), to judge whether or not the form of life can be seen in terms of the quality of human relationships in which the unity of humanity appears to be possible. (p. 105)

He added that he believed that his "findings will be of use to those teacher-researchers who wish to justify their own claims to knowledge to the academic community" and that the approach to educational theory that he is proposing

> rests on a number of assumptions concerning both the idea of a 'living form of theory' and the personal and social criteria which can be used to criticise the theory. (p. 105)

Twenty years later, Whitehead (2004a) still maintained that he distinguished between data and evidence and perceives data "as the information that is collected during an enquiry" and evidence as "data that is used to support or refute a belief, assertion, hypothesis or claim to knowledge" and that in turn a self report that explains an individual's learning at a particular time "can itself become data and used as evidence in a later report that explains the transformations in learning through time"; an act which makes it that "data only becomes evidence in relation to testing the validity of a belief or claim to know".

In the mid-1980s, Whitehead (1985a) held the view that

> every educational action-researcher has a part to play in the development of the profession. Teacher action-researchers must be prepared to make public the educational theory which is embodied in their practices. Academic action researchers must be prepared to help to establish the standards of judgment which are appropriate for judging the validity of such claims to knowledge. Administrator action-researchers must be prepared to show in what sense their activities are sustaining or improving the quality of education with the pupils in their institutions. (p. 106)

Yet, almost fifteen years later Whitehead (1999 p.21.) was still claiming that

> There is some dispute amongst philosophers about the nature of the standards which can be used to criticise a claim to knowledge

and therefore

> in criticising a claim to knowledge it is important to be clear about the unit and the standards of judgement which can legitimately be used in the criticism…The unit of appraisal in my conception of educational theory is the individual's claim to know his or her own educational development. I use both personal and social standards in justifying my own claims to know my own educational development.

The earlier Whitehead used Popper and Lakatos' ideas for the explanation of what a unit of appraisal is Whitehead (1985a). He defined in that paper the term unit of appraisal as

> Whatever is being criticized is known as the unit of appraisal. (p. 99)

He added that the work being criticized can be a single hypothesis of theory (Popper 1972) or a research programme (Lakatos 1972). He drew on Polanyi's idea of personal knowledge and particularly on Polanyi's (1958, 1966; Polanyi and Prosch, 1975) emphasis on personal knowledge and a person's commitment to his/her direct and personal knowing of the world and his/her own personal and embodied knowledge for the development of the unit of appraisal of the LET approach and LET accounts turned theories of educational practices and developments.

Whitehead (1985a, pp. 102-3) clarified that

> In the justification of a claim for scientific status for the individual's claim to know his or her own educational development I advocated the use of criteria from the work of Popper…I check to see whether or not the claim to know my own educational development conforms to the cycle of experiencing and formulating problems, imagining a solution, acting on the imagined solution, evaluating the outcomes and modifying the problems and ideas.

At the end of the 1980s, Whitehead (1989a), in the sedction **4) HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WHAT THE RESEARCHER SAYS IS TRUE? - A QUESTION OF VALIDITY** (bold and capitalisation in original) reiterated his suggestions regarding the unit of appraisal of the LET approach and explained that his commitment to this owed a great deal to the work of Michael Polanyi since the early 1970s.

He stated that

> Polanyi's work fulfilled its purpose…[of] stripping away the crippling mutilations which centuries of objectivist thought have imposed on the minds of men.

Whitehead (1991, in 1993 p. 78) wrote that constructing an educational theory from the explanations which individuals produce for their own educational development can reveal

> what it means to empower a teacher to speak on his own behalf rather than for me, as a researcher, to make a claim to knowledge about the professional learning of teachers without enabling teachers to speak for themselves

and subsequently to enable educators to share

> our stories of our educational influences in our own learning and in the learning of others that are grounded in our ways of being in the world that engage with the workings of power, values and perception. (ibid)

Whitehead also suggested that he

> will be helping to gather evidence and to evaluate the practitioners' research reports in an attempt to see if it is possible to produce reports in which both the pupils and the teachers are speaking on their own behalf (p. 80)

and that

> in seeing my contribution to educational management as a form of educative relationship I think my claims to educational knowledge of such relationships rest upon the acknowledgement by others of the value they have found in my activities, research and writings. (ibid)

By the mid 1980s, reflecting on his works since the 1970s, Whitehead (1985a p.100) considered LET to be epistemologically grounded in Personal Knowledge and that

> I am conscious that I have taken a decision to understand the world from my own point of view, as a person claiming originality and exercising his personal judgement responsibly with universal intent. This commitment determines the nature of the unit of appraisal in my claim to knowledge.

He cited the following insight from Polanyi (1958)[5], (ibid)

> No one can utter more than a responsible commitment of his own, and this completely fulfils his responsibility for finding the truth and telling it. Whether or not it is the truth can be hazarded only by another, equally responsible commitment

and noted,

> I would remind readers that they should always bear Polanyi's point in mind and approach their own claims to knowledge in a creative and critical way as individuals who have made a decision to understand the world from their own point of view, and who are claiming originality and exercising their judgments with universal intent. (pp. 105-6)

Nonetheless, Whitehead added in that publication that he also

> examined the possibility of moving from such a dialectical base into a living form of educational theory. (ibid)

As for the standards of judgement of the LET approach, Whitehead contended that the standards of judgement are to be made public by showing and communicating their use in the learning, practice and reflecting on the practice and the learning as an individual practitioner's educational theory that is to be shared and utilised by other practitioners teachers-researchers in the field of education. He has consistently used

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[5] I have seen this citation from Polanyi in both Polanyi (1966, pp. 77-8) and Polanyi and Prosch (1975, p. 194) in a collection of lectures by Polanyi at the universities of Texas, Chicago and Oxford from the 1960s.

values as standards of judgement in the creation of living educational theory accounts.

Indeed Whitehead (1985a, p. 101) clarified that

> the personal and social standards I use to judge the academic legitimacy of my claim to knowledge are the values I use in giving my life its particular form in education

and that

> "in judging my own claim to educational knowledge I use…logical, scientific, ethical and aesthetic values". (ibid)

He thereby pointed out that the LET approach

> draws on the practitioners' educational values that are employed by them as their standards of judgement in giving their life its particular form in education through their practice and their desire to improve it and to fully realise themselves as the practitioners. (ibid)

Similarly, Whitehead (1989a) explained that the reason that values are fundamental to educational theory is that education "is a value-laden practical activity" and thus

> we cannot distinguish a process as education without making a value-judgement.

He also noted that he is

> taking such values to be the human goals which we use to give our lives their particular form.

Thus, according to Whitehead (1991, in 1993 p. 75),

> if action research is characterised by a particular form of systematic enquiry then there is no necessity to justify the value base of the enquiry in defining the research as 'action research'.

He noted that he wished to avoid restricting his view of 'educational development' to the traditional view of educational institutions such as schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities as he viewed any development in which individuals are learning what it means to live more fully their values in their practice as potentially 'educational' and subsequently

> action research could, in these terms, be used to increase the efficiency of activities which could be morally unacceptable. (p. 74)

He wrote that in claiming that his research is 'educational' he is committing himself to upholding the values of good order and specified that

I am not willing to accept the term 'educational' to describe activities which are undermining these values

and that

in undertaking educational action research I accept the responsibility of making public the values which I use to characterise my activities as 'educational'. (p. 75)

He added that

in showing what it means for an individual's educational development to try to live by the values which are embodied in the Academic Assembly's notion of good order and in trying to ensure the ascendancy of the power of truth over the truth of power I am attempting to establish a basis for a socially orientated, educational action research. (p. 75)

Whitehead maintained this view into the 1990s, as we can see when he (1995, p. 144) explained that he sought to show "the gradual emergence of the meanings of the educational values" which he utilised to test the validity of his "claim to educational knowledge" and "to have participated in a good quality human enquiry".

He noted his recognition

that everything I am claiming about what constitutes the good in my human enquiry rests upon a relationship between the values I attach to education. (ibid)

He maintained that he distinguished between AR and educational AR in terms of values and emphasised that he believes that the *'How do I improve my practice?'* enquiry

has moral significance because of the values which constitute a practice as 'educational'. (p. 139)

As his work continued into the next century, Whitehead (2004a) *in the section* ***Significance of the question*** (bold and italics in original) still identified the LET approach as a

form of research that requires of the researcher a willingness to hold himself or herself to account in terms of values… [and] offer the account for public validation as a contribution to educational knowledge (underlining in original).

He explained that this was

to say that the values-based standards must be comprehended by others in order to publicly test the validity of the account with the researchers own standards underlining in original) (ibid)

and thus

the validity of these standards, within an open society, must be open to question. (ibid)

He stressed the importance of ensuring that the values-based standards of judgement, that are being used by the s-step researcher, can be communicated for use in public tests of validity and noted that these helpful linguistic assertions can be related to the recognition of what counts as evidence of the values-based standards of judgement that are emerging from s-step research.

He also emphasised that he was

> thinking of the evidence that shows the transformation of embodied values into communicable standards of judgement for testing the validity of the contributions to educational knowledge of s-step researchers. (ibid)

Similarly, at that time, Whitehead (2004b, p. 7, Introduction Part II) noted that he was

> thinking of the values and standards we use to account to ourselves for the worthwhileness of our lives and to account for our lives to others in explanations of what we are doing and learning.

Thus, according to Whitehead, a theory should also be able to answer questions concerning why things happen and thus

> in the approach to educational theory advocated here the 'why' questions are answered in terms of 'value'. (ibid)

He noted that in his view of education and educational research "values-based standards characterise educational judgements" and that

> this process of communication involved the clarification of the meanings of her values as they emerged in her practice of community and enquiry (ibid)

and subsequently

> the development of educational judgements by s-step [the American Educational Research Association Special Interest Group of Self Study of Teacher Educational Practice, AS] researchers requires an understanding of how the embodied values of educational practitioners can be transformed into communicable standards of judgement for publicly testing the validity of the evidence in educational knowledge-claims (Whitehead, 1999, 2000, 2002). (ibid)

He contended that "the procedures being used to validate educational knowledge" are "focused on values-based standards" and noted his conviction that

> the values-base brings something distinctively ontological into s-step research because of the nature of 'first person' or 'I' enquiries provide an ontological connection to the epistemological standards. (Section **Exploring the educational implications of inclusional ways of being** bold in original)

Since the 1980s Whitehead (1985a, p. 102) has stipulated that

> since the meaning of values cannot be expressed in a purely linguistic form of discourse, they must… be shown in action

and consequently

> it will be necessary for whoever is validating the claim to knowledge to use ostensive, as well as linguistic, criticism, in judging this aspect of the claim to knowledge. (ibid)

He noted that he does not believe that values are the type of qualities whose meanings can be communicated solely through a propositional form. He thus spoke of his

> rejection of the clarification of the meaning of values solely through conceptual analysis, and the rejection of a solely linguistic approach to generalisability. (p. 103)

Even earlier, Whitehead (1980) contended that "to communicate my meaning to you I must point to my practice to show you my values in the practice" since "linguistic definition is inadequate as a medium for the clear expression of educational values" and therefore "needs to be supplemented by ostensive definition for a clear communication of the nature of educational values" for "these values can only be fully understood in relation to practice" and the "the necessity of "pointing to practice' (ostensive definition) prevents the separation of theory from practice in the constitution of educational theory".

Indeed, at the end of that decade, Whitehead (1989b) concluded by saying

> I'll leave you as you might expect with educational enquiries which I think we should all work on because of our commitment to social justice, intellectual integrity, and faith in a more peaceful and productive world. How do we live more fully our educational values in our work and other social relations? (paragraph before last)

He distinguished this commitment as a form of academic AR.

Even almost fifteen years later, Whitehead (2004a) in the section ***Evidence from s-step research*** (bold and italics in original), noted that

> where there is still much work to be done is in developing the shared understandings of the values-based standards of judgement used by examiners of s-step accounts.

This echoed his (1985a, p. 97) suggestion that

> Because of a desire to give a correct account of the nature of educational theory I want to hold up the value-laden nature of my claim to knowledge for public

criticism. I want you to understand and accept for good reasons, the normative background of my ethical values[6].

Hence in the mid 1990s we see that he tried to communicate something of the nature of the human values which

> for me, constitute my enquiry as good [and that] the immanent dialectic within the values are given practice form.   (1995, p. 153)

We can see how later, Whitehead's (2004a) in the section ***Significance of the Question*** (bold and italics in original) note that

> I am suggesting that the unique constellation of values, embodied in the practices of each s-step researcher, moves the researcher to accept a responsibility to account for their own practice and learning in terms of their values. These accounts, in the form of descriptions and explanations of learning, are contributing to the growth of educational knowledge

has continued his earlier (1989b) hope that

> we can share the pleasure and withstand the pain of some collaborative research as we act to show ourselves living our educational values in practice, more fully together, and as we develop our understanding of the constraints which prevent such values being realised in action. (last paragraph)

As early as 1980, Whitehead (1980) criticised "those researchers who continue to pursue educational research as if they were generating knowledge which was value free" and fifteen years later (1995) remarked that "Anderson (1951) gives an early account of this belief that educational researchers should follow the methodologies of the physical sciences" and that "This article is well worth reading as it shows a total disregard for the value-laden nature of education and for the fact that education is a form of art".

I was taken by the idea of using ontological values as epistemological standards of judgement as I thought this will contribute to the treatment of the human subject as an autonomous, value-laden, living, embodied and developing being in, with, and towards the world. Still, I thought the emphasis of the LET approach should be on what these ontological values mean to the practitioner who reflectively and heuristically re-evaluates, theorises and conceptualises his/her practices and professional, educational, ontological and epistemological development in, with, and towards the world. In the next part of this thesis I shall introduce my suggested heuristic means of re-evaluating, explaining and describing the way an individual examines, and is ought to critically analyse, how his/her embodied values contribute to his/her self-fulfilment, ontological security, empowerment and healing and productive relationships with both himself/herself and other people.

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[6] Indeed, Whitehead (1995) explained that he views teaching and education "as a value-laden practical activity" and that he "cannot distinguish something as educational without approving the value of what has been learnt".

I was also captivated by Whitehead's use of Habermas' criteria for human communication for the validation of his LET approach. Indeed Whitehead drew upon the emphasis of Habermas' (1976) on clear, comprehensible, authentic, trustworthy, trustful, true, applied and applicable expression and communication.

Whitehead (1989a) wrote in the section **4) HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WHAT THE RESEARCHER SAYS IS TRUE? - A QUESTION OF VALIDITY** (capitalisation and bold in original)

> Habermas (1976) says that I must choose a comprehensible expression so that we can understand one another. I must have the intention of communicating a true proposition so that we can share my claim to knowledge. I must want to express my intentions truthfully so that we can believe what I say.

In fact, a few years earlier, Whitehead (1985a, p. 98) concluded from his reading of Habermas (1976) that

> From this I take it that the action-researcher has a responsibility to present a claim to knowledge for public criticism in a way which is comprehensible. The researcher must justify the propositional content of what he or she asserts, and justify the values which are used to give a form to the researcher's life in education.

Similarly, Whitehead (1991, reprinted in 1993 p.92.) argued that

> of all the criteria I have mentioned in this paper for judging its validity I wish to return to Habermas' criteria of authenticity where he says that it is only through watching a person through time, in action, will we be able to judge that person's authenticity.

He also (1995 p.152) noted that

> I am also open to submitting my ethical standards to social validation in Habermas' sense that my communication should be comprehensible, it should be explicit about its normative background, it should be authentic in that you can see over time that I truly believe what I say and that I should back up my propositional claims with appropriate evidence.

I was relieved, fulfilled and empowered by this.

Indeed, Habermas' (1976) book commences with the point that he will develop the thesis that in order to act communicably in performing any speech action, what is required is the embracement of the following universal validity claims within a participative process of reaching understanding, and the supposition that they can be either vindicated or redeemed. Habermas listed these universal validity claims as follows:
1. Uttering something understandably.
2. Giving (the hearer) something to understand.
3. Making himself thereby understandable.
4. Coming to an understanding with another person.

Habermas then noted that this implies that the speaker must choose a comprehensible expression in order for both the speaker and the hearer to understand each other. He added that the speaker must hold the intention of communicating a true proposition (or a propositional content, the existential presuppositions of which are satisfied) in order for the hearer to be able to share the knowledge of the speaker. Furthermore, the speaker needs to be willing to express his intentions truthfully in order for the hearer to be able to believe the utterance of the speaker and to trust him/her. Finally, the speaker must choose an utterance that is right in order for the hearer to be able to accept the utterance and for both the speaker and the hearer to be able to agree with one another on the utterance as far as the recognized normative background goes. Moreover, communicative action can merely be carried on uninterruptedly as long as the participants presume that the validity claims that they jointly raise together are justified.

In addition, Whitehead used the following point in Habermas' (1987 p.383.) writing on *The Theory of Communicative Action* in order to rationalise the idea of a LET approach that is directly derived from an enquiry into the theoretician's learning and reflective heuristic enquiring into his/her own learning:

In that chosen extract, Habermas noted that he has sought to free historical materialism from its philosophical ballast and needed the following two abstractions to do so:
i. The abstraction of the development of the cognitive structures from the historical dynamic of events.
ii. The abstraction of the evolution of society from the historical concretion of forms of life.

He explained that these two abstractions have enabled him to transcend the confusion of basic philosophy of history categories and that a theory that is developed in this manner needs to adjust itself to the range of learning processes that is being opened up at a given time by a historically attained level of learning. This is rather than starting by examining existing inherent ideals in traditional forms of life. He added that this theory could take up some of the intentions for which the interdisciplinary research programme of earlier critical theory remains informative. This is whilst needing to abstain from critically evaluating and normatively ordering totalities, forms of life and cultures, and life-contexts and epochs as a whole. Nonetheless, after making this point, Habermas also noted that this suggestion of his, though coming at the end of a complicated study of the main features of a theory of communicative action, could not even count as a "promissory note and is in fact less of a promise than a conjecture".

I was taken by the possibilities that this had for the construction of my own alternative approach. I based the validation of my own construction of self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological, auto-poietic and cathartic educational AR re-evaluations, explanations and description of a human existence and a person's being, living and developing in, with, and towards the world on the criteria of Habermas and Whitehead.

1. 4. The Methodology of the LET Approach

Methodologies are research orientations and approaches that embody philosophical and theoretical orientations, ideologies and methods to implement them. A method, on its part, is a technique and tool of obtaining data and analysing data that falls within the methodology that grounds it. A methodology is therefore the theoretical/philosophical underpinning that governs and sets the methods as its practical tools that collect and analyse the data that support the theory and thesis that the methodology places. In referring to method in this manner, I wish to show the uniqueness of AR and the way I have been drawing on it for my constructive critical psychology of the human subject.

The LET approach has creatively developed the methodology and techniques involved in theorising, re-evaluating, conceptualising and processing, identifying and recreating professional practices. It also attempts to improve the educational development of the practitioner who uses it directly and creatively within a concrete living, embodied, self-dialectical, auto-dialogical and dialogical heuristic enquiry into the question: how do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my educational and ontological values in my professional practice and educational development?

This inventive educational AR methodology involves the enquirer creatively producing, formulating, working out and developing a narrative account of the way in which this enquiry has been developed, created and recreated and worked out over time, space, practice and praxis and a desire to improve what the enquirer is doing and fulfil his/her educational and ontological values as a professional practitioner. It uses self-dialectical AR cycles that Whitehead, McNiff and the living educational theorists at the doctoral and dissertations section of Whitehead (2009b) and McNiff (2010) have worked out and tested in the course of their academic research and that they are now [since 2002/3, AS] seeking to integrate with their endeavours to develop the third 'living' logic and epistemology of 'inclusionality'.

In his application for a Readership I mentioned earlier, Whitehead listed four original ideas that characterise the LET research programme. According to Whitehead, these four ideas provide the explanations and legitimation for postgraduate educators to evaluate their own embodied knowledge, professional, educational, ontological and epistemological development and transformation and learning within their own LET enquiries and accounts.

The educators account for their educational influence

> in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which they live and work (Whitehead, 2006, 2007, 2009b).

They form living epistemological standards of judgement by explaining the meaning of the emerging embodied values. Their 'I' is incorporated as a living contradiction within a living theory through action research cycles. In the course of carrying out

and implementing these AR cycles, the Living Educational Theorist is experiencing concerns when failing to fulfil his/her values. He/she is then imagining the required action within an action plan. Subsequently, he/she is acting upon this action plan and is gathering data in order to validate the action and is then making required amendments according to the evaluations. Then, he/she is accounting for the way in which he/she has been following these methodological procedures and is reporting, analysing and re-evaluating the results of what has taken place in and throughout the enquiry. This takes the form of a self-dialectical, living, embodied and dialogical AR account that bears the title of a question/enquiry in the like of: How do I…? Whitehead (1993, p. 3; 2004b, Introduction) has also suggested

> three original ideas for answering your questions, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', and 'How do I live my values more fully?

He listed them as

> the idea of the inclusion of individuals' own 'I's as living contradictions in research questions of the kind, How do I improve what I am doing?[,] the idea of the integration of individuals' 'I' as a living contradiction in the form of the action reflection cycle [and] the idea concerning the descriptions and explanations of individuals' learning and educational development, in the stories they themselves tell in an attempt to live their values more fully in their practice. (1993, p. 3)

Four original ideas have been developed by Whitehead for the LET approach. They go as follows:

i. The idea of the existence of the autonomous, concrete, dynamic and 'materialistic', "I" who is directly enquiring into and responding to the question, how do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my ontological values as a practitioner and a human being in the course of my educational, epistemological, ontological and professional development and my practicing my professional practice;

ii. The idea of the existence of this autonomous, living, developing and self-forming, 'I' as living contradictions in his/her enquiry into the question: how do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my ontological values as professional practitioner and a human being?

iii. The idea of answering these enquiries through and within AR cycles;

iv. The idea of accounting for the dialectical educational AR enquiries of, how do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my ontological values as a practitioner and a human being as and within the creative stories and accounts that the enquiring 'I' himself/herself constructs out of these enquiries of his/her. This is with an intention to account for, describe and re-evaluate to himself/herself and others his/her professional practices and educational and professional development.

Here I shall discuss the meanings of each of these four ideas and the ways they have been developed by Whitehead.

i. The autonomous, materialistic, living and embodied 'I' in the enquiry, How do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my ontological values in my practice and practice development?

Thirty years ago Whitehead (1980, p. 4) argued that

> the 'I's of individual educators are…conscious and causal agents of change

and that

> this inclusion transforms the traditional view of a scientific explanation of human action. (ibid)

Fifteen years later, this idea of the "I" remained central to his approach. Whitehead (1995) maintained that

> Your own 'I' in a question of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', is both a subject and an object in your enquiry (p. 5).

He then complemented this point in the fourth cycle, when engaging with the question "How do I relate my educational development to a good social order?", and insisted that

> The 'I' in the question is my own and embodies my sense of personal identity (p. 87).

At the end of the 1980s, Whitehead (1989b) noted that "In developing the enquiry I agree with John Elliott (1988) when he says that our visions of methodological possibilities are inevitably framed by our professional biographies" and that Elliott "believes that we would do well to reflect about our biographies in responding to the threat (or challenge) of the commercial culture".

Whitehead also suggested that he would

> go further than John and relate enquiry to the development of our personalities through our research. (paragraph 22)

Fifteen years after making this suggestion, Whitehead (2004a) noted that "because a key word in this Handbook is self-study I do want to be clear that I am not starting with a conceptual definition of the 'Self' in the form of a linguistic abstraction", instead he insisted that "I am starting from the experience of my own enquiring 'I', in questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'", and

> from the assumption that you, I, and others experience the content of our own enquiring 'I' and can make sense of this content. (Introduction)

He added that the evidence of the inclusion of the enquiring 'I' in the titles shows that self-study researchers have been accredited in research degrees with making significant contributions to educational knowledge and educational theory and that

in meeting Snow's (2001) point about the importance of developing agreed-upon procedures for transforming knowledge based on personal experiences of practice into 'public' knowledge, this evidence shows that such procedures are already well established in the Academy. (The Section ***Evidence from s-step research***, italics and bold in original)

He then maintained that whilst three out of the sixteen contributions to Loughran et al's *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher-Education* have a title in the form of questions, these questions are in a form recognised in traditional scholarly discourse as being asked at a level of linguistic generality that does not commit the researchers, through including their own 'I' in their question, to explore the implications of asking a self-study question in relation to their own life and work.

He also contended that whilst

> this is definitely not saying that these self-study researchers have not engaged in self-study…the ways they form their questions do not explicitly focus on a self-study of their own educational practice in a way that would support my point about the contributions of self-study to a logic of educational enquiry. (Introduction)

He then reflected on his educational practice as supervising and supporting LET accounts, listed the legitimated self-study enquiries that have been legitimated as doctoral theses and masters dissertations and noted that

> the evidence of the inclusion of the enquiring 'I' in the titles shows that self-study researchers have been accredited in research degrees with making significant contributions to educational knowledge and educational theory. (ibid)

Yet, almost a decade earlier, in his *Advanced Bluffers Guide to Action Research*, Whitehead (1995 p.91) reflected and explained that

> having assimilated Gadamer's views on the art of conversation and of the necessity of finding a common language. I then found myself disagreeing with the following ideas on the relationship between 'I', 'language' and 'the world'.

He indeed noted that,

> Having agreed with Gadamer up to this point I was disappointed to discover this basic idea which moved his enquiry forward, *"Our enquiry has been guided by the basic idea that language is a central point where 'I' and the world meet or, rather, manifest their original unity." (G. 431)* (italics in the original) (ibid)

and that the

> basic difference between Gadamer's enquiry and my own is that I do not hold that language is a central point where 'I' and the world manifest their original unity. (ibid)

Four years later, Whitehead (1999) elaborated on this earlier insight in a section that he titled "**The problem of conceptualising 'I'**", (pp, 29-34).

He noted in that important section that

> In any attempt to understand my analysis of my educational development it is important to comprehend that 'I' has become a materialist concept whose essence is my personality. (p. 30)

He pointed out his rejection of "Hegel's point that 'I' is the existence of a wholly abstract universality, a principle of abstract freedom" and noted that he is "taking 'I' as a wholly concrete singular which is a principle of concrete freedom".

He summed this idea up as follows:

> It is the necessary internal movement of the object grasped in itself. The generality of the concept is not constituted by eliminating the singular but by raising the singular to the level of its internal logic (i.e. it constitutes the 'specific logic of the specific object'). (p. 33)

He also noted that

> I want to start by claiming that you and I are similar in that you, like me, are conscious of asking yourself a question of the form, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'. (p. 29)

He expressed his conviction that

> the constitution of theoretical possibilities rests upon the study of our developing personalities as we support the power of truth against the truth of power (p. 30)

and that

> research which is educational is necessarily related to the development of the researcher's personality. (p. 30)

He also noted that by personality he means, following Sève (1978) that

> the total system of activity which forms and develops throughout our life and the evolution of which constitutes the essential content of biography (Seve, 1978). (p. 32)

Hence, throughout his writings, Whitehead described the 'I' to be an overt (observable), living, transforming, corporal (embodied), active, self-experiencing and enquiring agent rather than an abstractive, disembodied and detached linguistic sign and concept. As such the 'I' embodies and contains within itself a biography, sense of selfhood, embodied and acquired knowledge, history, materialistic body, embodied and acquired values, feelings, experiences and intentions, and his/her enquiries into how to improve and qualitatively transform himself/herself/itself and his/her/its practices within what he/she/it is doing and is passionate about. This

means that the 'I' is actually living, working out and implementing the enquiry: how do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my embodied ontological values in my practice?

Moreover, according to Whitehead (2004b),

> Given the increasing acceptability of self-study in academic research it may be difficult to appreciate the resistance of the Academy to accept 'I' questions as being legitimate questions of scholarly research. (Introduction)

This is since

> those who are still meeting resistance to these kinds of enquiry now have a substantial body of knowledge to call upon which demonstrates the acceptability of these enquiries in Universities with outstanding international reputations. (ibid)

He added that these questions are in a form recognised in traditional scholarly discourse as being asked at a level of linguistic generality that does not commit the researchers, through including their own 'I' in their question, to explore the implications of asking a self-study question in relation to their own life and work.

He posited himself in his enquiry

> as the concrete singular 'I', who as a materialist 'I', is asking the question, 'How do I improve this process of education here?' (ibid)

He explained that he is looking at the subject of his enquiry as his own 'I' in the process of investigating his problem and noted that

> the point about my dialectical view of 'I' as a materialist concept is that I am attempting to show how in general the concrete singular is produced. (ibid)

Thus, Whitehead challenged the traditional academic assumption that the research subject and the participants in an empirical research study need to be evaluated and critically observed in an objective, impartial and unbiased manner, and in turn cannot evaluate and research themselves and carry out and convey the research directly on themselves. The reason is that this would render the research biased, subjective, unscientific and classified as folk psychology (Wundt, 1890, 1916; Stich, 1983; Christensen and Dale, 1993; Horgan and Woodward, 1985; Wilkes, 1991; Nisbett and Wilson, 1977; Serper, 1999, 2009) as opposed to valid and reliable empirical research. This assumption has been one of the most important fundamental principles of empirical research and has been zealously protected by the academic community.

After establishing and rationalising this idea of a concrete ('materialist'), living, embodied and autonomous 'I' within the enquiry into the question: how do I improve my practice and fulfil my ontological values in my practice?, Whitehead related this idea of an autonomous 'I' with the idea of self-dialectical, living and embodied, form of and approach to educational, action and practitioner research and

a human existence and the enquiry into the question: how do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my values in my practice?. By this he meant a concrete 'I' who draws on the contradiction of failing to fulfil one's ontological values in the course of his/her practice and in turn hindering his/her professional, personal, ontological and educational development in his/her endeavours and who works to self-fulfil, grow and qualitatively and dialectically develop and transform his/her professional practice and development. I shall now look into this idea.

ii. The existence of 'I' as living contradictions in the question: How do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my ontological values in my practice and practice development?

Having described the essence of the first idea of the LET approach, I shall now describe Whitehead's second idea of the existence and auto-experiencing of the 'I' as living contradictions in the question/enquiry, how do I improve my practice? It is this idea that constructs the concrete and applied and living and embodied dialectics and self-dialectics of the LET approach to education, action and practitioner research, and human existence.

In his more recent writings, Whitehead (2005a, 2006, 2009b), when reflecting back on his professional practices, work and achievements, has pointed out that

> the methodology of action research has been significant in generating the living standards of judgement for validating living educational theories in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

and that he is

> thinking here of the systematic form of educational enquiry that can emerge from forming this kind of question in the experience of oneself as a living contradiction.

He then noted that

> by this I mean that the 'I' is aware of holding together the values that give meaning and purpose to one's existence, with the experience that the values are being negated in practice

and that

> this idea of experiencing oneself as a living contradiction appears to stimulate the imaginations of all those I have worked with in generating their living educational theories.

This idea has been central to his development of LET since the end of the 1980s.

The abstract of Whitehead's (1989a) first introduction of his LET approach reads

> This paper argues that a living educational theory of professional practice can be constructed from practitioner's enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve my

practice?'. The significance of 'I' existing as a living contradiction in such enquiries is considered and other epistemological issues related to values, validity and generalisability are discussed from the living perspective.

In this paper, in the section **PRODUCING A LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY** (bold and capitalisation in original)Whitehead (1989a) noted,

> My insights about the nature of educational theory have been influenced by viewing video-tapes of my classroom practice. I could see that the 'I' in the question 'How do I improve this process of education here?', existed as a living contradiction. By this I mean that 'I' contained two mutually exclusive opposites, the experience of holding educational values and the experience of their negation…I began to understand the concrete problems experienced by adherents to dialectical and propositional logics when they try to establish a sustained dialogue. The nucleus of dialectics, contradiction, is eliminated from descriptions and explanations presented in the propositional form (Popper 1963)…I take it that the experience of the negation of educational values moves the enquiry forward and that the values are taken, by the holder, to be concrete universal laws in the sense that we hold our educational values with universal intent.

He also noted that in developing the LET approach he needed to work out the issues of a suitable methodology for enquiries such as, 'How do I improve this process of education here?'. He contended that whilst he has been observing himself as "a living contradiction in my professional practice (Whitehead, 1980)" and in turn needed for the explanation of this practice to embrace such a contradiction, he could not do this within the existing forms of theorising. This is for all forms of theory (including the dialectical one) is presented in propositional discourse and consequently "Theory is presented within propositions which conform to the Law of Contradiction", which rejects the acceptance of two mutually exclusive statements as simultaneously true, and constitutes a collection of determinate relations between a set of variables in accordance with a rather large set of empirically verifiable regularities.

Indeed, at the beginning of the 1980s, Whitehead (1980. p. 25) expressed his concern

> with the failure of many…academics to explore blatant contradictions in their epistemologies.

What he meant by "blatant contradictions" was research that satisfies the researcher as answering the research enquiries and placing evidence in support of the hypothesis, and research that cannot be included and examined in traditional empirical academic research. Traditionally, in academic research, evidence that clearly refutes the research hypothesis means the end of the research, and its evidence in support of the hypothesis under scrutiny that satisfies the researcher as answering the research enquiries.

Still struggling with this problem fifteen years later, Whitehead (1995, p. 154) noted that he recognised

a major problem, almost as great as the problem of contradiction, as soon as I attempt to communicate the ethical values in my claim to know my educational development.

He defined the problem as grounded in the principle known as the autonomy of ethics and asked for the manner in which he is ought to present a claim to know his educational development in a way that truly represents this integration? since the meanings of his ethical values are embodied in his educational practice and thus to judge and submit the ethical status of the values that are practiced

> would require a form of ostensive criticism in which I must present visual records of my practice. (ibid)

He noted:

> Now 'I', 'this' and 'here', are contained within questions of the form, 'How do I improve this process of education here?',

He added that

> In viewing video-tapes of our own educational practices I believe that we can see our own 'I's existing as living contradictions (ibid)

and that

> this revelation, through the visual record, is crucial for the reconstruction of educational theory. (ibid)

He explained that "there is a tendency to reduce the significance of "I" as it appears on a page of text" and that therefore "it is so easy to see the word 'I' and think of this as simply referring to a person" as "the "I" remains formal and is rarely examined for content in itself".

What Whitehead meant here is that the 'I' should be observed as he/she practices what he/she values and intends to implement in concrete, real-world, situations, as opposed to being merely portrayed in abstract, disembodied text. I, myself, believe that the 'I' can explain himself/herself rather well in a piece of quality creative writing that allows more to emotions and self-expression than traditional propositional academic writing.

He continued to argue that

> when you view yourself on video you can see and experience your 'I' containing content in itself…you see yourself as a living contradiction, holding educational values whilst at the same time negating them. (p. 155)

I agree that the human subject is a complex being who can be seen to negate in the course of his/her professional practices what he/she claims to be his/her own ontological values as a human being and a professional practitioner.

Hence I agree with Whitehead, when he asks,

> is it not such tension, caused by this contradiction, which moves us to imagine alternative ways of improving our situation? (p. 158)

and replies that

> By integrating such contradictions in the presentations of our claims to know our educational practice we can construct descriptions and explanations for the educational development of individuals (King 1987). (ibid)

I agree that the act of learning from failures and seeking to amend them forms an important part of educating oneself and of a qualitative educational account of one's learning and self-developing. I think that whilst this dialectics was questioned in the past by hard-line radical empiricists and positivists, who saw learning and cognition as subject which cannot be accounted for empirically, this is no longer the case, and most if not all academics would agree and claim this above statement to be obvious.

On his part, Whitehead (1991, in 1993 p. 67) explained that the paper outlines a dialectical approach to educational action research which attempts to synthesise a process of personal development with a process of social evolution which is characterised as a process of question and answer in which an individual 'I' exists as a living contradiction in questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' and which potential for social evolution is examined in terms of an individual's responses to contradictions in the workplace.

He gave the examples of

> the loss of one's employment, the denial of one's originality, the denial of the right to ask questions, being disciplined for what one writes and then having one's research legitimated in the MEd Curriculum of a University School of Education…the appropriate response to: being sacked; having one's originality and the right to ask questions denied; being told that one's research and teaching were inconsistent with one's duties to the employer; being asked to teach a curriculum based upon the research and writings which were at the focus of the earlier contradictions.

Indeed, as he noted in that paper, that whereas these contradictions are socially and historically located within a particular time and culture, his interests lay

> in exploring the potential significance of the ensuing actions for social evolution (p. 71)

and the possibility that the reader/engager will identify with the experience of "the truth of power" which prevents the individual from practicing his/her profession, asking questions, and contributing to knowledge and summons other power relations in order to prevent the individual from practicing his/her academic position.

I think that whether or not the reader can identify himself/herself with such experiences depends on the authenticity of the account and the reality and authenticity of the events described, analysed and re-evaluated.

He expressed the conviction that the reader/engager can

> identify with these experiences in the historical sense that many other individuals have been subjected to such power relations and that the course of social evolution can partly be understood in terms of the responses which individuals and groups have made to these experiences of oppression (p. 72)

and with the

> responses to the following contradictions in the sense that the reader/engager will feel moved by them to help to generate a living form of educational theory which has implications for social evolution through its goal of human betterment. (ibid)

I still think that it all depends on the authenticity and realism of the account and also on the manner in which it is written and the analysis and re-evaluation of the described events.

I agree with Whitehead that being aware of actually contradicting what is of ontological value to the practitioner-enquirer as a human being and a professional practitioner in the course of the re-evaluation of the practitioner's professional practice can lead to a significant educational development and a qualitative account of that educational development. Still, I believe that a hermeneutic enquiry into the experiences of oneself as a living contradiction require language and a mastery of creative writing.

He (1999) also contended, in opposition to Gadamer, that he has "no understanding of any 'original unity'" and that

> if there is to be unity I see my enquiry as an attempt to understand how to create a unity between 'I' and the world. (p. 33)

As a phenomenologist (Serper, 1999, 2009), I agree with Whitehead that the enquiry into professional practices, developments and transformations need to be applied and concrete and to re-evaluate real-world practices and situations and the relationship and interactions between the professional practitioner, the professional practice and the world in which they are carried out, lived and unfolded. In making this point, I combine Whitehead's work with Shanon's (1993) work into a phenomenological alternative to representational cognitive psychology.

Moreover, Whitehead (1995 pp.107/8) pointed out that he offers his own unit and standards from a dialectical perspective which includes

> the unit of appraisal as a living contradiction's account of their own educational development

He added that

> the process of gaining academic legitimation for a living form of theory is examined in terms of the politics of truth within our Institutions of Higher Education. (ibid)

Hence, Whitehead treated dialectics as the fusion and inclusion of contradictions for the purpose of a qualitative, living and applied transformation of practice and ontology and the educational, professional and ontological development of the practitioner-researcher. He drew on the emotional response of observing oneself practicing the exact opposite of what he/she holds as ontologically valuable, meaningful and productive, to him/her as a practitioner and a human being. His dialectics is far more practical, emotional, applied and concrete than the more academic dialectics of Gadamer, Marcuse, Habermas, Hegel, and Ilyenkov. It is indeed the powerful human-all-too-human emotions of shock, self-dissatisfaction and frustration with oneself that lead the LET dialectician to modify his/her professional practice and develop, transform, empower and actualise/fulfil himself/herself and his/her professional practice.

A few years earlier, Whitehead (1991) noted his conviction that researchers associated with the School of Education of the University of Bath (Elliott 1989; Lomax 1989; McNiff 1988; Whitehead 1989) have been able to make an original contribution to the action research movement through

> the incorporation of 'I' as a living contradiction in explanations for the educational development of individuals. (in 1993 p. 68)

He explained that in his position as a dialectician he suggested that social change and transformation could be conceptualised through the attempts of individuals to "resolve their consciously lived contradictions". He reflected that he himself has been able to appreciate his own existence as a living contradiction in his own enquiry in Ilyenkov's sense of holding "two mutually exclusive opposites together in practice". He also explained that this means that he could experience himself holding specific educational values whilst at the same time denying them in his practice. He illustrated this point through the example of his shutting down his pupils' capacities to learn by enquiry in the way that he had organised his lessons, even though he is valuing these capacities (Whitehead, 1976, 1977, 1980, 1981).

He suggested that this account could be generalised within the manner in which others could identify

> their contradictions with my own and find it useful in making sense of their own lives in their own action enquiry in the workplace. (p. 76)

I like the way Whitehead transformed academic practitioner-research, the dialectics-propositional debate, and educational research and educational AR into applied and concrete real-life situations and not just abstract theories and arguments. I think this could narrow the breach between academic researchers (theorists) and practitioner researchers who work to research, explain and describe their own practices and developments. I used these ideas of Whitehead in the fulfilment of my own desire to

transform and utilise my reading the text of dialecticians into my own concrete and applied form of phenomenological and ontological psychology of the human subject.

Indeed, according to Whitehead (1989a), in the section **3) HOW DO WE SHOW OUR VALUES IN ACTION?** (bold and capitalisation in original), values can be drawn upon as the "reasons for action" when accounting for an individual's educational development. He illustrated this claim through the example of the value of freedom being used as the reason for the action of an individual who is experiencing the negation of freedom whilst believing he/she should be free and is acting in this fashion due to his/her valuing his/her freedom. He also provided the example of the value of democracy being used as the reason for the explanation of the actions of a person who is working to overcome anti-democratic forces in the work place.

He then challenged the academic traditional view that the meanings of values could be conveyed exclusively through a propositional form.

He noted that

> values are embodied in our practice and their meaning can be communicated in the course of their emergence in practice (ibid)

and therefore in order to comprehend the values which transform individuals' educational development we need to

> start with records of our experience of their negation (Larter 1985,1987). (ibid)

I agree that whether values are being implemented and lived in the course of one's life and professional practice needs to be observed in the practice itself, and the way the practitioner understands them and revisits and amends his/her practice when it is evident that his/her values are not being fully lived and implemented in his/her practice. This follows Freire's (1973, 1996, 2004) emphasis on both practice and praxis, action and reflection and the evaluation of the practice and action, in educational research and enquiry.

Whitehead (1995 p.10.) advised his students that

> It is usually worthwhile video-taping a lesson before you design your action plan"

as

> the video-tape is the most powerful reflector of what you are doing and can often reveal contradictions between what you believe yourself to be doing and what you can see yourself doing. (ibid)

I myself believe in and count on the practitioner's intuition and his/her acquired and embodied and tacit expertise and knowledge over years and experience of practice (Dreyfus, 1979; Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1986; Polanyi, 1958, 1966; Polanyi and Prosch, 1975; Shanon, 1993; Schön, 1987). I think the practitioner-enquirer would

sense such contradictions and intuitively work to amend them. I think a video-tape could provide more proof to and backup such intuition but is only secondary in importance to intuition.

He explained that he has referred to this experience in terms of being a living contradiction since

> all the teachers I have worked with have reported the experience of seeing themselves as living contradictions as they recognise, often in a surprising context, that they are not living their educational values as fully as they believed. (ibid)

He also stated that

> it is often the experience of oneself as a living contradiction which stimulates the imagination to think of ways of overcoming this experience in a desired direction (ibid)

and that

> whilst acting to improve your practice it is often useful to gather data which will enable you to make a judgement on the effectiveness of your actions in terms of the pupils' learning. (ibid)

I agree that the educator needs to be continuously attentive to the pupil's progress and to evaluate his/her own progress and development in direct relation to the pupil's development and progress. I can see the influence of Freire's (1973, 1996, 2004) claim about the close interaction between educator and educatee in qualitative education upon Whitehead's research.

I like the straightforward and practical concept of the idea of the practitioner-theorist qualitatively and dialectically transforming his/her professional practice as he/she observes his/her failure to carry out and lead a meaningful and productive practice and professional life and development to himself/herself in the course of which his/her ontological values are being fulfilled and implemented. He/she identifies and re-evaluates this failure and works to amend it in the course of his/her professional practice and development as a practitioner and a human being. I particularly like the self-accountability on the part of the practitioner in evaluating his/her own practice and the use of this learning to self-improve and empower.

Moreover, in the early 1980s, Whitehead presented his dialectical claims in the form of ten research reports (Whitehead 1982) which have been produced since 1972 as he described how he "explored my existence in terms of 'I' as a living contradiction in the School of Education of the University of Bath" and argued that in evaluating the legitimacy of a value-laden claim to knowledge, the individual is faced with the problem of justifying one set of values against another. He also made the point that he is committed to the examination of the implications of attempting to overcome the experience of the negation of the values which provide a particular form to his life within a manner which carries out Habermas' input on the theory of validity.

He argued that this in turn causes a conflict in values which leads to a political struggle which is intensified

> when particular forms of life cut across those of others to the extent of one form negating the value-laden practice of another. (p. 35)

Hence, the argument needs to be clear, fully engaged with, and understood, systematic and well-rationalised by and to the communicator and engager. The communicator and the engager need to understand each other and to be on the 'same page'. I think that a dialectical debate, tension and disagreement can qualitatively transform the particular area and knowledge in question, provided that both sides fully comprehend and are being completely open towards and attentive to each other and to each others' meanings.

However, in the mid-1990s, Whitehead (1995) acknowledged that in his own dialectic he had been influenced by Ilyenkov's question concerning contradiction and drawn on Kosok's ideas in his position that non-linear dialectical process of educational development could be made linear across time through holding propositional claims to knowledge as transition structures in the processes of the transformations which form the educational development. At this point, I think Whitehead's dialectics suffers from over-simplification. He tended to represent dialectics as a single class of reasoning which could be used to constructively critique and challenge the traditional form of educational research and theory. I believe Whitehead ought to have followed Ilyenov's (1977) example and critically engage more with the development of the dialectical tradition over two and a half thousand years, from Plato to the modern dialecticians, in critical thinking and educational, human and social sciences and research, and show how he has been able to follow this development in constructing his LET approach.

Quoting Ilyenkov (1977 p.320.), Whitehead was aware that Ilyenkov argued that Hegel has challenged traditional logic and called for the process of the practical realisation of the assertions, rules, and basic propositions of logic in real thought to which he called an 'immanent dialectic' (Ref. 1, p.187), and that Hegel's conception of thought preceding action was negated by Marx and Engels when they claimed that practice (or production in its broadest sense) was mediated between nature and thought. Indeed, Hegel's conception of dialectics was radically idealistic. Hegel theorised about a dialectical change in history which is always in the same direction and includes a synthesis between two "conflicting" opposites (termed thesis and antithesis). It was Marx who turned Hegel's dialectics from radical idealism into a species of materialism. This led to Engel's *Dialectics of Nature* inclining to reject atomism in favour of a dynamic, evolving conception of matter and forces, wherein natural laws are emerging properties of matter in a state of constant change and interaction and hence should be understood dialectically in terms of evolution (of which history is a special kind). Whitehead claimed that Ilyenkov has failed to answer his question about living contradictions because he was still trying to 'write' logic instead of working to comprehend the nature of a living logic in answers to questions of the kind, 'how do I improve what I am doing?' or 'how do I live my values more fully in my practice?', or 'how do I improve my practice?', or 'how do I

help my students to improve the quality of their learning?'". Whitehead also claimed that he subscribed to Marcuse's acceptance of contradiction in dialectical thinking and agreed with Marcuse's suggestion that the propositional knowledge is masking the knowledge of reality. It should be noted here that Whitehead was focusing on the creation of an alternative heuristic approach to educational research and theory, and he did not engage with a philosophical discussion of logic.

Yet ten years before, Whitehead (1985a p. 104.) remarked that

> since the meaning of values cannot be expressed in a purely linguistic form of discourse, they must…be shown in action

and thus require

> whoever is validating the claim to knowledge to use ostensive, as well as linguistic, criticism, in judging this aspect of the claim to knowledge. (ibid)

I myself believe that values and their meanings could and should be analysed, re-evaluated, conveyed and fully comprehended within a piece of auto-phenomenological and self-dialectical creative writing. Whitehead is referring to the ethical values which he utilises in making decisions "which give a form to my life in education". He draws on value-words such as those of consideration of interest, worth-while activities, respect for persons and democratic forms of social control (due to the influence of Peters, 1966). The meanings of his ethical values are embodied in his educational practice and had emerged in the course of his attempts to overcome their negation (due to the influence of Feyerabend, 1975). I myself agree that the embodied ontological and living values should be observed and re-evaluated in the practice and the way the practice is carried out and unfolded in real-life situations in the real world.

However, increasingly, Whitehead has expressed the need to display visual records of that practice in order to communicate these meanings. He repeatedly pointed out his requirement to demonstrate the places where he is experiencing the denial of his educational values, in order to provide an account of his problems in terms of this denial, and display a programme of activities which could overcome the denial. He noted his need to convey his actions and hold up his evaluations of those actions for the reader's scrutiny and argued that this makes it feasible for an individual to hold up a claim to know his/her educational development

> as an ethical form of life for public scrutiny. (p. 105)

The seeds of this insistence can be seen in his writings from the mid-1980s, when he (1985a) stressed the possibility of the individual producing "a personal form of educational theory" and presenting it for public test which would clearly reveal the meaning of values in action rather than in a purely linguistic form of discourse. He stressed the need for the use of ostensive as well as linguistic criticism in validating the claim to knowledge and evaluating this aspect of the claim to knowledge.

I myself believe that a good piece of auto-phenomenological, self-dialectical and living creative writing on practice and the experiences of practice could convey the emergence of living, embodied and ontological values, and it is therefore not necessary to display it ostensively in action.

He also suggested that these values could be clearly conveyed as they emerge in practice through time and struggle (see also Jensen 1987). He reflected that when he reviewed the videotapes of his practice he needed to overcome the issues of validation and generalisation, recognising the 'I' in the question as existing as a living contradiction (1989a), including and displaying those values which meaning could merely be explained during their emergence in practice and the influence of power relations on the academic legitimacy of LET. Indeed, when worked out in the 1970s, the idea that an educational practitioner-researcher can work out his/her own explanation and re-evaluation of his/her practice and submit it as an educational theory (explanation and evaluation) of professional knowledge, practice and development has been utterly rejected in the academy. Very few academics, if any, would make such a claim, knowing it would lead to and risk complete rejection and alienation in their field and workplace. Hence Whitehead's attempt to convey and advocate this has therefore been original.

More recently, Whitehead (2004a) has pointed out that a list of legitimated doctorates at the University of Bath can provide evidence of further contributions to a logic of educational enquiry that is grounded in living contradictions in 'I' enquiries. He described these doctorates as theses where each researcher/author has acknowledged his/her existence as a living contradiction in enquiries of the kind, 'how do I improve what I am doing? and where the logics of his/her educational enquiry has emerged in his/her account of his/her life of enquiry as he/she has been living his/her contradictions (see also Hamilton, 2001) and forming his/her questions and as he/she worked out his/her account of his/her learning. He added that s-step researchers can account for the meanings of the spiritual, aesthetic, ethical and other values they embody in their practice in their living their contradictions. He explained that in the course of this clarification they can transform the embodied values into living and communicable standards of judgement and that in considering what counts as evidence in s-step research he did not wish to avoid the controversial issues surrounding the legitimation of claims to knowledge but rather to perceive the motivational and explanatory power of living contradictions as connected with spiritual, and aesthetic values.

Hence, according to Whitehead, a practitioner can explain the way his/her failure to implement the spiritual and aesthetic values which he/she, himself/herself, regards as what provides his/her life and professional practice with meaning leads him/her to re-evaluate his/her professional practices and development and work on their improvement and qualitative dialectical transformation. Watching oneself practicing a rather mechanistic form of education and educational relationships with one's pupils when he/she believes in humanistic values and education could lead the practitioner-researcher stop and re-evaluate this contradiction, amend it, improve his/her professional practice and develop as a practitioner. At that stage of his work, Whitehead was working on turning that dialectical logic of qualitative

transformation through fusing contradictions into what he took to be the more living, connective, relational, flowing and flexible logic and epistemology of inclusionality.

Whitehead (2004b) reflected that his responses to difficult experiences had enabled him to carry out meaningful Action Research Expeditions. He pointed out that consequently he wished to avoid producing a victory narrative that omitted this recognition since a meaningful AR Expedition which involves living the values that "carry hope for the future of humanity" requires the experiences of pain and creative tensions of relationships with other individuals and groups in a network of power relations that act to deny these values.

He concluded that AR publication by suggesting that

> each living educational theory shows an influence in the education of social formations in learning how to transform the living contradictions, experienced in holding together our humanity and the lack of humanity evoked by the image, into hope for the future of humanity as we respond together in the flow of our loving spirits. (conclusion)

He noted his conviction that

> this hope flows through our recognition of the loving and life-affirming dignity in and to those who are suffering in a crime against humanity and in our researching together in our AR Expeditions how we can bring the values that carry this hope more fully into our world…. (ibid)

Whilst I believe in self-accountability, auto-empowerment and self-fulfilment, it is my belief that the future of humanity is embodied in history, systems and processes that are greater than and go beyond individuals working to transform their idiosyncratic living contradictions and which should be engaged with, identified and fully understood.

The idea of the existence of the concrete, living, embodied and autonomous 'I' as living contradictions in a self-dialectical educational action research 'I' enquiry has constituted the phenomenological essence and grounding of Whitehead's LET approach. He has managed to work out and rationalise in theory a simple and original theoretical idea that an educational practitioner turned theorist of his/her own educational practices, research and development can theoretically convey and account for the way in which he/has been practicing in the course of his/her professional practice the exact opposites of what he/she takes to be his/her ontological values.

What I mean is that he/she gives an explanation that he/she is then dialectically including and drawing on in his/her evaluations of: how do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my ontological values in my educational practices and development? Thereby forming a dialectical account (theory) of professional practice and development which includes an analysis, re-evaluation and explanation of the ways in which he/she identifies and analyses and reverses and transforms his/her practice of living the exact opposites of his/her ontological values in his

working at his/her fulfilling his/her ontological values in the course of his/her educational practices and development. The degree of opposites could be studied phenomenologically in evaluating the experiences of living and implementing the values and failing to do so. What I mean here is that the greater the experiences and feelings of shock and self-dissatisfaction, the greater the contradiction between the fulfilment of values and the failure to lead and implement them.

Hence, the practitioner-theorist includes a phenomenological evaluation of his/her living, idiosyncratic and embodied experiences of failing to implement and lead his/her ontological values in the course of his/her professional practice and development in his/her living, embodied and concrete, educational auto-phenomenological and self-dialectical account of the way he/she is implementing his/her ontological values in his/her professional practice and development. It is dialectical because the practitioner-theorist fuses two contradictions in the research into his/her educational, ontological and professional development and transformation.

Consequently, the act of reflectively identifying situations in his/her professional practices where he/she is not only failing to practice and fulfil his/her ontological values in the course of his/her professional practice and development, but is actually practicing what can only be seen and defined as the exact opposites of his/her values, enables the living educational theorist to work out means of dialectically reversing and transforming these counterproductive activities into the more constructive activities of actually improving his/her practices and fulfilling his/her ontological values in the course of his/her professional practices. Moreover, after establishing this theoretical idea and possibility, Whitehead was able to develop specifically constructed educational AR cycles for the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research and a human existence. An educational AR cycle is a repeated phase of action-reflection-evaluation in which the enquirer studies and reflects on his/her professional practice in order to understand and improve it. These educational AR cycles were based on this theoretical idea of the existence of the 'I' as living contradictions. I shall explain what AR is in more detail below and also the way I have transformed the theoretical idea of the existence of the 'I' as living contradictions and the specifically formulated educational AR cycles that have turned this theoretical idea and possibility into a practical and experiential methodology.

iii. The Action Research cycles for the enquiry: How do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my ontological values in my practice and practice development?

Whitehead (1989a) asked "was the enquiry carried out in a systematic way?"

He then replied that

> one methodological criteria I have used is the action reflection cycle (Foster 1980, Forrest 1983). I have suggested a dialogical form enables such a theory to be presented for public criticism. Within this form the action reflection cycle has been found (Lomax 1986) to be an appropriate way of investigating questions of the kind,

'How do we improve this process of education here?'. In this cycle we can study the gradual emergence of our values through time as we struggle to overcome the experience of their negation. We can describe and explain an individual's attempts to improve his or her educational practice (Foster 1980). (section **4) HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WHAT THE RESEARCHER SAYS IS TRUE? - A QUESTION OF VALIDITY** (bold and capitalisation in original)

In his 2005 application for a Readership, Whitehead noted that in his teaching he has drawn on an AR methodology which has universal appeal to students as a form of learning which they identify in expressing concerns when their values are not fully fulfilled as they intended them to; working out action plans from ideas about improvement, acting and gathering data which enable them to evaluate and validate the effectiveness of actions, and modifying concerns, ideas and actions in the light of these evaluations.

Moreover, he noted of his students and other users of the LET approach that

> through their imagination they create possibilities in action plans that are intended to enable ontological values to be lived more fully in practice. Where conditions permit, they act on an action plan, gathering data in multiple forms, to make ajudgement on the effectiveness of the actions in terms of values, skills and understandings

and

> evaluate the effectiveness of the influence of their actions and modify their concerns, action plans and actions in the light of the evaluations.

Over twenty years earlier, Whitehead (1985a, p. 103) wrote that by drawing on Popper's work he was taking care to ensure that his claim to know his own educational development conforms to the cycle of experiencing and formulating problems, imagining a solution, acting on the imagined solution, evaluating the outcomes and modifying the problems and ideas. Hence, in a living approach to educational theory, teacher action-researchers are required to present their claims to know how and why they are attempting to overcome practical educational problems in this form:

> I experience a problem when some of my educational values are negated in my practice.
> I imagine a solution to my problem.
> I act in the direction of the solution.
> I evaluate the outcomes of my actions.
> I modify my problems, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations.

Yet, ten years later, Whitehead (1995 p.129) pointed out that he is working to ensure that the explanations have a shared form and content which can be understood in relation to:

i. Buber's (1923) work on education and the spiritual value of the I-You relation in this work.

ii. The aesthetics of existence (Foucault 1979)

iii. The ethical principles of freedom, justice, democracy, dialogue, truth and knowledge which emerge from the work of Peters (1966) and McIntyre (1990).

iv. The scientific value of the systematic form of action reflection cycle. I experience a concern when some of my values are negated. I imagine a way forward. I act and gather data to enable me to make a judgement on my effectiveness. I evaluate the effectiveness of my actions. I modify my concerns, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations.

Whitehead has grounded his AR methodology within the aesthetic relationship among human beings, their dialogical engagement with and their acceptance of each other, and the methodological, critical and systematic evaluation and validation enabled by the AR cycles. He drew on his conviction that all human beings can comprehend and relate to the meaning of the value-laden practice of transforming and improving freedom, justice, democracy, dialogue, truth and knowledge, and what these linguistic ideas mean. Nevertheless, none of these ideas are straightforward and they all involve considerable academic debates on their meaning.

Whitehead (1995 pp.153-4) explained to his readers that he perceives them as action learners in the sense that they can identify that they have already attempted to improve on their practice in a systematic form of experiencing problems when their values are not fully implemented in practice, imagining alternative ways of developing practice and choosing one to act on, and adjusting their ideas and actions in the light of their evaluations. Similarly, Whitehead (1999 p.24.) suggested that the readers will be able to identify in their own actions a form of problem solving in the course of which they have experienced a tension due to their failure to fully fulfil their values in their practice, imagined ways of developing the quality of their practice, chosen a plan to act on and acted and evaluated their effectiveness in the process of change.

Five years later, Whitehead (2004a) in the section *Significance of the Question* (italics and bold in original) had asked his readers if they could distinguish an 'educational' research methodology from social science methodologies for self-study enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', and whether or not there is a distinctively 'educational' research methodology which could be seen as emerging from s-step accounts. By a s-step account, he meant a reflective explanation on the part of a self-studying educator of his/her educational practices, learning and development in his/her professional development (Loughran et al., 2004). He then insisted that both Allender (1991) and he (Whitehead, 1985a, 1999) have utilised the Mitroff and Kilman classification of social science methodologies and differentiated their methodology by its preferred logic and method of enquiry.

He noted that the educational research methodologies used by s-step researchers cannot be validly categorised within the above social science methodologies due to their

ontological commitment to study their own learning in enquiries of the form, 'How do I improve my practice?'. Instead s-step researchers engage in systematic action/reflection spirals in which researchers carry out the following action research cycles:

i.   (I) experience a concern because educational values are negated.
ii. (I) imagine a solution to the problem.
iii. (I) act in the direction of this solution.
iv. (I) evaluate the outcomes of action.
v.   (I) modify problems, ideas and actions in the light of evaluations (ibid.,).

However, five years earlier, Whitehead (1989a) in the section **1) 'HOW DO I IMPROVE MY PRACTICE?' - A QUESTION OF METHODOLOGY** (bold and capitalisation in original), suggested that it is possible to trace the development of a number of teachers/researchers who have used the following form of action/reflection cycle to display their epistemological claims to know their own educational development as they examined questions of the form: 'How do I improve this process of education here?' from Lomax (1986) and McNiff (1988) who have already produced a living form of educational theory.

This form of an action/reflection cycle goes as follows:

> *I experience problems when my educational values are negated in my practice.*
> *I imagine ways of overcoming my problems.*
> *I act on a chosen solution.*
> *I evaluate the outcomes of my actions.*
> *I modify my problems, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations ...(and the cycle continues).* (italics in original).

Nonetheless, at that time, the LET approach was still rejected in education research. There were still not any living theory doctoral theses that had been legitimated by being passed at any university. The first of these, by Mary Gurney and Jean McNiff, were awarded that year. Whitehead's ideas were not received well in the academy. Hence, there was no way to know then that the LET AR cycles would be validated and legitimated by academics. It was a work in progress and a speculation. It was only in the 1990s that this methodology began to be accepted as a marginal methodology in educational research and educational AR. Nowadays, the number of LET enquiries and publications have grown significantly and can be traced in Whitehead (2009b) and McNiff (2010).

Whitehead's 1995 guide for LET action researchers is obviously a particularly useful place for the purpose of the understanding of the meanings and implications of the living, embodied and dialectical form of AR cycles. He (1995 p.5.) told the readers that their fundamental commitment as action learners is to ask themselves a practical question concerning improvements in their practice and that action learning assumes that they will have already had experience of resolving practical problems by defining action plans and acting, evaluating and modifying actions in the light of evaluations.   He also told the readers that they should check the questions and form of the action planner below to see if it corresponds to their approach to problem solving and that since it is being used in our action research network as a useful

introduction to action learning there are a number of ways for them to construct and carry out their enquiries.

Then, Whitehead (1995 pp.6-7) stated that

> Action research requires asking questions which are directed at improving the quality of the professional practices of the researchers, their understanding of their practice and the social context in which the practice is located. The action planner is usually constructed through discussions which help the researcher to clarify the nature of the enquiry, 'How do I improve..............?', into questions of the form,
> 1). What is your concern/What do you want to improve?
> 2). What are your reasons for your concern?
> 3). What might you do to improve your practice?
> 4). How will you know that your practice has improved? How are you going to find out? i.e.,; What kind of evidence will you need to collect to enable you to make a judgement on the outcomes of your practice in terms of the quality of your own or teachers' and/or pupils' learning?
> 5). What kind of resources will you need to enable you to implement your plan?

Whitehead (1995 p.43) used the example of a group of Wiltshire teachers who had carried out their local curriculum development action research project in the School of Education at the University of Bath and who have developed a basic action-reflection cycle which has began with the individual's experience of educational problems in action of the kind, 'How do I improve this process of education here?'.

He noted that

> The cycle has that form,
> 1). I experience problems when some of my educational values are negated in my practice.
> 2). I imagine a solution to my problems.
> 3). I act in the direction of a chosen solution.
> 4). I evaluate the outcomes of my actions.
> 5). I modify my problems, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations...

He (1995 p.46) clarified that

> The inclusion of the individual 'I' experiencing problems because of the negation of values (the experience of being a living contradiction) emphasises that the individual is investigating his or her own practices with the intention of improving their quality.

Thus, the cycle begins with the researcher experiencing a problem in the course of his/her professional practice, rather than with the traditional hypothesis which is to be supported or refuted. The experienced problem is being reflected on, with solutions imagined and acted upon, evaluated and modified. A theory (explanation) of the practice emerges from this cycle. It provides a very practical theory of the practice which fellow practitioners and theorists can relate to and learn from and draw on in their practice and research. There is no need to test it as a theory in

practice. It has already been tested in real-life professional practice in real-world situations.

Hence, Whitehead contended that he considered this enquiry to be a good quality human enquiry in that it is grounded in an intention to enable others to improve the quality of their learning, as well as the enquirer's own learning and in its ability to assume a systematic form of action enquiry cycle

> which values both learning from experience and a willingness to benefit from the ideas and evaluations of others in a forum for (democratic) evaluation within which individuals submit their judgements to the power of better argument within a community.

He also stressed the importance of the validity and rigor of his AR and noted his claim to submit, as a methodological principle, his AR accounts to regular social validation in a range of academic and professional contexts.

iv. Stories of the enquiries into the question: How do I improve my practice and what I am doing and fulfil my ontological values in my practice and practice development?

Finally, I shall move on to describe the fourth idea of living educational theorists creating their own creative accounts, descriptions and explanations of their educational development and practices.

Whitehead (2004b) in the section *What are the three original ideas?* (bold and italics in the original))spoke of this idea as one which

> concerns our descriptions and explanations of our learning and educational development, in the stories we tell ourselves and others, as we research our attempts to live our values more fully in our practice.

He described these explanations as

> our living educational theories which, along with the theories of others, have profound implications for the future of humanity (ibid)

and expressed his intention to communicate the value of this idea by revealing to the reader/engager

> its potential in the living theory accounts of other teachers, educators, leaders and managers. (ibid)

Furthermore, one year later, in his Readership application he noted that

> Sharing accounts of learning for critical evaluation and responding to these evaluations as part of the processes of learning is important in living my philosophy of teaching.

This is since

> one of the greatest influences of policy makers in extending this approach is in the sharing of their living theories explanations of their own educational influences in the lives of teachers and their pupils.

He then pointed out that

> the learning resources flowing freely through web-space are now widely accessible in different countries and reaching areas of great poverty…[and] show how living educational theories can enhance the flow of inclusional values and understandings that carry hope for the future of humanity.

Likewise, in a November 2006 contribution to *the British Educational Research Association Practitioner Research* electronic seminar that he convenes[7], Whitehead has made the plea that he should

> like to hear us sharing our stories of our educational influences in our own learning and in the learning of others that are grounded in our ways of being in the world that engage with the workings of power, values and perception

and that he should

> like to share stories that show how, in clarifying the meanings of our embodied ontological values, in the course of their emergence in what we are doing, we form the living epistemological standards we use to explain to ourselves and others our educational influences in learning.

He also maintained that

> in constructing an explanation for my professional practice I found it necessary to clarify the meaning of my value of social justice by showing its emergence in action.

Indeed, Whitehead (2004a) had already discussed the requiement on the part of the development of educational judgements by s-step researchers to fully comprehend the way in which the embodied values of educational practitioners could be transformed into communicable standards of judgement for publicly testing the validity of the evidence in educational knowledge-claims (Whitehead, 1999, 2000, 2002).

He argued that an understanding of such living standards of judgement and their use in testing the validity of the evidence in s-step accounts

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7 The contribution was made on the third of November, 2006, in the thread "What do we understand of living theories in this place?", and could be accessed at https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A2=ind0611&L=PRACTITIONER-RESEARCHER&F=&S=&P=19758

This was before the Practitioner-Research JISC email list ceased its British Educational Research Association affiliation and became dominated by 'inclusional' educational research.

requires the kind of engaged and appreciative reading advocated by D'Arcy (1998) and needs this response in order to see how an embodied value of community has been transformed into a sufficiently stable and comprehensible living standard of judgement, for others to use in testing the validity of the knowledge-claims. (Section, *Evidence from s-step research*, bold and italics in the original)

In her book, *'Making Sense, Shaping Meaning* (1989), which spelled out her basic philosophy on how writing, talking, listening and reading interrelate, rather than operate in isolation as separate skills, and in her Ph.D. thesis (1998) on her journey as an educational researcher, Pat D'Arcy had emphasised the importance of making aesthetically engaged and appreciative responses to the ideas of others and the need to avoid misrepresenting the ideas of others so as to refute or support them.

In his earlier work, Whitehead (1989b) pointed out that in order to construct a LET account, a community of shared discourse is needed to be created. This community is to be grounded in ostensive definitions of educational values in action (Whitehead & Foster, 1984). He insisted that in constructing a living theory, the texts are historical accounts in the sense that they describe and explain past activities and

> also have a proactive function in that the evaluation of these accounts prompts a vision of the future in an imagined possibility of how present practice might be improved. (sixteenth parapgraph from the top)

He argued that living practice could be illuminated through the understanding of the relationship between the account of the past and the vision of the future and thus educational theory

> is, for me, a living theory in that the explanation contains evidence of an evaluation of past practice, evidence of an intention to produce something not yet in existence and evidence of the present practice through which the intention is being realised in action (Whitehead, 1985a). (eighteenth paragraph from the top)

This follows existential and humanistic thinkers who view human existence as emerging, becoming and creating in the world in the present and systematically constructing the future based on the past and its evaluation.

Later, Whitehead (1995) maintained the view that life has the unity of a story, with a beginning (birth), a middle and an ending (death). Whitehead (2004a) discussed the importance of a good-quality narrative self-study account. He reflected on his analysis of different kinds of evidence in s-step research and noted the intention of s-step researchers to offer definitions of quality in autobiographical forms of self-study research. He specified the example of Bullough & Pinnegar (2001) who had offered some 14 assertions of the kind:

- Autobiographical studies should ring true and enable connection.
- Self-studies should promote insight and interpretation.
- Autobiographical self-study research must engage history forthrightly and the author must take an honest stand. Section *Significance of the question* (bold and italics in original)

Nevertheless, he himself avoided giving his explicit definition of a good quality living educational theory account and was contented with creatively clarifying the way he thinks a LET account could be evaluated, recreated and judged as a good quality one which essentially involves social dialogue.

Whitehead (1995) gave his view of the way he thinks LET accounts should be evaluated through the use of his own LET account. He claimed to avoid the risk of circularity or self-deception by submitting the account to a peer review of a group of critical friends, as it is customary in AR and reflective practice. He told his reader/engager that in submitting his own account of his professional life he was seeking for his readers to evaluate it as a good quality human enquiry. He explained that he was asking his readers to evaluate his account in order to see if he was able to communicate what he meant by LET, and to be told whether or not it has any significance to developing our understanding of what constitutes a good quality human enquiry.

He directly approached his readers and expressed his intention to reveal to them, in the course of his testing out the validity of his epistemological claim to know his own educational development, the meaning of his educational goods, which he defined as the values and educational standards of judgement that he utilised in providing his life with meaning and purpose, in the course of their emergence in practice throughout his educational development and through an immanent dialectic.

He also claimed that

> in this dialectic, practice precedes the theory of it, and the meanings of my educational values, are expressed, clarified and developed through time, practice, reflection and the ideas and relationships of others. (p. 123)

However, according to Freire, this kind of dialectical practice is a traditional praxis (e.g., Freire, 1973, 1996, 2004) which means a theory of practice that involves a practice, a reflection on this practice, and a theory of that practice.

Whitehead also asserted that

> in doing this I hope to demonstrate the power of an educational action research project for strengthening human communities and making a contribution to a good social order and cultural renewal. (p. 126)

The reason he gave for this was that he generalised the use-value of LET to others as they make sense of their own experience and make a contribution to education, and in terms of the significance of the LET accounts of others to his enquiry.

Whitehead (2004a) noted that

> In his Presidential Address to AERA Eisner (1993) called for and used a multi-media presentation of alternative forms of data representation in educational research. The iconic images of Martin Luther King and the chimneys of Auschwitz carried spiritual, and aesthetic meanings. Section *Evidence of transforming*

embodied spiritual and aesthetic values into standards of judgement (bold and italics in original)

He added that

> Eisner has also pointed out the problems and perils of this form of data representation (Eisner, 1997). (ibid)

In the section Evidence of transforming embodied spiritual and aesthetic values into standards of judgement, Whitehead (2004a) then confessed the influence of the following quotation from Fukuyama (1992, p. xvii) on his thinking about the evidence of spiritual standards in s-step research:

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

I like and agree with this claim that I also gathered from Freire's (1973, 1996, 2004) emphasis of the point that all human beings are to be recognised for their worth and could make a valid contribution to others and to humanity.

He then noted that he is

> thinking of the significant meanings that can be shown through portfolios of evidence that include visual media such as the video-ethnographies of Carl Harris (2000) and his collaborators (section ***Evidence from s-step*** research (bold and italics in original)

and that

> Harris uses video-clips from classrooms, interviews and lectures, together with written and audio text to communicate the meanings of educational practice. (section ***Evidence from s-step*** research (bold and italics in original)

He then pointed out that the Carnegie Media Laboratory (2002) and researchers in the like of Fletcher and Whitehead (2003) have also displayed multi-media portfolios of evidence in a narrative form that include visual images of educational practices to communicate meanings that cannot be adequately represented through words on pages, even the most poetic ones.

Moreover, Whitehead (2004a) drew, in his endeavour to rationalise non-verbal and non-textual means of communication, on Maura McIntyre and Ardra Cole's (2001) performance text at the *Third International Conference of the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices Special Interest Group of AERA*.

He cited the following from McIntyre & Cole, (2001, p. 22) (italics in original),

Performance of the research text is an embodiment and representation of the inquiry process as well as a new process of active learning. The possibility of active learning in each performance or recreation of the text exists through our ongoing commitment to maintaining the conditions of our relationship. Each performance is an experiential basis for reflection, analysis, and learning because in relationship we are 'participants-as-collaborators' (Lincoln, 1993, p. 42). *Together we were able to draw out each other's knowledge and strength.*

He then commented that the brilliance of this performance text was in the way McIntyre and Cole had communicated the nature of an educative relationship that focused on learning to tap-dance and that

> without the visual and auditory communications, included in the performance text, significant meanings are lost in the textual representation on pages in a book. (section ***Evidence from s-step*** research (bold and italics in original)

In the following year, when asked about his "Future Research Plans" in his application for Readership, Whitehead expressed his intentions to focus in his research programme on the development of multi-media enquiries into the transformation of embodied values, skills and understandings of practitioner researchers into living epistemological standards of judgement and to develop his research programme into educational theory through the extended use of multi-media technologies. He referred his reviewers to Whitehead (2004b) and explained that these technologies are capable of overcoming a problem in trying to represent, in text alone, the meanings of people's embodied values as explanatory principles in educational theory generation and evaluation. Furthermore, he discussed his strategy to continue working out a web-based knowledge-base for educational practitioners from both the processes and outcomes of his research into his own educational influences and from his work on research masters dissertations and doctoral theses.

He asked

> How Valid Are Multi-Media Communications Of My Embodied Values In Living Theories And Standards Of Educational Judgement And Practice?

and included, in response, the URL of a draft of a paper of his from 2002 of this very title that he has placed at
http://www.actionresearch.net/multimedia/jimenomov/JIMEW98.html" (2004b).

He answered that he had used the dialogical and dialectical visual narrative in his presentation in order to illuminate the meanings of embodied values as these emerged in educational enquiries since in the course of being clarified, the embodied values are being transformed into living and communicable standards of judgement.

Although I very much agreed with Whitehead on the possibility of dialectically including a person's contradictions of his/her own ontological values in his/her theory of his/her own practice improvement and truly believing in the AR orientation to research, as I shall explain soon, I strongly disagree with Whitehead's

argument that non-textual audio-visual clips is a superior method of presenting living LET accounts.

We started diverging from each other at this point, for I have remained faithful to my belief in the cathartic, creative, liberating, purifying, empowering and therapeutic power of good creative writing and which I believe are lost in the audio-visual narratives and video clips. I think audio-visual narratives and video clips tend to leave nothing to the imagination and to display the entirety of action, practices and being-in-the-world of the displayed individual enquirer. I prefer a bit of mystery and to have the reader work out hidden meanings for himself/herself and really engage with the creative writer. The fact that Whitehead has rationalised his belief in the non-textual audio-visual means of presenting LET in his attempts to develop, explain and rationalise his 'third logic and epistemology of inclusionality' has not contributed to the further development of LET.

For reasons that I shall explain below, I prefer to stick with dialectical logic and epistemology, in relation to therapeutic and cathartic creative writing. This is because I think that 'inclusionality' is poorly conveyed and that it constitutes an incomprehensible idea that lacks in reason and strong argument, due to the fact that its developers have ignored, misrepresented, or misunderstood important ideas and presuppositions in philosophy and the history, philosophy and sociology of science, and social and human science.

I shall discuss my disagreements with and criticisms of Whitehead's method of communicating his AR cycles in the next part. Before I show the way I have transformed these four components of the LET approach, I shall introduce the writings of Jean McNiff who has contributed more than anyone else to Whitehead's development of the LET approach.

1. 5. The Living Educational Theory approach and Jean McNiff[8]

In addition to Whitehead's own efforts, the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research has also been popularised by his former student Jean McNiff, who has made a new career for herself in developing and popularising the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research after retiring from teaching and administrating. As an educator and subscriber to the use of AR cycles in theorising, re-evaluating, identifying and processing, recreating and conceptualising educational practices and developments, McNiff focuses on the practical methodological aspects of the approach at the expense of its theoretical and philosophical aspects as a practical dialectical humanistic approach to educational research (Whitehead, 1981; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006).

Let me illustrate McNiff's work by using two examples. First, in the third chapter of her practical guidebook to the new methodological approach of AR (1988 p.37), she wrote,

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[8] This section seeks to show that the LET approach is not the sole work of Jack Whitehead and to acknowledge the important work done by Jean McNiff to its development and its radical shift in the late 1980s from rejection to legitimacy.

Whitehead is keen to keep the teacher-practitioner at the center of the enquiry. He feels that Kemmis, Elliott and Ebbutt are in danger of moving away from the reality of educational practice.

She then added that Whitehead is therefore "keen to keep the teacher-practitioner at the center of the enquiry" and that in order

to make action research meaningful to the lives of real, individual educators, he has re-formulated the action-reflection cycle into a pattern of statements. (p. 38)

She explained that these statements are used to overcome practical educational problems in a systematic fashion and listed them as follows. She also added and provided her own examples from her own experience as a practitioner:

1. I experience a problem when some of my educational values are denied in practice   (for example, My students do not seem to be taking as active a part in my lessons as I would want them to).
2. I imagine a solution to the problem. (Should I organise my lessons so that my pupils have to ask questions? Shall I try group work, or structured exercises?)
3. I implement the imagined solution. (I try group work as from Tuesday's lesson, and I introduce structured worksheets that lead my pupils to ask and answer questions without my constant supervision.)
4. I evaluate the outcome of my actions. (Yes, my pupils are certainly participating more, but they are making too much noise. Also, they are still depending on me in the form of worksheets.).
5. I reformulate my problems in the light of my evaluation. (I must find a way of persuading them to be involved but less noisy. I must find a way to make them more independent of me in their own educational development.)...
This action-reflection spiral is a basis for teacher self-improvement. It can be tied in with a set of questions which act as a starting point to curriculum reform:
1. What is your concern?
2. Why are you concerned?
3. What do you think you could do about it?
4. What kind of 'evidence' could you collect to help you make some judgement about what is happening?
5. How would you collect such 'evidence'?
6. How could you check that your judgement about what has happened is reasonably fair and accurate? (pp. 38-9)

Whitehead's original idea has been boosted by McNiff's contribution to Jean Clandinin's (2006) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*. In that contribution, McNiff interrelated Whitehead's LET approach with the narrative approach to educational research enquiries.

She shared Whitehead's view on the educational significance of generating one's own LET in the narratives of one's life and learning.

She contended that

Practitioners in higher education and in schools can communicate in face-to-face and virtual contexts and, through their printed and electronically transmitted storied

accounts,…show how they are learning collaboratively to exercise their educational influence in their own and one another's learning…Narrative forms can transform value-based commitments into their lived articulation in the form of practitioner researchers' networks, thus eradicating the artificial divides of *them* and *us*. (italics in original) (p. 308)

McNiff also explained how practitioners need to engage with cultural and editorial politics as they produce their accounts of practice, especially in relation to demonstrating the validity of their research.

She noted that

> this chapter aims to show the links between narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) and action research, a form of research that enables practitioner researchers to tell their stories of how they have taken action to improve their situations by improving their learning. (ibid)

She explained that she is going to convey her own research narrative in order to examine these issues and address her enquiry. She listed the following questions as the leading ones in her enquiry and which therefore can account for her practice:

> ¥ What is my concern?
> ¥ Why am I concerned?   (end of page 309)
> ¥ What kind of experiences can I describe to show the reasons for my concerns?
> ¥ What can I do about it? What will I do about it?
> ¥ How do I evaluate the educational influence of my actions?
> ¥ How do I demonstrate the validity of the account of my educational influence in learning?
> ¥ How do I modify my concerns, ideas, and actions in the light of my evaluation? (see McNiff & Whitehead, 2005, 2006). (p. 310)

This took the form of a dialectical question-response heuristic enquiry into these specifically formulated and listed questions. McNiff noted in it that her story is "a story of stories" that

> is about how I have exercised my educational influence so that people can exercise their originality and critical engagement and have their stories about the generation of their living educational theories accepted in the public domain. (ibid)

She insisted that her inquiry "becomes part of a politics of narratives, of narrativized differences" and in turn "politics of ethics" since

> making decisions about which stories are permissible and who is permitted to tell them becomes a domain of political ethics within a wider framework of what counts as good and how it should be judged (ibid)

and that for her

whether my story should be accepted is not a case of whether it abides by the conventions of the orthodox canon but whether the validity I am claiming for it can be justified in terms of rational inquiry. (ibid)

She has positioned and grounded herself as "an educational action researcher, part of whose work is to tell stories of educational action research" and remarked that her

main theme is about how I offer explanations for my educational practices, my personal theories of…my practice as good practice, including the form and content of my research report as an integral part of that practice. (p. 316)

She drew on Todorov (1990) to distinguish between a propositional form of narrative, where a text can be a sequence of propositions that is easily recognized as a narrative, and a generative narrative form that

has transformational quality, where each episode contains the potential to generate the next, which, as Lyotard (1984) says, is the nature of narrative as a work of art that continuously re-creates itself through the process of communication. (p. 318)

She distinguished between what she does as an action researcher and what social scientists dressed as action researchers do. She suggested that social scientists produce explanations that are "frequently underpinned by a logic of domination (Marcuse, 1964)". She contended that this logic of domination inclines to close the argument down by giving general answers to particular questions and carrying out explanations which take the form of sets of propositional statements that through their internal relationships demonstrate the way they have overcome contradictions and provide instructions on how to implement action steps that are grounded within the Aristotelian logic which assumes a cause-and-effect relationship with no place for contradiction.

Indeed, making these points, McNiff repeated almost word-by-word Whitehead's early claim from the 1970s that this view is perpetuated by philosophers such as Popper, who said that a logic that accepted contradiction was based on "a loose and woolly way of thinking" and that a "theory which involves a contradiction is therefore useless as a theory" (Popper, 1963/2002, p. 429), and by philosophers such as Peters (1966) and Hirst (1983), who wrote that research and training should be carried out under the aegis of the different disciplines of education, and also informs

dominant institutional stories, underpinned by specific institutional epistemologies (Schon, 1995), about how knowledge should be seen as a package of information delivered to allegedly unknowing practitioners. (p. 318)

Indeed, in the 1970s educational research and theory was grounded in radical empiricism and positivism that sought to explain all phenomena using objective and detached science and clear propositions and which had been radicalised in the 1950s, reaching a climax in the 1970s (Serper, 1999).

McNiff did not consider herself as subscribing to these philosophies and noted that she did not wish to tell such stories.

She reflected that

> During the 1980s, I rejected a traditional disciplines approach to learning and instead explored a generative transformational approach that sees all things in an ongoing process of emergence (Chomsky 1965). (p. 325)

She claimed to utilise a form of logic "that aims for open-ended inquiry through problematic questions" and invites "people to ask questions about what they are doing and decide for themselves what action to take". She also claimed to tell "stories about how I avoid telling people what to do, on my understanding that people are fully competent to make their own decisions, including what I have to say is right for them" and contended that "the stories I tell are those of myself in company with others who are also telling their stories".

Indeed, she supervises and supports LET works on the direct explanations of practitioners of their own practice and their own decisions-making and learning in the course of their practice. She also gives seminars and workshops on this LET work and writes extensively on how she carries out this practice.
She reiterated the main role of the LET approach and discussed theoretical and practical means for practitioners to

> re-create their professional identities as practical theorists and not only as practitioners acting as data that external researchers can use [and] explain how reflecting on their action can lead to new learning, which can inform future learning and action. (p. 309)

Whilst similar to Freire's (1973, 1996, 2004) recommendations, the LET approach had emerged from the practical experiences of its British developers and have not gone into the same extent of political, historical and economic analysis, arguments and understanding as the Brazilian and Marxist Freire.

She stated that

> their stories comprise their descriptions and explanations of practice, which constitute their own living educational theories of practice (Whitehead, 1989). (p. 308)

She added that

> by offering these theories of practice, they are able to show how they hold themselves accountable for what they are doing and why they are doing. (p. 308)

McNiff also contended that telling a story as a straight narrative is different from telling a story as a research narrative since

> a research narrative contains a descriptive account of the systematic nature of doing the research (Stenhouse, cited in Skillbeck, 1983) as well as an explanatory account of the reasons for the research and what the researcher hoped to achieve (p. 309)

and therefore

> unless people are told about the research, they will not appreciate its reasons or potential significance. (ibid)

She recited Medawer's (1969) point

> that a scientific inquiry begins with a story about a possible world that we invent, criticize and modify as we live, so it ends by being a story of real life. (ibid)

She argued that "on this view, research can be seen as disciplined narrative inquiry" and "the business of getting people to listen to the story".
McNiff remarked that

> telling a research story is an integral part of research practice. (p. 319)

This is since "a story does not appear out of nowhere" but "is written by a researcher who brings his or her own values to the writing process".

She also suggested that

> consequently the story can be understood as the articulation of the values of the writer, which communicates these values through its content and form. (ibid)

She noted that

> in action research reports, the content is about accounting for oneself through a process of showing the validity of the work as it links, in Husserl's (1982) terms, with realizing the researcher's guiding values (ibid)

and that

> therefore, practitioner researchers have two responsibilities: (1) to show the validity of their research through (2) showing the validity of their research report. (ibid)

McNiff then explained and contended that these issues have to be made explicit

> if practitioner researchers wish to be seen as competent theorists rather than skilled implementers. (ibid)

She noted that in making this remark, she drew on Furlong's (2000) point, in his evaluation of the Best Practice Research Scholarship initiatives, that

> teachers tend to see their action research as a form of professional development leading to school improvement but do not appreciate the need to raise their own capacity to do research and engage in quality theorizing. (ibid)

She then pointed out that these ideas are new territories for her, and possibly also for the wider community of action researchers since

existing stories of practice in the public domain tend to be description of actions without articulating their grounding in explanations for the actions. (ibid)

But nevertheless also stated that "this kind of explanatory grounding is, however, essential if the procedures used to test the validity of the research are to be explicated" and that "procedures for establishing the validity of the research story itself need to be explicated".

Moreover, McNiff linked validity with (italics in original)

the idea of goodness, especially in terms of what counts as *good practice* and *good research accounts*. (p. 310)

She maintained

that an account of practice should demonstrate its own validity and the validity of the practice, in terms of whether they both show explicitly how and why they should be considered valuable or good. (p. 325)

She reiterated Whitehead's plea for the use of Polanyi's (1958) idea of having faith in the rightness of one's capacity for personal knowledge, bearing in mind that one's personal knowledge may be mistaken and for example it could be rooted in self-delusion. She also repeated Whitehead's point about the researcher's willingness to engage with criteria in the like of those suggested by Habermas (1987, 2003) and that the claim to knowledge is to be made in honesty, sincerity, and truthfulness and with an awareness that it is made within a normative context. This is as a means of testing the validity of the account of the practice.

I myself think that the only way to evaluate what McNiff is saying here is through engaging with examples of the type of the personalised practice accounts which is referred to by McNiff and examine firsthand their validity, quality, extent and merit, sincerity, honesty and truthfulness. It is very difficult to evaluate these propositions by McNiff without evaluating specific illustrations of what she is suggesting here.

In page 125, McNiff reiterated that

the realization of one's values constituting the standards of judgement of the research enquiry…can transform into the living critical criteria and standards of judgement whereby practice may be assessed through the critical scrutiny of others,

thereby establishing the validity of the research enquiry "by explaining how the researchers have realized their values and how this realization has given meaning to their lives (see Whitehead & McNiff, 2006)", and that in turn

Research stories need to show explicitly how values have transformed into living standards of practice. (p. 320)

McNiff noted that she initially (1989) outlined the relationship between stories, intentions, truth and validity due to the myths and legends of a culture representing

"deep truths about that culture (Frazer, 1963)" and stories containing "truths about the nature and underpinning values of human relationships".

This is because

> when we tell a story, we imply that the story has a relationship with truth. (p. 318)

Reading this, I cannot but ask about fiction, literary and dramatic license, subjective and biased misperception and conception of what it true and what is an exaggeration.

She then cited Habermas (2003) who she claims to draw on Husserl's (1982) insights that any act of knowing, once begun, has "an immanent relation to truth". Nonetheless, a Husserlian phenomenological evaluation is a pre-analysed analysis of experience as it comes to the experiencing cognition. Being pre-analysed and raw, how is it to be known and validated as true or false?

She argued that

> this immanent relation of intentional action to truth implies that people know what they are doing when they seek to influence the creation of themselves in company with one another. (p. 318)

Moreover, McNiff has also made use of Said (1995) and argued that he

> develops this theme, explaining that each intentional beginning becomes its own methodology, a realization of its underlying intent. (ibid)

I do not think this is structured enough. I think McNiff's claim here is too vague; the realisation of intention in action and through practice is by no means sufficient and requires more structure, explanation, understanding, planning, thinking, analysis and evaluation.

For example, she reflected that "from these works, I understand how intentional action can be shown to have an immanent relation to truth by demonstrating its validity" and that "by telling their stories, practitioners can show how intentional action can be shown to have an immanent relation to truth by articulating explicitly how they give meaning to their lives in terms of what they consider valuable or good", and in turn "the validity of their value-informed practices by establishing the validity of the story".

Furthermore, McNiff also contended that

> the research needs to be shown as meaningful – that is, fulfilling its original intent in Habermas' (1987) terms, of enabling participants to create meaningful relationships for mutual benefits, in terms of what they understand as of value or good. (p. 319)

I think these propositions are empty without actually critically engaging with illustrative LET accounts of practice and determining whether or not they provide good quality and valid answers to their questions. One of the problems with the LET approach in terms of the validation of its extent and merit is that it cannot really explain and validate itself without the evaluator having to read critically several LET large-scale accounts of practice. It is therefore very hard, if not unfeasible, to evaluate these propositions by McNiff, without critically engaging with and commenting on and applying them on specific LET illustrations.

She also stated that

> creating meaning is not simply about taking action but also involves focusing on the learning that enters into the action so that the action is understood as informed purposeful practice, (ibid)

and that

> the relationship between learning and action needs to be articulated in stories…[and the] relationships between practitioners' stories need to be actualised when the practitioners say they are influencing their own learning and one another's learning. (ibid)

I agree that an educational account requires a careful analysis of the learning that has been placed into and emerged in the action taken and how the action has enabled the practitioner to fulfil his/her desire to carry out a meaningful practice to himself/herself and others. I also think all educational accounts should be relational, dialogical and clearly explain to the readers how the practice of the author could be of value to them, the readers.

However, McNiff has contributed to the development and practice of the LET approach, as a practical educational action research and reflective practice methodology. She transformed the heavily theoretical and abstractive elements of Whitehead's writings into a far more practical and experiential methodological approach to and in AR, educational AR, and reflective practice and educational research and theory. She produced practical guides to AR and educational AR that are based on the theory of the LET approach. She avoided the incomprehensible attempts to work out a 'third logic and epistemology' to educational research and educational AR. She has remained faithful to the introduction of the living, embodied, dialectical and dialogical educational AR cycles of the LET approach and to their textual conveyance in textual books and papers. I shall discuss this so-called 'third logic and epistemology of inclusionality' and the poor way in which it is communicated, explained and described by its proponents below.

I like McNiff's practical and straightforward approach. I liked McNiff's emphasis on the contrast between a "generative narrative form…that continuously re-creates itself through the process of communication" and which "has transformational quality, where each episode contains the potential to generate the next", and a "propositional form of narrative" which is made of fixated and disembodied,

generalising and abstractive "sequence of propositions that is easily recognized as a narrative".

I used this when creating my original textual account of my suggested alternative approach.

Having explained what the LET approach is, I shall show in the next section the relationship between the LET approach and the method, model and epistemology of reflective practice and practitioner research, AR and educational AR, and the theory and theorisation of the person and human existence, namely ontological research. This should position it in the field and explain its originality and merit, as well as show the reasons for my criticisms of Whitehead's recent turn to 'inclusionality' and an 'inclusional' LET approach.

1.6. The Living Educational Theory approach and Donald Schön

Donald Schön is the developer of the idea of using direct reflection upon action in theories of practice (1983, 1987, 1991, 1995). He originally initiated this idea as an alternative to the traditional positivistic means and ideas of theorising professional practices. In the course of his work he had moved away from the traditional Popperian propositional means of validating theories of practice and into pleading for the use of Levin's (1946) AR cycles as a means of working out and validating and legitimating theories and theorisation of professional practices. I shall describe Levin's AR cycles in the next section. Alas, Schön died shortly after making this plea. Whitehead subscribed to the idea of reflective practice and using reflection upon action as a means of theorising professional practices but objected and constructively challenged Schön's initial use of the Popperian, propositional means of validating theories of propositional practices.

Whitehead therefore greatly supported Schön's plea for the use of Lewin's AR cycles in theories of professional practices and regretted Schön's demise before being able to implement this plea of his in practice. I very much agreed with Whitehead here. However, I deeply regretted Whitehead and the LET approach moving from dialectical reflective practice and AR into an attempt to work out the 'third logic and epistemology of inclusionality'; a move that has prompted my alienation and movement away from LET back into critical psychology and the development of my own suggested therapeutic, educational and cathartic tool. Before introducing that tool, I need to describe Schön's work and development to show how Whitehead related to it, before showing in the next part of the thesis how I have made use of these ideas, in relation to the evolving relationship between Schön and Whitehead.

Schön (1983) suggested the development of an alternative epistemology of practice to the positivistic one that he termed as 'Technical Rationality'.

Schön (1983 p.345.) noted that

the idea of reflective practice leads, in a sense both similar to and different from, to a demystification of professional expertise

and that in turn

it leads us to recognize that for both the professional and the counterprofessional, special knowledge is embedded in evaluative frames which bear the stamp of human values and interests. (ibid)

Furthermore, in the preface to *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, Schön (1987) pointed out that in his 1983 publication, *The Reflective Practitioner*, he argued for a

new epistemology of practice…that would stand the question of professional knowledge on its head by taking as its point of departure the competence and artistry already embedded in skilful practice – especially, the reflection-in-action (the "thinking what they are doing while they are doing it") that practitioners sometimes bring to situations of uncertainty, uniqueness, and conflict. (p. iii)

He then continued to note that in contrast, he claims that the professional schools of contemporary research universities give a privileged status to systematic, preferably scientific, knowledge and that

Technical rationality, the schools' prevailing epistemology of practice, treats professional competence as the application of privileged knowledge to instrumental problems of practice. (ibid)

He contended that

the schools' normative curriculum and separation of research from practice leave no room for reflection-in-action, and thereby create – for educators, practitioners, and students – a dilemma of rigor or relevance (ibid)

and that

the argument of *The Reflective Practitioner* implies a question: What kind of professional education would be appropriate to an epistemology of practice based on reflection-in-action?. (ibid)

Thus Schön (1983) offered a constructive critique of and an heuristic alternative solution to what he called "Technical Rationality".

He (1983 p.31.) defined "Technical Rationality" as

the heritage of positivism, the powerful philosophical doctrine that grew up in the nineteenth century as an account of the rise of science and technology.

He suggested that "Technical Rationality is the Positivist epistemology of practice" and that

it became institutionalized in the modern university, founded in the late nineteenth century when Positivism was at its height, and in the professional schools which secured their place in the university in the early decades of the twentieth century. (ibid)

He described positivism as

a social movement aimed at applying the achievements of science and technology to the well-being of mankind. (ibid)

Likewise, Schön (1983 p.165.) defined positivism and "the positivist epistemology of practice" as resting

on three dichotomies…the separation of means from ends, instrumental problem solving can be seen as a technical procedure to be measured by its effectiveness in achieving a pre-established objective…the separation of research from practice, rigorous practice can be seen as an application to instrumental problems of research-based theories and techniques whose objectivity and generality derive from the method of controlled experiment…[and] the separation of knowing from doing, action is only an implementation and test of technical decision.

Hence, according to Schön (1983 pp.33/4), for positivists,

practical knowledge was to be constructed as knowledge of the relationship of means to ends. Given agreement about ends, the question "How ought I to act?" could be reduced to a merely instrumental question about the means best suited to achieve one's ends. Disagreements about means could be resolved by reference to facts concerning the possible means, their relevant consequences, and the methods for comparing them with respect to the chosen ends of action.

Schön (1983 pp.30-31) pointed out that "since the Reformation the history of the West has been shaped by the rise of science and technology", that "as the scientific world-view gained dominance so did the ideas that human progresses would be achieved by harnessing science to create technology for the achievement of human ends" and that "this Technological Program, which was first vividly expressed in the writings of Bacon and Hobbes, became a major theme for the philosophers of the Enlightenment in the 18th century and by the late 19th century had been firmly established as a pillar of conventional wisdom"'.

He noted that

by this time, too, the professions had come to be seen as vehicles for the application of the new sciences to the achievement of human progress. (ibid)

Nonetheless, he refrained from delving inside the meanings of this claim of his in regards to the positivistic use of the natural sciences to methodologically and heuristically interrelate with the well-being of mankind because "excellent accounts of this story exist elsewhere, [e.g., Bernstein, R 1976 *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich New York]".

Moreover, Schön (1983 pp.39-40) maintained that

> from the perspective of Technical Rationality, professional practice is a process of problem solving. Problems of choice or decision are solved through the selection, from available means, of the one best suited to established ends. But with this emphasis on problem solving, we ignore problem setting, the process by which we define the decision to be made, the ends to be achieved, the means which may be chosen…In real-world practice, problems do not present themselves to the practitioner as givens. They must be reconstructed from the materials of problematic situations which are puzzling, troubling, and uncertain, a practitioner must do a certain kind of work. He must make sense of an uncertain situation that initially makes no sense.

Likewise, Schön (1983 p.163) pointed out that under the premises of positivism and 'Technical Rationality',

> there is an objectively knowable world, independent of the practitioner's values and views

and that

> in order to gain technical knowledge of it, the practitioner must maintain a clear boundary between himself, and his object of inquiry (ibid)

and thus

> in order to exert technical control over it, he must observe it and keep his distance from it – as Bacon said, commanding Nature by observing her. His stance toward inquiry is that of spectator/manipulator. (ibid)

The reason given by Schön (1983 p.34) for this absurdity of the positivistic detachment of the knowing from the known and the observer from the observed is that according to the positivist epistemology of practice,

> craft and artistry had no lasting place in rigorous practical knowledge.

Similarly, Schön (1983 p.345) noted that the technical rational model

> also leads us to recognize that the scope of technical expertise is limited by situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and conflict

and that

> when researched theories and techniques are inapplicable, the professional cannot legitimately claim to be expert, but only to be especially well prepared to reflect-in-action. (ibid)

Schön (1983, pp. 68-9) argued that reflection-in-action turns the reflecting practitioner into a researcher in the practice context. It enables him/her to construct a new theory of the unique case and liberates him/her from the need to utilise the

categories of established theory and technique or to limit his/her inquiry to the consideration of ways that require prior relations with the ends. In framing his/her issue of concern and working out his/her heuristic solution to this identified problem, he/she integrates the means with the ends and the thinking with the doing and subsequently turns to action in the course of doing so. He/she is able to incorporate implementation in his/her enquiry as his/her experimentation in and with a type of action. He/she is also able to carry out reflection-in-action even when the situations are uncertain or unique since such act of reflection does not require the dichotomies of 'Technical Rationality' which repress the reflection on the part of the practitioners and overcompensates being skilful at the techniques of selective inattention, junk categories and situational control, in order to maintain the constancy of their knowledge-in-practice instead of reflection. Schön's reason for this act of overcompensation is a fear of uncertainty which he regards as a sign of weakness and a failure to communicate and verbalise what the practitioners know how to do, coupled with a failure to justify the quality or rigour of this emobodied knowledge. He pointed out that this reason renders the study of reflection-in-action all the more important.

Schön's (1983 p.166) solution ran as follows: In the reflective conversation the inquirer seeks to control variables for the intention of an hypothesis-testing experiment that is based on "the situation's potential for transformation". In doing so he/she enters the situation and produces an objective knowledge which can be falsified. He/she includes personal knowledge as well which is compelled by the inquirer's "commitment to appreciative system and overarching theory" and merely involves those members of a community of inquiry who share these commitments. The experiment can show that the transformation was not satisfactory and thus requires amendment of practice.

Schön applied his alternative reflection-in-action epistemology in *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, (Schön, 1987), in which he had proposed that university-based professional schools mimic traditions of education for practice which stress coaching and learning by doing and that

> professional education should be redesigned to combine the teaching of applied science with coaching in the artistry of reflection-in-action. (p. xii)

Schön (1987 p.322) proposed a model of

> The phenomenology of practice – reflection on the reflection-in-action of practice

that encourages the study of the organizational life of the practitioners.

His theory and theoretical guidelines for that model included the incorporation of the ways in which the practitioners deal with the constraints of their organisational settings into the reflective practicum, as well as the careful consideration of the patterns of phenomena by the reflective practitioner and the need for a high level of capability on his/her part thereby to describe his/her observations, propose daring and occasionally simple models of experience and test them in accordance with the limitations of the action settings. They also stressed the need for a constructionist

perspective as phenomena of practice in organisations depend on the types of reality that are being constructed by the individuals for themselves, as well as on the manner in which they organise and form their words and the manner in which the individuals who hold similar and different ways of framing reality interact.

As for the test of validity, reliability and rigour of reflection-in-practice theories and accounts of professional practice, in his T*he Reflective Turn: Case Studies in and on Educational Practice*, Schön (1991) edited a book of fourteen different contributions in which the contributing authors utilised the method of reflection-in-practice to convey, critically analyse, re-evaluate, identify, process, theorise and explain their practice to the readers.

In the conclusion of this book, Schön (1991, p. 348) noted that

> A more rigorous approach to testing the validity of a proposed account of reality…is the one for which Karl Popper is best known (Popper, 1968)…If we follow Popper's line of thought, then, appropriate rigor in the study of practice will depend on the researcher's ability to generate, compare, and discriminate among multiple representations of practice phenomena - that is, to formulate alternate causal stories of the phenomenon in question and test their competitive resistance to refutation.

Indeed, as for the validation and testing of the validity and reliability of the theories of practice, Schön (1983, 1987, 1991) remained fixated within the propositional, Aristotelian and Popperian logic of wholly conceptual abstraction, generalisation and rigor. The propositional, Aristotelian and Popperian, test of rigour, validity and reliability of theories of professional practices involves the act of testing out, examining and validating the reliability of theories and ideas through refuting the reliability of the alternative possibilities, thus ensuring the validity of the theories under examination and validation. This, in my mind, inclines to reduce and mechanise human practices and accounts of their practices into propositional and linguistic statements that are either accepted or rejected and to disembody them from human emotions, experiences, intentions, practices and living.

Nonetheless, in *The New Scholarship Requires A New Epistemology*, Schön (1995) had moved into suggesting the need for AR cycles to be incorporated in the method of reflection-in-action. He suggested that the new scholarship required a type of distinct AR, with its own norms, that would challenge the technical rationality that is the traditional and dominating epistemology in academic research. He stressed the need for academics to observe themselves in their practice, reflect on their observation, describe it, and reflect on what they describe. He argued that failing to teach our doing in this manner risks us teaching in bad faith and not teaching what we know-in-action. He stressed that the validation of the type of knowledge that we generate must conform to strict criteria of appropriate rigour and that the new scholars' claims to knowledge must be subjected to critical debate both in academic communities and other communities.

He pleaded for an

epistemology of reflective practice, which includes what Kurt Lewin described as action research (p. 34)

in order to be able to properly account for both the use of knowledge generated in the academy and the production of actionable knowledge that takes the form of models and prototypes that could be adapted, through reflective transfer, to new practice situations. He noted that his own experience in studying MIT's Project Athena[9], where he undertook case studies of the project, had enabled him to illustrate the type of AR that he pleaded for and "to suggest the epistemological, institutional, and political issues it raises within the university".

Indeed, he noted that the type of AR he was thinking about takes the form of a Deweyan educational and pragmatic inquiry where

> thought intertwined with action – reflection in and on action – which proceeds from doubt to the resolution of doubt, to the generation of new doubt. (p. 31)

He thus regarded the embodied knowledge that is produced through the systematic heuristic enquiry on behalf of a reflective practitioner into his/her own practice as

> a legitimate and appropriate rigorous way of knowing and generating knowledge. (p. 32)

Indeed, Dewey challenged the inclination on the part of the traditional forms of epistemology to separate thought from the world and had worked out a new approach to which he referred as "instrumentalism". This approach views thought genetically as the product of the interrelationship among the organism, the environment and knowledge and as having practical instrumentality in the guidance and control of that interaction.

Hence in the two decades prior to his passing away in 1997, Schön had moved from offering a constructive criticism of what he argued is the disembodying, disconnecting and abstracting, traditional positivistic 'technical rationality' means of theorising, analysing and explaining, professional practices, learning, development and knowledge, onto a plea for the users of that post-positivistic reflection-in/on-action method, that he offered as a post-positivistic alternative to traditional positivism, or 'Technical Rationality', to use AR cycles in the epistemology and scholarship of reflection-in/on-action and their theorisation, analysis, evaluation and explanation, of their professional practices.

He moved his post-positivistic method of a practitioner's reflecting in and on action and embodied learning and knowledge in order to generate and convey a self-dialectical, living, reflective, reflexive and embodied, theory of his/her professional

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[9] Project Athena was an MIT project which aimed to integrate computational technology into the curriculum and produce a campus-wide distributed computing environment for educational use. It ran from 1983 to 1991 and consisted of a wide computer network of over 1300 end-user workstations distributed around the MIT campus. This campus wide network allowed a given user to access his/her personal files and customised environment configuration from any workstation using a distributed client/server model.

practice from the wholly propositional, Aristotelian and Popperian, means of evaluation, enquiring and presentation, and validation into those of AR enquiries.

In his critical engagement with Schön's ideas, Whitehead (1989a) stated that the propositional form of presentation would hinder the ability of academics, including those who whilst expected be able to comprehend the requirement to establish an alternative to the propositional form of theory have chosen to remain within it, to answer the dialogical question 'How can we encourage the conditions necessary for teachers to enter into a dialogue aimed at understanding?'. He illustrated this claim by providing a citation from Schön (1983) wherein the author argued that reflection-in-action turns the researcher into a researcher in the practice context, enables him/her to generate a new theory of the unique case and liberates him/her from the need to follow the categories of established theory and technique. Nonetheless, he criticised Schön's commitment to the fundamental category of established theory in grounding his work and theories within the propositional form.

He cited this, in the section **PRODUCING A LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY** (bold and capitalisation in original) as evidence for his claim:

> Theories are theories regardless of their origin: there are practical, common-sense theories as well as academic or scientific theories. A theory is not necessarily accepted, good, or true; it is only a set of interconnected propositions that have the same referent - the subject of the theory. Their interconnectedness is reflected in the logic of relationships among propositions: change in propositions at one point in the theory entails changes in propositions elsewhere in it. Theories are vehicles for explanation, prediction, explanatory theory explains events by setting forth propositions from which these events may be inferred, a predictive theory sets forth propositions from which inferences about future events may be made, and a theory of control describes the conditions under which events of a certain kind may be made to occur. In each case, the theory has an 'if...then....' form.' (Argyris, C. and Schön, D. 1975).

Furthermore, Whitehead (1993 p.164) added that whilst Schön (1983,1987) suggested numerous ways in which educators can reflect and formulate their rationale for practice, he did not specifically advocate a dialogical approach. Instead he wrote almost exclusively using conceptual models and did not demonstrate how his concepts could achieve a practicable reality. Whitehead also argued that unlike Schön he was able to enable his own students "to realise democratic processes within the learning" and in turn to "enhance the learning itself".

Nevertheless, with Schön's movement into recommending complementing the reflective practice paradigm and the reflecting-in/on-action/practice epistemology and methodology with Lewinian AR cycles, Whitehead adopted some of Schön's insights. Whitehead (2004a) noted that he followed Schön's (1995 p.34) observations in his understanding that the issue of introducing and legitimating the types of AR that are associated with new scholarship should combine the efforts of both the institution and the scholars themselves. He interpreted Schön as noting that the development of an epistemology of practice for the new scholarship would be hindered by both the power of the disciplinary in-groups that have emerged around

the dominant epistemology of the research universities and the inability of those who could become new scholars to make their practice into appropriately rigorous research (Schön, 1995, p.34).

Similarly, Whitehead also added the following remarks in a British Educational Research Association-Practitioner Research electronic seminar correspondence on February, 13, 2004 at
http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/wa.exe?A2=ind0402&L=bera-practitioner researcher&T=0&F=&S=&P=1861,

> In response to John Elliott's (2004) paper, *The struggle to redefine the relationship between 'knowledge' and 'action' in the academy: some reflections on action research,* "I've taken to heart Donald Schon's (1995) point that the problem of introducing and legitimizing in the university the kinds of action research associated with the new scholarship is one not only of the institution but of the scholars themselves (Schon, 1995, p.33). In response to John Elliott's struggle to redefine the relationship between 'knowledge' and 'action' in the academy I am suggesting that there is already evidence in the academy of the legitimation of this redefinition. I intend to direct your attention to the sites where I am claiming that this redefinition has been legitimated by practitioner-researchers who share John Elliott's viewpoint that 'education' is an activity directed by process values rather than objectives which refer to extrinsic outcomes of the activity. For example, I think you will find that at the time Donald Schon was writing about the possibility of creating a new epistemology for the new scholarship Kevin Eames actually created one
> (see http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/kevin.shtml.

I have been captivated by the idea and the possibility of the idea of using direct reflection in and on action on practice in theorising professional practices. I have taken inspiration by the development of Schön's epistemology and heuristic approach, of reflection in and on practice from a critique and criticism of positivism into a plea for the use of AR cycles in the theorisation of professional practices and embodied knowledge and learning. I was wondering if this idea could be used by a person to theorise his/her practice of being, living and developing in, with, and towards the world and more importantly to re-evaluate and theorise auto-phenomenologically the meanings and implications of the practice of leading a meaningful, productive, empowering and self-fulfilling existence. This raised the possibility of merging this idea with the idea of the LET approach.

1.7. The Living Educational Theory approach and Action Research

Now I shall provide a short explanation of AR. What I am seeking to do here is to explain my reasons for using and being interested in AR since 2003. I am not going to look at the debates among AR researchers.[10]. Instead, I shall explain, identify, re-evaluate and determine the relationship between the contributions of Whitehead and McNiff to the development of the LET approach, and my own work into the construction and development of an alternative dialectical form of an educational

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[10] If the reader is interested in such debates see McNiff (1988, 2000, 2010); Whitehead (1993, 2009b); McNiff and Whitehead (2006); Reason and Bradbury (2001, 2006); Greenwood and Levin (1998); McMahon (1999); Dick (2010).

action research enquiry and approach. Action research is an orientation to inquiry that covers a wide range of methods. In AR, the practitioners or activists become the researchers of their own practice in order to improve what they are doing in the midst of action, rather than long afterwards.

Action research is usually applied to dynamic situations where the practitioner (activist) studies not only the situation, but also their own effectiveness and involvement in the process. It is designed to embed and embody the practitioner in his/her practice settings and location and to directly address the common discrepancy between personal and organisational intentions, values and beliefs and the way that individuals act in practice in ways that inhibit transformational change. It is essentially a reflective process of heuristic, systematic and disciplined, self-reflective enquiry of planning, acting, observing and reflecting and re-evaluating that is designed to solve given problems and concerns with a view to improve social situations and matters of concern for the action researchers.

The emergence of AR has been a creative response to a growing dissatisfaction with what was deemed traditional heuristic methods, tools, solutions and approaches to researching human practices, which are too often remote, detached and disengaged from the people and the contexts which they seek to affect. The overall aim of action researchers is to break down what they refer to as the false objectivity of much conventional research which sees the role of 'researcher' as that of a detached, objective and external, expert and observer.

The conventional role of the researcher becomes in AR enquiries more like that of a mentor or facilitator who is there to assist fellow co-participants to drive their own high quality inquiries in a systematic way. An AR enquiry is not concerned with prediction and control, but rather works to enable meaning and interpretation to evolve, change and transform as the research work proceeds and adapts to the emerging strands of inquiry. It is embedded in the local particular context and thereby allows those who are the closest involved in the situation under study to determine what is of importance and what is not. It is open to new information and understandings which challenge and surprise underlying assumptions instead of working with externally defined and imposed measures. A special emphasis has been placed by action researchers on the relationship between the theories that practitioners hold about their practices and what they actually do and practice and whether or not the practice does in fact fulfil the practitioners' values, intentions, commitments, beliefs and needs.

Thus the fundamental aim of AR is to improve practice rather than to produce knowledge. The knowledge is derived from the action researcher working on improving the practice and is thus secondary in relation to the improvement of the practice under investigation and theorisation. The emphasis of AR is on the study of a social situation with a view to improve the quality of action within it. The quality of action is defined by the way it works to fulfil the intentions and needs of the practitioner within the social situation in which he/she is acting and in turn enables him/her to empower and fulfil himself/herself. The knowledge, understandings and learning that are produced in AR enquiries is either designed to improve practice or

is amassed in the course of the heuristic process of improving the practice and solving issues of concerns to the action researchers and that are shared by others who may be interested in the subject. The purpose of AR enquiries is to feed and nurture practical judgements in concrete situations by using data as a basis for reflectively improving practice. The focus of AR is on the quality of the inquiry and on developing clear, productive and helpful understandings and resonance. The validity of the theories or hypotheses that it generates depends on their usefulness in helping and enabling people to act intelligently and skilfully. It is therefore a very practical form of enquiry that is validated by its working on improving the intended practice and the outcomes that it has brought, namely how the intended process of improving the practice and situation has been carried out and how successful it has been.

An AR practice draws on a wide field of influence, including critical thinking, liberationist and humanistic thought, and feminist ethics. Carr (1986), Carr and Kemiss (1986), Kolb (1984) and Zuber-Skerritt (1982) constitute examples of the influence of critical thinking on AR. This influence takes the form of the AR cycle being perceived as a learning process, whereby individuals engage in learning and create knowledge through the means of critically reflecting upon their own actions and experiences, developing abstract concepts, testing the implications of these concepts in new situations, creating their own knowledge and understanding of a situation and acting upon these new knowledge and understanding, thereby improving practice and advancing knowledge in the field. LET AR has been following the humanistic and liberal tradition of existential, continental and humanistic philosophies and thinking that are based on and around human lives and living in, with, and towards the world, as well as on human values, empowerment, self-fulfilment, a meaningful and productive life and professional practice and self-actualisation (Whitehead, 1981, 2009b; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). The LET AR cycle serves for the LET inquirer to self-empower and self-fulfil in his/her practice and professional and personal life. Marshall (1999, 2001, 2004); Brydon-Miller et al., (2004); Lather (1994, 2001); Hartog (2004) and Griffiths (1994) and Griffiths and Davies (1993) interrelate feminism and feminist ethics with AR, and incline to use AR within their feministic research into the evaluation of the treatment and the improvement of the ways women carry out research and are treated in the academy, in particular, and their workplace, in general.

It also draws on a range of research methods to gather and represent evidence, mostly qualitative in nature. It is usually carried out by groups of individuals who share common concerns in their social situation and act collaboratively to solve these concerns and improve the social situations, and therefore typically involves groups of participants, co-researchers and co-subjects engaging in cycles of action and critical reflection. In fact the term 'action research' covers a wide range of methods including co-operative inquiry, participatory AR, action science, action inquiry and appreciative inquiry. Co-operative enquiry (Heron, 1996; Reason and Heron, 1995; Heron and Reason, 2001) follows up the ideas of Freire (1973, 1996, 2004) and calls for research *with* rather than *on* people (my italics). It is based on the idea that all the participants are fully and equally involved in making research decisions in their capacity as co-researchers. It is grounded within a research cycle

that interrelates propositional, practical, experiential and presentational knowledge. Practitionary action research, on its part, has also been influenced by Freire. It pushes cooperative enquiry forwards and is grounded within, defined, and evaluated in terms of the quality of the active intervention, development and change that are worked and carried out within communities and groups. Action inquiry aims to enable individuals, teams and organisations empower and transform more constructively through the means of simultaneously interelating action and inquiry as a disciplined leadership practice that increases the wider effectiveness of the produced actions (Sherman and Torbert, 2000; Torbert, 2001, 2004; Reason and Torbert, 2001). Action science (Argyris, 1970, 1980, 1983, 1994; et al., 1985) is a reflective process of heuristic problem solving in the course of which individuals are working with others in either teams or within a community of practice to improve the way in which they deal with issues and overcome problems. It studies the way human beings design their actions in difficulat situations of tension and conflict. Action science and action inquiry are related disciplines that offer methods for inquiring into and developing a connection among the action researchers' purposes, theories and frames, as well as behaviour, and impact in the world. These practices can be applied at individual, small group, and organisational level. Examples of methods that promote reflection, dialogue and connection include: Case studies, diaries, document analysis, community stories, oral histories, participant observation, appreciative inquiry, in-depth interviewing, intergenerational interviewing, focus groups, use of tape/video recordings and transcripts, photography, arts and drama, community juries, running commentaries, shadow studies, checklists, questionnaires, inventories, analytic memos, large group processes such as Open Space[11] and a host of other activities and events.

AR has the most longstanding and established practice in organizational settings that aim to contribute both to more effective work practices and better understanding of the processes of organisational change (e.g., Williams, 2004; McNiff, 2000; Reason and Bradbury, 2001; Torbert, 2001, 2004; Reason and Torbert, 2001). Examples of these organisational settings could be school and classrooms situations and improving the way they run and their proficiency in terms of students' learning and teachers' performances, or social situations of combating and resolving social issues of concerns and relationships in the workplaces. In this way, AR draws on a variety of forms of information gathering and feedback to the concerned members that are designated to lead to a problem solving dialogue. A typical inquiry group consists of between six and twenty people. As co-researchers they participate in the thinking that goes into the research —framing the questions to be explored, agreeing on the methods to be employed, and together making sense of their experiences. As co-subjects they also participate in the action that is being studied. Indeed, the co-researchers engage in cycles of action and reflection. In the action phases they

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[11] An open space is a space where all the participants are working collaboratively to establish the trusting conditions that are favourable to the formation of a community of enquiry and to ensuring that no participant is left out and that each participant is able to feel safe and free to participate and share his/her own point of view on the issue of concern. The participants are invited to reflect on their participation and learning and provide some feedback, either written or verbal, on what they have learned about the topic, themselves, their fellow participants (co-inquirers), the space itself, and the learning process that has taken place within the open space.

experiment with new forms of personal or professional practice. In the reflection phase they reflect on their experience critically, learn from their successes and failures, and develop theoretical perspectives which inform their work in the next action phase. Cooperative inquiry groups thus cycle between and integrate four forms of knowing—experiential, presentational, propositional and practical.

The term 'action research' was first coined by Kurt Lewin in his 1946 paper "*Action Research and Minority Problems*". In that paper, Lewin described action research as

> a comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action and research leading to social action. (p. 35)

He maintained that

> we need reconnaissance to show us whether we move in the right direction and with what speed we move (p. 38)

and that

> rational social management proceeds in using a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact-finding about the result of the action. (p. 38)

He added that,

> we will have to learn to handle these relatively large units of periods and social bodies without lowering the standards of validity and reliability to which we are accustomed in the psychological recording of the more microscopic units of actions and periods of minutes or seconds of activity (pp. 42-3)

and that

> research that produces nothing but books will not suffice. (p. 35)

In the 1980s, Winter (1989), Carr and Kemmis (1986) and Carr (1990) have turned Lewin's (1946) idea of AR into the basis for a practical, adequate and coherent educational science and teacher research. They have created an educational AR that enables teachers to reflect on and convey their educational practices to fellow teachers and educators.

Carr and Kemmis (1986 p.193) noted that

> Educational action research, employing a dialectical view of rationality as socially-constructed and historically-embedded, sets out to locate the actions of the actors in a broader social and historical framework. It treats the actor as the bearer of ideology as well as its 'victim'. By changing his or her own practices, understanding or situations, action research reminds the practitioner that he or she is, in some small way, changing the world.

Likewise, Carr and Kemmis (1986 pp.193-4.) proposed that,

> Action researchers can examine their own educational practices to discover ways in which they are distorted away from these values of social justice; they can also examine the situations and institutions in which they practice to see how they are constituted so as to prevent more rational communication, more just and democratic decision-making, and productive work which provides those involved with real access to an interesting and satisfying life.

Whitehead (1993) related his LET approach to these other approaches and noted that Winter (1989), Carr and Kemmis (1986) and Carr (1990) "outline the principles of action research" and acknowledge that "a defining characteristic of action research is a study by the researcher of their own practice".

He drew on Winter's (1989, p. 9) definition of action research and like Winter also perceived AR as a

> dialectical, reflexive, questioning and collaborative form of inquiry

that is embodied

> within the action researchers'…own sustained educative relationships in their workplace. (ibid)

Still, Whitehead (1991, 1993) also criticised the logical form of these discourses and communication of the AR enquiries for being "purely propositional".

He offered a form of AR enquiry where educational knowledge

> has a dialectical form which is not amenable to systematic representation in a purely propositional form (Whitehead and Lomax 1987).

Whitehead (1991, in 1993, p. 67) noted that

> Like critical action research (Carr and Kemmis 1986) the dialectical approach will be shown to incorporate a consideration of values and power.

He has also transformed the critical AR of Winter (1989), Kemmis (1986), Gibson (1985), Carr and Kemmis (1986) by working out a dialectical form of an action research enquiry that bears the format of a self-enquiry by an individual practitioner into his/her own professional practice and educational development. McNiff (1988, 2000, 2006); McNiff and Whitehead, (2005, 2006); Whitehead and Mcniff, 2006; McNiff et al., (1996) have been writing about AR from within Whitehead's dialectical, living, embodied and dialogical, educational theory approach to it, and have been following Whitehead's development of theoretical ideas in AR workshops, supervision and publications. According to Whitehead (2009b), others have begun to do likewise and develop a career for themselves by doing so.

I have chosen the AR approach for two reasons. First, I have chosen it to research and develop my own approach. This implies the heuristic process of my creative writing and b/logging in action, practice and praxis and self-dialectically, auto-

phenomenologically, cathartically, creatively and auto-poietically enquiring-within-writing&b/logging, through, within and over time, space and practice and praxis into my construction and development and transformation. Second, I have chosen it so that hopefully other people will be able to understand and benefit from my research.

I was attracted by the possibility of answering my main research question and resolving my problems with how empirical psychologies and the human and social sciences approach the human subject. AR has also enabled me to embody and live out my research enquiry directly within my research practices, developing, enhancing and improving, within and through my creatively b/logging and heuristic enquiring-within-writing&b/logging. This has moved me from the point of having a mainly theoretical concern to the point of actually managing to do something concrete, constructive, meaningful, creative, hopeful, self-fulfilling, empowering, enriching and productive, and being able to convey creatively and recreate the practical and creative solution to the wholly theoretical problem in a manner that could make sense to and perhaps even empower and enrich its readers.

My approach is embedded in the local context of an individual who is working on heuristically defining and redefining, enquiring into, recreating, re-evaluating, identifying, processing and making sense of his/her being, living and developing in the world as a practitioner, within an intention to improve its aesthetic, ethical and authentic quality, and amassing an ontological meaning, security, fullness, completeness and self-fulfilment. My approach seeks to follow the human subject in his/her auto-development and self-transformation across, within, and over an explicit time, space, practice and enquiry. In my case, this self-dialectical and auto-phenomenological development, recreation, re-establishment and self-transformation is from being a wholly theoretical critical humanistic psychologist of the human subject and human existence (and a rather isolated researcher) into being an empirical and practical researcher, relating to and engaging with other researchers and practitioners. The latter ontology entails being an academic who has managed to come up with a clear and convincing alternative to wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated and generalising, linguistic statements, theories, models and paradigms, and to engage with fellow researchers and practitioners in the course of communicating and rationalising it.

When I rationalised my relationship with the LET approach in my original draft, my researches embodied my AR in the dialectics of asking myself the questions: how do I improve what I am doing? And, how do I live and implement this enquiry in my practice and development as a practitioner? Action researchers draw on their failure to implement and fulfil their values in their professional practice and educational developments as practitioners. I observed this failure and worked out plans and cycles to reverse, shift and redirect this failure and qualitatively and self-dialectically transform it into a more productive form of practice and educational development where I was able to fulfil my values in their practice and educational development as a practitioner. I followed AR cycles that are directly embodied in the question, 'How do I improve this process of education here?' and that drew on the dialectics of how I experience problems when my educational values are negated in my practice. I imagined ways of overcoming my problems. I acted on a chosen

solution. I evaluated the outcomes of my actions. I modified my problems, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations. Then, I came up with a LET account that described, explained and showed how this process was carried out. I subsequently transformed the LET AR approach into the more ontological question, how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself? and the heuristic tool and approach that I have already introduced in the Introduction. I shall show how I have done this in the next part.

1. 8. The Living Educational Theory approach, Ole Dreier[12] and the Theory of the Person

Ole Dreier's (1999) plea for the theory of the person and his analysis of the ways the human subject has been approached, related to, and theorised by contemporary researchers, have helped me relate the LET approach to my own research.

Whitehead and I used, at the end of 2004 and the beginning of 2005, Dreier's (1999) paper, *Personal Trajectories of Participation across Contexts of Social Practice*, to establish our relationship to it, and transform Whitehead's LET approach from the theorisation of educational practices and developments into the theorisation of the human subject. This was done using the concrete and applied, living, embodied, dialectical and dialogical educational AR. We publicised our research in our websites (Serper, 2009; Whitehead, 2009b) and presented it in January, 2005 to the Department of Education's reading group of the *Centre for Sociocultural and Activity Theory* at Bath.

Nonetheless, after working with me on that, Whitehead had made Dreier (1999) the basis and focus of an "**Application for the ESRC Research Seminars Competition**" for the LET group, that entitled '*Inclusionality, Learning and Living Educational Standards of Judgement'* and could still be accessed from http://www.jackwhitehead.com/esrcsen270105.htm[13]. In making our work on Dreier's (1999) paper the complete focus of an application on the extent and merit of' 'inclusionality', he had started the disagreement with me over the issue of the movement of the LET approach from the dialectics and being a straightforward and practical dialectical form of educational AR onto 'inclusionality' and being an 'inclusional' form of educational research and AR. I should like to review the paper, extract its essence, and discuss Whitehead's impressions of it, and also to use this review in order to move on to a discussion of 'inclusionality'.

In his paper, Dreier introduced and discussed the need to develop a psychological conceptualisation of the person in its participating in structures of social practice and

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[12] Please note that I am aware of the fact that Dreier's work has been developing and advancing quite significantly since 1999. In this section I merely wish to relate the LET approach and my own work with it to ontology and the theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject through a critique of the specific paper of Dreier (1999). This is by no means an evaluation of Ole Dreier's work and impressive achievements over the years. It is just a way to prepare for my transformation of the LET approach to ontology and the theorisation of the human subject and human existence and also for my critique and criticism of 'inclusionality' and inclusional LET.

[13] The application failed, after much effort on the part of Whitehead and the LET group to produce it, and was never discussed again by Whitehead or anyone in the LET group.

to lay down some of the most basic groundwork for such a theory. He defined the required theory of the person as one which accounts for what it takes and means to be a person who is living in a complex social practice and what persons mean by finding a direction to their lives, which normally not only includes what they aspire to be part of in one context, but rather a particular "throwout" for a future composition of their conduct of life with attached forms of participation and concerns, and that embraces the ways persons unfold their everyday conduct of life and the ways individual life-courses stretch across social time and space and comprehensive processes of learning that are involved in the unfolding and change of a personal conduct of life and life-trajectory. This involves a form of learning which is in theory unending and that calls for many forms of reconsideration and re-learning.

According to Dreier,

> to ground a conception of the person in its participation in structures of social practice in no way excludes to recognize the personal significance of values and ideas about the good life. It only means to insist that values and ideas are also encountered and will gain particular personal significances in different personal social contexts, and that we must grasp how they become a particular part in the person's conduct of life and life-trajectory. (p. 30).

He discussed issues of subjectivity as encountered by persons in their participation in complex structures of social practice, and put forward, developed, and related the concepts of personal conduct of life and life-trajectory to the relevant literature. This literature included basic theoretical approaches to the person, self, and identity within non-Cartesian psychologies. He reviewed these in light of their heuristic theorisation and conceptualisation and he offered a wholly theoretical plea to display a theory about the person, self, and identity and individual subjectivity in social practice. He suggested that this critique holds even for theories which acknowledge that we must grasp the person, identity, and self in a social world and that it is, indeed, unusual to find that precisely a theory of the person, self, and identity stops short of theorising the eminently subjective aspects of personal social practice that are expected to be observed in a theory of the individual in social practice. He contended that the grounding of people's lives in social practice becomes so weak and fragile that their lives provide the impression of easily disintegrating into disjointed bits and pieces or multiple and fragmented selves (e.g. Rowan & Cooper, 1999). He maintained that these fragility and degeneration exist and take place since social practice is not homogenous, but rather is made up of diverse, located contextual practices which are linked in a social structure.

He suggested that underestimating the full grounding of personal life in structures of social practice leads to generating theories about abstract structures of personality or representations of oneself and, in turn, fails to account for its true meaning: its concrete contents, what it is a part of, concerned with, the full implication of many of its real possibilities, challenges, dilemmas, problems and contradictions. He argued that most narrative conceptualisations of the person, identity and self, fail to adequately convey individuals' personal organisation of their conduct of life and life trajectory, and even those theories which argue that the person, identity and self in a

social world should be conceptualised, fail to convey the person as a relatively free-floating and subjective agent, and in turn follow the contemporary social constructionism trend. Thus, according to Dreier much of the current ways of theorising the person have little bearing upon the explanation of what it means and takes to be and develop as a person.

He noted the need to conceptualise subjects as participants in structures of ongoing social practice and to produce a theory about the person. He pointed out that his critique of the inadequacy of this research had made him plea for the development of theories about complex personal trajectories of participation in structures of social practice and the establishment of such analytic means for an adequate self-understanding. Nevertheless, he asserted his intention in this paper to merely put the case for the most rudimentary underpinning for such a theory of the person and stops short at exemplifying the theory and testing out and carrying through the actual practical, empirical, heuristic and methodological act, practice and praxis of the theorisation, conceptualisation and re-evaluation.

Dreier began by noting that specific studies of participants in social practices – such as of clients' lives in and across the contexts of their family, work, school, psychotherapy sessions etc., - have enabled him to understand the significance of basing a theory of the person on the idea of personal participation in structures of social practice (see also Dreier, 1996, 1998, 2000[14]). He noted that the main aim of the paper is to clarify and provide the basis for such a theory of the person that needs further elaboration not by examining the person directly from the inside, but rather through looking into the world with a view to analyse and comprehend the person as a participant in that world. He argued that the merit of such a theory rests upon the comprehension that being a multilateral person means both an indication of leading a multilateral life in which different concerns are being practiced by participating differently in various contexts and holding various streaks, sides, or patches to oneself.

Dreier identified "participation" as "a key concept in a theory of the person" and noted that he does so for four reasons: (1) taking on participation as a key concept in a theory of the person implies understanding subjects as always already involved in social practice; (2) the idea of participation accounts for individual subjects as being always situated in local contexts of social practice and involved from there in mostly practical relations with social structures of practice; (3) all individual participation is a partial and particular feature of a social practice; and, (4) the fundamental human duality between acting within the existing restriction of a social practice and enlarging its scope of possibilities (Holzkamp 1983) is grounded in a similar duality of forms of participation. He suggested that subjects who move across contexts must act, think and feel flexibly since their types of participation change due to these varied context embodying specific positions and social relationships that incline to hold a large range of possibilities and personal concerns for them.

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[14] This paper was referred to by Dreier (1999) as 'In Press', but was published in 2000.

In reference to Holzkamp (1983) and Taylor (1995b), he took this to apply that individuals' behaviour is more than the mere implementation of schemata, procedures, and rules. Instead, individuals need to analyse and situate standards and rules in order to incorporate them in concrete situated action (Taylor, 1995b). Since the meaning of their behaviour is often derived by intentionally differing from such standards, they are able to connect with their social circumstances and discourses in different ways and to critique, influence and change them (Holzkamp, 1983). He contended that in general social theorists fail to understand boundaries and diversities in the structure of social practice when they analyse the personal meaning of participating in a particular context. He added that they incline instead to attribute it to the societal function that they presume to be fulfilled by the particular context, and, in turn, to view them as primarily functional distinctions that are based on the division of labour, institutions, and the like.

Hence, Dreier argued that a concept of the everyday conduct of life is not sufficient to theorise the basic complexity of personal social practice in the structure of social practice and the challenges driving the formation of personality. He argued that what is required is a concept of personal life-trajectory which would serve to theorise the ways individual life-courses extend across social time and space. He also contended that individuals' personal social practice maintains its location in and across specific situations regardless of how they spread the particular locations and is therefore not essentially global. He used the concept of trajectory to stress the neglected spatial dimension in the duality of projecting and transjecting across social contexts and altering contextual participations. He suggested that the flow of the life-course has a spatial dimension and inclines to spread out across social contexts in the same way that both everyday personal social practice and personal courses of life do. He added that the individual participates in a changing configuration of particular social contexts and composes these changing contextual participations into a personal life-trajectory across the life-span.

For his suggested heuristic mode of theorising and conceptualising the person, Dreier distinguished among personal locations, positions, and stances (see also Dreier, 1993, 1994). He defined "location" as indicating the specific place in the world where a subject is found and emerging in a particular context and from where the personal perspective reaches into the world. He suggested that "location" indicates the concrete situatedness of personal practice. Likewise, he defined "position" as the particular social position which a subject occupies in the existing social context. Nevertheless, he pointed out that merely using concepts of "location" and "position" would fail to properly account for the ways in which individuals evaluate, engage with, affirm, and modify their locations and positions. This, according to Dreier, means that what is left is an impersonal and deterministic notion of subjects in social practice. He subsequently suggested that in order to be able to think of these personal aspects in theoretical terms what is called for is a "third concept of personal stances".

He envisaged "stances" as the individual's perspectives on his/her complex personal social practice. He maintained that this concept is in fact required due to the complex and heterogeneous essence of both the social practice and the individuals

who take part in it and in order to enable individuals to secure personal reflection and direct themselves in the structures of their complex, ongoing and personal social practice. Furthermore, he argued that the manner in which individuals construct their complex personal social practices in the structures of their ongoing social practice needs to be theorised in terms of specific commitments, places, organisations of rhythms of activity and the like, and that this does require individuals to develop and adopt personal stances on what they participate in, do, and want. He pointed out that in order to avoid the risk of failing to achieve other important goals, individuals are required to clearly identify for themselves premises of action that could enable them to stretch their participations across different times and places.

In fact, he maintained that to adopt stances also implies taking sides in conflicts and contradictions of social practice. The reason that he attributed to this act of taking side in conflicts was that such stances could be either clear or confusing, either unplanned or planned, which means that different standpoints could be derived from similar positions. He noted that this is due to all human beings embodying different and overlapping positions during their personal social practice. He added that this is something that means that the development of personal stances depends on the existing interrelationships between social contexts in the structure of social practice and that stances are embedded in the person's complex and diverse participations and are directed at orienting the person's participations in and across broad scopes of social contexts.

Likewise, according to Dreier, stances do not depend on some imported higher grounds. This is since adopting a stance takes place through using a shifting set of premises that derives from the very same components which are in turn related and compared. He suggested that this is what is responsible for the composed nature of the generalisation of the stances and for the relating and comparing of contrasts which is thereby playing an important role in their identification. He also noted the existence of a kind of —"core blindness" (Lave & Wenger, 1991) that is associated with being a full participant in a specific context and which plays a similar role in a contextual theory of social practice as the concept of habitus does in Bourdieu's theory of social practice (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

He argued that this "core blindness" prevents the identification of specific major premises and functionalities of that social practice and in turn must be overcome by taking part in other, contrasting and contextual, practices, and contrasting and comparing experiences from these varied positions. He differentiated the idea of "core blindness" in a contextual theory of social practice from the one in Bourdieu's "theory of social practice" because in a contextual theory of social practice the cross-contextual diversity of personal social practice enables the individuals some leeway of reflection and change in relation to their "core blindnesses", whilst in Bourdieu's overarching culturalist notion of habitus, it remains ambiguous and doubtful and results in several, distinct and interrelated, core blindnesses in the social practice of the same person and in a given society. He subsequently called for the heuristic conceptualisation and theorisation of social participations to be carried

out in terms of a person acting out social activities in applied real-life and practical real-world social situations.

At the core of his argument was the demonstration and critical analysis of what he took to be the flaws and oversights of existing social theories of social participation. He criticised social theorists for failing to conceptualise boundaries and diversities in the structure of social practice in primarily practical terms. He claimed that these diversities primarily have to be dealt with in practical terms by persons as a part of the conduct of their everyday social practice and life-trajectory. In effect, with a view to demonstrate and establish his claims, Dreier conducted a thorough and rather impressive literature critique and review of the manner in which the subjective, embodied and personal characteristics of the individual person have been treated, conceptualised and perceived by the different social theorists who are researching social practices.

In that review, he criticised theorists who incline to historicize the notion of identity, but fail to explicitly include the diversity in the structure of social practice and personal participations in their conceptualisation. He argued that such social theorists tend to historicize their notion of interpersonal relations in a free-floating manner. He noted that their focus on intersubjectivity is similar to conversational and relational perspectives in current psychology in that it does not understand the way these social relations form located parts of a structured social practice and personal participations. He criticised them for mistaking being situated with being situation-bounded and in turn pleading for the emergence of the idea of 'disembedding' from a place which they take to apply the notion of abstraction as a detachment from any particular place into an ideational nowhere. He argued that this mistake makes them disregard the fact that individuals always act in a situated, embodied manner as participants in local social contexts. This includes situations when they are covering translocal or global, definite or indefinite time-space distance across and within definite time-space locations. He maintained that "Numerous social theorists go along with the abstraction from place which Giddens holds to be a characteristic of modernity (1991, p. 146)". This place is disembodied from time and place, is no longer confined by the boundaries set by the space in which one moves and in turn is wholly virtual and imaginative.

According to Dreier, Taylor's work is an example wherein actions are treated as abstractions from the contextual structure of personal participation. He argued that Taylor did not address the significance of people conducting their lives across these two spheres for the formation and dynamics of identity. He also noted how social theorists like Burkitt (1994) have tended to focus on the role of the interpersonal relations in the formation of identity. Dreier criticised Gidden's (1991) argument that self-identity, as a coherent phenomenon, presumes a narrative. He contended that theories of narrative conceptualise the personal conduct of life and life-trajectory one-sidedly in an abstract dimension of time and lose the relations of time-space in person's participation in the structures of social practice. He criticised Giddens for failing to acknowledge the contextual complexity in his analytic manoeuvres and for losing the spatial dimension of the contextual infrastructure of the social practice of the personal conduct of life and life-trajectory in his theoretical

understanding of personal life. He argued that Giddens' use of time-space as a concept for the interconnectedness of time and space in Giddens' notion of the abstraction of time and space, and of disembedding and globalisation, leads to his consideration of trajectories as merely stretching over the time dimension of an individual past-present-future. Similarly, he also criticised Ricoeur (1992) for equally arguing that identity is an emerging temporal sameness with a narrative core.

In addition, Dreier argued that the feminist literature is a good place to examine the way the personal social practice in a complex social practice is being theorised. This is as it can introduce ideas about the authenticity of the individual, self and identity, and emphasise the intrinsic complexities in the personal participation in social practice. Nonetheless, he criticised Griffiths' (1995) means of analysis as "contemplative rather than practical", and argued that she overlooks the grounding of diversities and of personal processes of orientation in relation to them in the participation in social practice of a given individual. He also argued that Griffiths' emphasis on fragmentation makes her unable to conduct a complex personal social practice and life-trajectory, and that she overlooks the idea that an individual must initially incorporate diverse claims and memberships into a personal conduct and trajectory of life in practical and personal terms. He then pleaded for a more practical/applicable stance instead of the contemplative/reflective one, and for locating diversities within a structure of social contexts in a structure of social practice where they are to be dealt with by the individuals in practical terms as a part of the conduct of their everyday social practice and life-trajectory.

Similarly, Dreier criticised Smith's (1987) view of the notion of standpoints on the grounds of failing to make an adequate distinction between "position" and "standpoint" and avoiding the issue of the way individuals deal with overlapping diversities by elaborating particular stances on how to lead their lives in such social structures of practice. He in turn argued that the failure to adequately distinguish "position" and "standpoint" would lead to members of a particular social category of persons adopting a particular common standpoint on social practice. He also added his belief that their participation in it would be turned into a sort of chameleon through discarding many of their vital concerns and pursuits which need to be located and conducted across social structures of practice.

Dreier discussed "reflections", "personal and interpersonal reflection" and "dialogue" and "dialogicality" frequently and referred to reflection as the personal dialogues with oneself. He noted that he views reflection as the human capacity to perform an interior dialogue. He interrelated reflection with dialogicality (see also 1995 p.50) and regarded interpersonal reflection and dialogue in terms of complex personal social practice in life trajectories. He noted that dialogues between people feed personal dialogues and vice versa. He argued that human beings tend to reflect and reconfigure their primary concerns in relation to those of others across varying constellations of social contexts in what used to be an unrecognised manner. He pointed out that dialogues amongst people and with ourselves may be related in problematic social practices in what Calhoun points to Bakhtin's understanding of the modern novel as a reflection of a human capacity to carry on an interior dialogue.

I share with Dreier the belief that the human subject is a wholly diverse, heterogeneous, creative and complex, individualised social being who creatively lives his/her life in and participates and dialogues with the world, as well as himself/herself, and whose complexities, creativeness, distinctiveness and intricacies need to be the focus of a theory of and about a person. Furthermore, using Dreier's criticisms, I can back up my own dissatisfaction with the post-Cartesian critical psychology paradigm and my decision to formulate an entirely new and creative form of an empirical psychology of the human subject and human existence.

Nevertheless, I also think that Dreier merely introduced the problem, offered a literature analytical critique of the flaws in post-Cartesian psychology and highlighted the need for an alternative theory of the person in critical social psychology. However, he did not elaborate on or construct the type of theory of the person that he had in mind. He laid a broad-strokes sketch of this form of theory but had stopped short of developing, creating and forming it. Still his criticism was important because the post-positivistic, post-Cartesian, paradigm in empirical psychology and the social and human sciences has emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as a means to improve the humanisation, concreteness, creativeness and authenticity of the heuristic tools, solutions and approaches to the theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world. Its reasoning for emergence has in fact been to construct and carry out improved forms of psychologies of the human subject and human existence that avoid the mechanisation and objectification of the human subject through quantification and controlled experimentations.

Dreier has enabled me to engage with a piece of work that shared my criticism of the conceptualisation of the person by and in post-positivistic psychologies, as well as positivistic psychology. However, whilst sharing Dreier's wholly theoretical and philosophical view and conceptualisation of the human subject, I also believe that the traditional wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated and generalising, logic, epistemological structure and grounding and means of researching and presentation of arguments, from which Dreier has not shifted, is at the core of the problems with the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the person.

Consequently, rather than convey my view of the type of psychology and theory of the human subject that I share with Dreier, I move away from this logic and heuristic means. Following Whitehead's ideas and the suggestions on the LET approach, I ground my own suggested form of psychology and the theory, re-evaluation and conceptualisation, of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world, and am developing my heuristic approach directly within the self-dialectics of developing a direct living, embodied, dialoguing, reflective, reflexive, and self-transforming theory, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject and human existence.

I agree with many of Whitehead's points about how propositional logic masks the development of the person and the possibilities of directly theorising it within the person's being, living and developing in, with, and towards the world, and relating

and interrelating with the world in which he/she lives and develops (see also Gibson, 1969, 1982; Gibson, 1950, 1966, 1979; Gibson and Spelke, 1983; Shanon, 1993; Serper 1999).

In our critique of Dreier's paper, Whitehead and I, each from his own perspective, as part of developing our epistemological structure and logic for our collaboration on developing an alternative heuristic tool, solution and approach to the theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject, asked (2009b)

> Is Dreier's propositional language and logic masking a possibility for creating a new psychology of the human subject?

We then noted that we share with Dreier the idea that actions are abstractions from the contextual structure of personal participation, and wish to examine whether or not Dreier's own concepts of practice, the person and the subject merits the same criticism.

Similarly, Whitehead referred to Ilyenkov's problem in his *Dialectical Logic* when he asked,

> if an object exists as a living contradiction what must the thought be that expresses it?'.

He noted that Ilyenkov thought he could find a solution by 'writing logic' when in fact his writing conformed to the principles of Aristotelian logic that eliminated contradictions between statements in 'correct thought'.

Whitehead then explained that Ilyenkov needed to generate a living logic in order to answer his question about a living contradiction. Subsequently, Whitehead noted that Dreier is utilising the same propositional form of language and logic as Ilyenkov, in his own arguments for the creation of a new psychology, and that he thought that creating such a new psychology would result in the development of a different approach to establishing the theoretical supposition for the theory to the one used by Dreier.

Whitehead then clarified that he was suggesting the type of approach that begins with an individual asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'how do I improve what I am doing?', where practice is experienced and understood in terms of 'what I am doing' and which values and stresses the value of enquiry learning and the development of accounts of learning that can explain the learning in one's own life-trajectory. He noted that this implies that the 'I' in the above self-dialectical enquiry is that of a conscious practitioner who is positioned in relation to the stances in his social practices. This form of criticism has already led Whitehead (1989a) to introduce his own living, embodied, dialectical, reflective and dialogical heuristic and methodological tool, solution and approach to educational, action and practitioner research.

He stated then that he is

arguing that the propositional form is masking the living form and content of an educational theory which can generate valid descriptions and explanations for the educational development of individuals.

He still nevertheless maintained then that this is not to deny the importance of propositional forms of understanding for

> I am arguing for a reconstruction of educational theory into a living form of question and answer which includes propositional contributions from the traditional disciplines of education.

He also referred to Gadamer (1975) and Collingwood (1939) and noted that

> I certainly see this model embedded in the institutional context of my professional life where it is part of the power relations which structure research and practice

and also in the

> normative curricula of my professional colleagues in schools… [for] even when I question the model of technical rationality, as a practitioner, educator and researcher I am aware that I may be colluding with an institution that perpetuates it.

Nonetheless, Whitehead concluded his own part of our January, 2005 critique of Dreier with the following conclusion,

> There are many interesting ideas in Dreier's perspective and I was particularly struck by the quality of his criticism of the ideas of others. I find myself exciting by what I am experiencing as a healthy creative tension in engaging with Dreier's ideas in the creation of my own living educational theory. I find myself attracted to use his notion of 'stance' and a desire to acknowledge the validity of the criticism he makes of the ideas of others while wishing to avoid such criticism being made of my own ideas! I also find myself recognising a resistance to subsuming the creating and testing of living educational theories within the boundaries of his psychology and his key concept of participation. I think this is because of a limitation I perceive in what appears to be a lack of recognition of the significance of cosmic flows of life-affirming energy in explanations of personal life-trajectories that flow outside and through social practices through space. Hence my preference for Rayner's notion of inclusionality as this includes Dreier's notion of participation while being more extensive in its inclusion of cosmic flows of life-affirming energy through space and boundaries in explanations of the personal life-trajectories of complex selves.

Thus, at this point we see Whitehead moving his research from the dialectical logic of Gadamer, Collingwood and Ilyenkov and its alternative to the propositional logic and epistemology and into what he calls the third logic and epistemology of 'inclusionality'. Whereas, I think of and conceptualise the human subject as a being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 1962; Binswanger, 1958, 1963; Boss, 1963, 1977; May et al., 1958) who struggles to creatively participate in and dialogue with the world and construct the most meaningful, fulfilling, productive and empowering quality of life and relationships with both himself/herself and other people that he/she is capable of. I directly convey the complexities, creativeness and creativity,

and intricacies of the self-dialectical auto-dialoguing, and dialoguing individual within his/her human-all-too-human intention to qualitatively develop and transform himself and his/her being, living and developing in the world, and summon up a more meaningful, hopeful, securing, complete and full and self-fulfilling existence in the world for himself/herself.

By moving the LET approach from the dialectics to 'the third logic and epistemology of 'inclusionality', Whitehead has constituted a point of no return in our relationship which has led to our alienation from each other. For reasons that I shall explain in the next part of this thesis, my rejection of this notion of 'the third logic and epistemology of inclusionality' has also led to my abandoning and transformation of my initial interests in and focus on LET and in and on making an authentic contribution to it and its development from the inside.

I could not subscribe to the development of LET in terms of 'the third logic and epistemology of 'inclusionality', which has gradually and systematically been emerging as Whitehead's main focus of research and subsequently, dominated the development and presentation of the LET approach. I felt a powerful reluctance, resistance and an inability to follow Whitehead and the other living educational theorists in their growing focus on the development of 'the third logic and epistemology of inclusionality'.

I chose to return instead to my interests in continental philosophy and psychology, critical psychology and therapy, and the creation of the auto-phenomenological, auto-poietic and cathartic form of and approach to dialectical educational AR. I shall present a brief discussion of the 'the third logic and epistemology of 'inclusionality' and Whitehead's preoccupation with it.

1.9. Whitehead and the Movement of the LET Approach from Dialectics into Inclusionality

Since 2002 Whitehead has shifted the LET approach from the dialectics of Gadamer, Ilyenkov and Collingwood to what he calls the living logics of inclusionality.

He understands inclusionality as

> a simple shift in the way we frame reality, from absolutely fixed to relationally dynamic (Whitehead, 2009a).

He noted that this implies

> a relationally dynamic flow and awareness of space and boundaries that is connective, reflexive and co-creative.

This brief citation from Whitehead is one that has been repeated in all his publications and writings since 2002/3.

He sought to develop a logic that enables a dynamic and living connection, reflection and interrelations by and among different idiosyncratic accounts on the part of various individuals of their practice and ontological and professional being and developing in, with, and towards the world.

This was done in two stages. In the course of the first stage, from 2002/2003 to 2005/2006, Whitehead had treated inclusionality as another idea, one of many, which he encountered and wished to make sense of.

In a piece of writing to the LET group from November, 2003, Whitehead noted that,

> As well as feeling a strong connection with…the inclusional way of being (I connect this with Ubuntu) I make sense of much of my present pedagogic practice in my web-based communications in terms of interconnecting, branching networks of communication.

The following year, Whitehead (2004a) pointed out that

> Rayner (2002, a&b) has provided a way of understanding inclusional ways of listening to dissonant voices in self-study research,

that

> in Rayner's view, inclusionality recognises that the unique identity of each researcher is constructed within a network of relationships with others

and that

> it enables us to see all 'things', including ourselves, not as isolated, independent bodies, but rather as 'dynamic inclusions' – interdependent embodiments - that are connected through boundaries.

He also noted that

> For Rayner, these boundaries are both co-created by and give identity to 'one another', making them distinct – recognizable – but not discrete – alone.

Nonetheless, in making these suggestions Whitehead and Rayner have failed to grasp the fact that the idea of unique identities being constructed within a network of relationships with others constitutes the fundamental premise of Marxist critiques and also has been raised and discussed by pragmatists and social theorists over the last nine decades or so. It is therefore hardly an original idea.

Furthermore, Rayner seems to ignore the fact that this anthropological idea (that human interactions with each others are essential to the way human beings understand themselves and act in the world) is hardly an innovative one and in fact is a dated suggestion that could be traced back as far as Aristotle.

Likewise, Rayner fails to acknowledge that the idea of these boundaries co-creating and distinguishing each other is very similar to Gibson's idea that everything in the

world is mutually interrelated and therefore by no means is novel. It is an idea that is in fact brought up in introductory topology classes on any 1st year university mathematics course. It has also been a premise of non-linear dynamics for about a century or so; it is also a premise of cybernetics theory and extended to biological systems during the 1960s.

At the end of his chapter in the *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices* (In Loughran et al., 2004), Whitehead (2004a) wrote:

> Where does my imagination take me as I speculate about some of the future possible contributions of s-step communities of educational researchers to the evidential base of educational knowledge? I am thinking of contributions related to inclusional ways of being, to contributions that combine learning circles with action research and to contributions that focus on the pedagogisation of the living theories of self-study researchers with the help of web-technologies.…I imagine that Leong's synthesis of learning circles and action research in Singapore will connect with Rayner's notion of inclusionality to extend the contributions of s-step researchers to the education of individuals and social formations on a global scale. Leong, (1991) and Leong and Hong (2003) have presented web-based evidence in photographs, videotapes, feedback from students and colleagues, as well as their articulation of their experiences in a report on the development of learning circles combined with action research approaches, in the Academy of Best Practices in Learning (ABLE, 2002) at the Institute of Education in Singapore.

Furthermore, Whitehead wrote in that chapter

> In my paper on my ontological commitments in my AR Expedition you will see that I acknowledge the influence of being certain of my death in living a productive life, in contributing to the growth of educational knowledge and in contributing to post-colonial practices in the inclusional spirit of Ubuntu. Each living educational theory that shows an influence in the education of social formations in learning how to transform the living contradictions, experienced in holding together our humanity and the lack of humanity evoked by the image, into hope for the future of humanity as we respond together in the flow of our loving spirits. I think this hope flows through our recognition of the loving and life-affirming dignity in and to those who are suffering in a crime against humanity and in our researching together in our AR Expeditions how we can bring the values that carry this hope more fully into our world.

Hence, Whitehead works to expand the LET approach beyond Western places and ways of thinking into other cultures around the globe, such as African and Asian ones, through the use of web-technologies and the creation of interrelating and interconnecting circles of individuals from various cultures and countries. Nevertheless, he fails to take into account that without properly understanding the non-western ways of thinking and researching them from within their own perspectives, rather than from his own Western perspective, this will result in the traditional romanticising of non-western ideas and cultures or colonialising them within western ideas. The first act would make LET fall within the popular new-age

culture of the day whilst the second act would unintentionally and ironically bring back 19th century colonialism to his post-colonial research.

Alas, from the end of 2005 onwards, he has made the explanation, rationalisation and legitimation of inclusionality the complete focus of all of his professional practices and academic research. When asked in the end of 2005 in his application for "Details of Grants Awarded", Whitehead answered that his learning resources are available online and to areas of great poverty and reveal the way

> living educational theories can enhance the flow of inclusional values and understandings that carry hope for the future of humanity.

Two years after, Whitehead (2007) clarified his "Future Research Plans" as focusing on the development of multi-media enquiries

> into the transformation of embodied values, skills and understandings of practitioner researchers into living epistemological standards of judgement.

He noted that the extensive use of multi-media technologies enables him to overcome the problem of seeking to represent in text alone the meanings of people's embodied values as explanatory principles in educational theory generation and testing.

Similarly, in his 16th of February, 2007, posting to the British Educational Research Association Practitioner-Researcher Electronic-Seminar at http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgibin/webadmin?A2=ind0702&L=berapractitionerresearcher&T=0&F=&S=&P=10550, Whitehead noted that Alan Rayner's suggestion of the need to

> 'relax our definitions' so as to be able to evolve co-creatively in fluid dynamic neighbourhood, as a river changes its boundaries with its inseparable catchment as it flows

pushes LET research forward.

Whitehead thus regards the "living, relational, flexible and connective" logic of inclusionality to be more suitable than the dialectical or propositional logics to express and convey these epistemological standards of judgement . According to him, it is a standard of judgement that transcends words, text and verbal explanation and communication, which apparently cannot be explained properly through textual methods, due to the requirement to use non-textual and non-verbal audio-visual representation in properly conveying the "inclusional" meanings of this type of knowledge.

However, in my view, he has been unable to explain it properly as he has only considered the traditional detached and propositional way of communication, and, as a result, he has failed to truly appreciate the ability of creative writing to explain and account for human emotions, tacit knowledge (expertise), and richness. I have seen throughout my research into it, many examples of most evocative, powerful, rich

and enriching creative writing accounts of human lives, experiences, relationships, sublimeliness and grotesqueness.

Hence, Whitehead has sought, in effect, to apply inclusional epistemological standards of judgement to the re-evaluation of LET accounts. He perceived these standards to be those of respect, humbleness, tolerance and dignity and real openness and connection to and among various ideas and cultures that are often contradictory. I myself question the hijacking of this consideration of such values as "respect, humbleness, tolerance and dignity and real openness and connection to and among various ideas and cultures" by and as 'inclusional values and epistemological standards of judgement'.

I relate this questioning on my part to my criticism of the dismissal on the part of inclusionality and its proponents of hard and rigid polarities that I shall follow in the next part. I would point out in saying this that many individuals advocate such important values as the 'inclusional' ones whilst also being able to discriminate between such polarities/dualities as 'right and wrong', 'good and evil' and 'just and unjust'. I would in fact invoke Martin Luther King and Mahatmah Ghandi to show that there are some profound people who have advocated the same values as those which are advocated by and in inclusionality and yet can still discriminate between 'right and wrong', 'good and evil' and 'just and unjust'. The dialecticians among us could in fact use these dualities and the clear distinguish between them in and for the sake of most qualitative educational, ontological and moral transformations and accounts of these significant transformations.

Alas, most, if not all, of Whitehead's work since 2004 has been dedicated to the introduction, rationalisation and development of the inclusional logic, epistemology, and standards of judgement through the use of audio-visual clips and representations that he believes are the only means to explain and rationalise the meaning and implications of 'inclusionality' to others. He has been working rather hard to convince and persuade the LET group to follow his footsteps and to have as many 'inclusional' accounts of 'inclusionality' and 'inclusional logic, values, standards of judgement and reasoning' as possible in the sections of LET theses, dissertations and graduate coursework and publications of his LET homepage (2009b).

In a series of three notes, placed in October and December, 2006, in the "ACTION RESEARCH DEGREE SUPERVISIONS" section of his website (Whitehead, 2009b), Whitehead pointed out to his living educational AR group of supervisees, students and readers of LET that

> The major extension and transformation over the last four years has been in my understandings of Alan Rayner's expressions of inclusionality and how this has contributed to my own professional values.

He also noted that that he added some quotations from Barbara Thayer-Bacon on Relational (E)pistemology and from Alan Rayner on Inclusionality that have profoundly influenced his own research and which he takes be very significant for those researchers

who are living and researching with a relationally dynamic and responsive awareness of space and boundaries that is connective, reflexive and co-creative.

He preferred to follow inclusionality rather than Relational (E)pistemology as it is a direct and comprehensive appeal to and description of an additional logic to the propositional and dialectics forms of logic. He explained that he had followed Rayner in using the term 'inclusionality' for this form of awareness and appeals to LET researchers to contribute to practice and the Academy through the understanding the way interconnecting and integrating individuals from different places hold different beliefs, ideas and perspectives.

He also noted that his work explored living standards of judgment and also clarified his use of the three epistemologies

> that are directly connected to the three logics above, each with its distinguishable units of appraisal and standards of judgment.

Subsequently, after talking about the propositional and dialectical forms of logic and epistemologies, Whitehead noted that the third epistemology is grounded in the living logics of inclusionality, taken from Rayner 2006), which he understands as

> a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that is connective, reflexive and co-creative.

He added and that in the explanation of his educational influences in his learning, he has utilised both logics within "the flow of his logic of inclusionality".

He claimed that he has been relating the propositional and dialectical forms of logic in his intention to relate to other individuals in a manner that would avoid both dialectical conflict and tension and a propositional rejection on the ground that contradictions cannot be held together in the same propositional claim. He explained that when he listened and watched Rayner's demonstration of the meaning of inclusionality, he was able to experience a transformation in his mode of thought and in turn to fully grasp Rayner's meanings of

> a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that is connective, reflexive and co-creative.

He posted the following video clip of Rayner describing the meanings of inclusionality in his Youtube channel (Whitehjead, 2010) to illustrate what he saw and heard: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVa7FUIA3W8

Nonetheless, he seems to be repeating his initial impression of inclusionality from 2002. He is continuously failing to develop a more profound understanding of inclusionality and instead keeps relating to it within and as the same one sentence description - as if he is uttering a mantra wherein repetition deepens understanding.

He added that Naidoo (2005) has developed the inclusional and responsive standard of judgment of "passion for compassion" in the development of her emergent living theory of inclusional and responsive practice.

Indeed, Naidoo's Ph.D. is a moving account of the practice of a dedicated and kind health practitioner with very vulnerable elderly. I agree with Whitehead on that. However, I also think that it is embedded in a very hands-on practice and emotional evocativeness and does not really require the very theoretical, oversimplified and abstract, one-sentence explanation of inclusionality.

Naidoo accounted in her Ph.D. thesis for her learning and educational, epistemological and ontological development as a nurse and actress who is working with geriatric patients who suffer from advanced dementia. She provided an emotional and firsthand account of her engagement with her patients, colleagues and members of the public and her own family in a creative and critical practice over a sustained period of time. She described the way she encouraged individuals to work in a creative and critical manner in order to improve the way they relate and communicate in a multi-professional and multi-agency healthcare setting and the quality of care provided and the well-being of the system.

She also described the way her ontological commitment to the value of 'passion to compassion' and her analysis of this commitment had enabled her to ground and explain her professional and personal (ontological) practices. Changing her research from 'complex theory' to 'inclusionality', she was able to complete and submit her research as her idiosyncratic development of her inclusional and responsive practice and to provide an account of the way her engagement with the ideas and works of others (e.g., theatre practitioners such as Augusto Boal, educational theorists such as Paulo Freire, complexity theorists and living theory action researchers) has enabled her to develop her own practice as well as a living, inclusional and responsive theory of her practice.

Nevertheless, it is my impression that Naidoo did not really need 'inclusionality' to ground her values as a dedicated health practitioner, bit it was Whitehead and Rayner who needed her dedicated and competent practice as a very committed and caring health practitioner to show the meanings of the idea and theory of 'inclusionality'. Rather than developing the theoretical underpinning and meaning of 'inclusionality' (that is essentially a theoretical idea), that Whitehead appeared to be incapable of doing, he drew on the practice of his students and their attempts to account for their practice using the LET approach to clarify the meanings of the theoretical idea of inclusionality.

In a "notes for the Monday evening conversation of the 9th October 2006" that are entitled EXPLAINING EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCES IN LEARNING FROM AN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE and that were specifically intended and suggested by Whitehead to assist his doctoral researchers in their research enquiries, he noted his intention to
  i.   share his present thinking about the importance of incorporating life-affirming energy, values, logics and experiencing within explanations of

educational influences in one's own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations

ii.   demonstrate the way such energy, values, logics and experiencing can be represented in multi-media narratives of such explanations in his post-doctoral enquiries in a fashion that could help the enquiries of his supervisees.

He suggested that the relationally-dynamic awareness and 'responsiveness to context' of the inclusional logic can be appreciated through the contextual understanding that his mode of thought is influenced by the dynamic context of a draft report from the Senate Working Party on Academic Freedom. What he means here is that the logic of inclusionality enables him to explain his ontological experiences of being harassed by the Senate Working Party on Academic Freedom. This is as it allows him to explain his experiences of the relational dynamic of the movement of his thought as it is generated in his response to violations that he is experiencing "in a lack of recognition of constraining pressures" and to his keen "commitment to the living expression of values of academic freedom, justice and responsibility".

Whitehead's endeavours to explain what 'inclusionality' is and means went as follows: The explanation of the living logics of inclusionality in educational relationships, "that are formed in interconnecting and branching channels and boundaries of communication in space", requires visual narratives in the form of multi-media explanations of educational influences in learning. This explanation starts with a video-clip that is taken to be capable of revealing inclusionality in action. The reason is that starting this explanation with the words that "for me inclusionality is a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that is connective, reflexive and co-creative" will provide the wrong impression that his meaning "could be contained solely in the relationship between these words", whereas the meaning is in fact situated in a relationship between living experience and the expression of living meanings with words.

Whitehead then stressed his belief that his meanings require ostensive definition, as well as lexical definition, in the sense that he will be pointing to visual data from practice to communicate the meanings flowing through the words. He provided the video-clip in http://www.jackwhitehead.com/bera06/nhcjmhbera.mov in an intention to convey, alongside his comments, his "meaning of inclusionality as a relationally dynamic flow of space and boundaries that is connective, reflexive and co-creative".

He noted that he was using this video clip to illustrate the movement of the participants in the session and their participation through their own receptively responsive contributions and that he regards these movement and participation as an

inclusionality which is being articulated through the living relationships in the space shown on the video-clip.

He also noted that he was relating the meanings of his words to the expression of the meanings that he experiences as he video-taped the session and as he experiences in viewing the video-clip in order to communicate his understanding of inclusionality.

I myself believe that a good piece of creative writing could convey all human experiences and feelings that in turn do not require a dependence on a video-tape in order to be conveyed. The videotape can be used to show the situation but not to evaluate it or its meanings to the individuals who live and experience it. Creative writing will be far more valuable in describing situations and their experiences by those individuals who live it firsthand.

I was sent these notes by Whitehead in the end of 2006 when I was about to complete a LET Ph.D. thesis that dealt with a heuristics of a human subject and was very strongly advised to draw on 'inclusionality' as the logic and epistemological grounding of my thesis. I took a break from my writing-up and read and engaged with Whitehead's suggestions very carefully. However, after reading up on inclusionality, I was not at all convinced that I ought to do so. I was very concerned about this transformation and shift of the LET approach from the dialectics to 'inclusionality'. This was not something that we discussed in 2003 when we moved my research programme from empirical psychology to LET and that we decided for it to be grounded in dialectical ontological and auto-phenomenological enquiries into and creative, auto-phenomenological and autoethnographical writings on my life, who I am and how do I work to improve the quality of my being, living and developing in, with and towards the world. I needed further clarifications from and discussion with Whitehead.

When I repeatedly expressed to Whitehead my profound concerns about this shift of interest of his from the dialectics of Gadamer (1975), Collingwood (1939), Ilyenkov (1977, 1982) and Marcuse (1964) to Rayner's (2006) inclusionality, he told me the following:

> Until 2002/3, I used two epistemologies, propositional and dialectical, with their logics, units of appraisal and standards of judgment. I still use these in my reading and thinking. In 2002/3 I began to appreciate the importance of a relationally dynamic perception of space and boundaries in communicating explanations of educational influences in one's own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations…

I was not satisfied by this answer.

When I responded that I preferred to stick to my original plans and to concentrate my research on the development of my self-dialectical, living, embodied, auto-phenomenological, autoethnographical, auto-poietic, cathartic, auto-dialogical, dialogical, therapeutic and self-educational blogging tool, he replied that explaining my heuristics through blogging takes place within energy/space. He then went on the explain further that I couldn't blog without such a space and that he feels an "enhanced flow of a life-affirming energy" because he experiences himself energised by the possibility of my placing my thesis "within the flow of this energy/space and of its potential influence in the lives of others", and that he is

impressed by the "stipulative definition of inclusionality as a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries as connective, reflexive and co-creative" rather than by the analysis. He then added that his visits to China and South Africa have contributed to his educational knowledge and attracted him to the idea that the development of a living logic with living standards of judgment "will emerge from the inclusion of energy/space in our heuristics of a human existence" and led to his desire (grounded in his politics and ethics) to legitimate the idea of Ubuntu in the Western Academy.

When I challenged this and asked Whitehead for his reasoning for moving the epistemological grounding of the LET approach from the dialectics to 'the third epistemology and logic of inclusionality', his reply was that he is increasing the international appeal of living educational theories by demonstrating the heuristic ability of inclusionality and Ubuntu to draw more individuals into producing their own living educational theories.

Alas, I was not only unpersuaded by this, but was also deeply alarmed by the language used by Whitehead. I was also concerned by what I perceived as a lack of the clarity and reasoning of his argumentation and verbal expression and also by his dismissal of any need for 'analysis' in this communication of his attempts to explain the 'third logic and epistemology' of inclusionality and his movement from the dialectics of Gadamer, Collingwood, Marcuse and Ilyenkov to inclusionality. I also needed him to rationalise his movement from textual means of constructing and presenting living educational theories into non-textual, audio-visual ones.

I was particularly concerned about moving the LET approach from a straightforward dialectical approach to educational research and theory into 'inclusionality', which seemed to me to be a rather problematic and incomprehensible approach that even Whitehead and the living educational theories have been having difficulties presenting in verbal and textual means of communication. I saw little more than a mantra of one sentence that continuously repeats itself. As a result of this failure to receive satisfactory answers to my questions and concerns, I had little choice but to distance myself and my work from this growing focus on 'inclusionality'. Since 2005/2006, this focus has become more and more dominant and has gradually turned itself into the main essence of the LET approach.

After three years of engaging with the works of the living educational theorists at Bath and elsewhere, I became convinced that their efforts to explain inclusionality as a unique form of logic and epistemology, without resorting to the use of propositional, dialectical or textual means of communication, lacked a means of explanation that is not propositional, dialectical, verbal or textual. The situation had reached an impasse. I was profoundly worried about the reasons why we had reached a stalemate when I insisted on using propositional, dialectical, verbal or textual means of arguing my critiques and feelings in order to examine and criticise inclusionality, only to be told that since these are not inclusional means of communication, my critique and means of dialogue are null, moot and invalid.

Indeed, all our conversations on 'inclusionality' and the LET approach have reached an impasse that neither Whitehead nor myself have been able to transcend and resolve. Since the LET approach has become an 'inclusional' approach to educational research, theory and development, rather than a dialectical one, my alienation from LET became the inevitable result of my reluctance to follow 'inclusionality' at a face value, without critical examination, just because Whitehead and the other living educational theorists told me to. I could not support Whitehead's repetitive claim in all his writings since 2004 (see the Jack Whitehead's writings sections of Whitehead, 2009b) that the LET approach is 'an inclusional form of educational, reflective and practitioner research' that lives up and implements Schön's (1995) plea for a new epistemology in practitioner research, reflective practice and education and educational AR. Instead, I focussed on working upon and developing my approach.

My conclusion was that I could support a LET approach that was heavily influenced by the works of Freire (1996, 1973, 2004), Riegel (1973, 1975, 1976a, 1976b, 1979), Gadamer (1975), Collingwood (1939), Winter (1989), Carr and Kemmis (1986), Husserl (1931, 1970, 1982) and Habermas (1976, 1987, 2003) and Polanyi (1958, 1966; Polanyi and Prosch, 1975), but I could not support a LET approach that uncritically followed the writings of Rayner (2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2010). In the next part I shall show how my analytical study of Whitehead and McNiff's LET approach have enabled me to develop my own suggested alternative solution, tool and approach to the traditional wholly propositional heuristic means of evaluating, theorising and conceptualising the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world.

Part Two:
A Criticism and Transformation of
the Living Educational Theory Approach

Brief introduction of the Second Part

This part of the thesis follows up my critique of the LET approach. Based on this critique, I shall transform LET into a more suitable alternative to the re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject, human existence and human educational, ontological, epistemological and professional development in, with, and towards the world. I shall criticise the overemphasise of LET on epistemology and making a significant contribution to knowledge. In turn, I shall transform the LET approach to ontology and auto-phenomenological analysis, re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject, as well as human and professional, epistemological, educational and ontological development. This will be done from the perspective of critical psychology, ontology, phenomenology, and with the aim of laying down the groundwork for my self-therapeutic, cathartic, ontological and educational approach.

I shall raise a new question that has been neglected by the proponents of LET: How do I lead a more meaningful existence in, with, and towards the world for myself? Instead of focussing questions on the improvement of my practice and whether I am fulfilling my values in their course and development, I am concerned with developing a more ontological enquiry into how I, as a human being, lead a more meaningful, self-fulfilling and secure existence in the world. Subsequently, I shall transform the LET approach into a self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological, auto-poietic and cathartic approach of creative writing, logging and blogging and enquiring-within-writing&-b/logging. I shall introduce and briefly explain the key components and terms of my approach. I draw on the four original components of the methodology of the LET approach and its original theoretical background as a challenge to the traditional way of theorising educational practice, knowledge and development. In the course of this constructive challenge, the practitioner-theorist theorises his/her own practice, embodied knowledge and educational, professional, epistemological and ontological development and prevents and safeguards himself/herself from an abstraction, dehumanisation and mechanisation into and within propositional theories of human practice and educational developments.

As I have described in the last section, prior to its turn to inclusionality, LET was a clear and straightforward alternative to propositional AR, educational AR, educational research, practitioner and reflective practice research, and ontological and psychological research that was dialectical, living, embodied, concrete and dialogic in its essence. In this part of the thesis, I shall describe how I have transformed these practical methodological components and theoretical background of the LET approach into the theoretical background and methodological essence of my own approach to the human subject and human existence. I shall also further criticise the movement of the LET approach from the dialectics to 'inclusionality' and from the textual way of re-evaluating, presenting and communicating living educational theories into non-textual and audio-visual means of doing so. As I

discussed at some length in the last section, this particular movement has led to my alienation from the LET approach. At the end of this part of the thesis, I set the ground for a reflection on my learning from my engagement with the LET approach and my hopes and intentions for the/my future.

I shall begin with my critique and transformation of LET. After this, I shall show how I draw on creative writing, cathartic self-dialectical logging and public blogging in the construction and presentation of my own ontological and cathartic self-dialectical educational AR. Having criticised the movement of the LET approach from the dialectics to 'inclusionality', I start with dialectics and devise a new form of self-dialectical and dialectical means of reflecting on and transforming one's life and its aesthetic, ethical and authentic quality. By doing this, I will be able to show the way to transform and develop LET in order to fulfil Whitehead's (2009b) unfulfilled promise to provide an approach to AR and human existence.

2.1. My Transformation of the LET Approach

I ground my approach on the unique power of a publicised (public) and dialogical form of private, personal and embodied creative writing, logging and blogging that is vulnerable, living, emerging and reflective, or auto-dialogical, and self-dialectical, transforming and empowering. A log, as we all know, is a personal, reflective, or auto-dialogical and reflexive, entry in a journal or account. A blog, on the other hand, is by definition a log that is made public online in a World Wide Web website or platform for others to read, follow, engage with, and interact and dialogue with. I shall discuss the meanings, implications and practices of creative writing, logging and blogging below, after critiquing and criticising further the methods of inclusional LET to formulate, present and communicate LET accounts.

My initial research problem was how to work out and establish a type of concrete, applied and creative heuristic tool, solution and approach that would carry through, illustrate, embody and implement my humanistic philosophical perception and conceptualisation of the human subject and the way it is ought to be approached. My focus was on enabling myself, as a human subject, to work out a self-dialectical qualitative transformation, empowerment and growth. Starting from my reading of Kierkegaard (1968, 1974) [15], I began with the aesthetic, ethical and authentic quality of my existence and relationships with both myself and other people in, with, and towards the world. My purpose was to achieve a cathartic and therapeutic shift and release from counterproductive and negative experiences and situations in my life, and turn these into more constructive and positive ones. I hoped to do so via the ontological, self-dialectical and dialogical educational AR heuristic enquiry into the questions: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world? How can I identify, re-evaluate and process situations and experiences of existential angst, frustration, alienation and solitude, and ontological void and insecurity, and reverse and transmute them into those of the experiences and situations of a more fulfilling, securing, hopeful and engaging existence in the world and relationships with myself and others? This needed to be an enquiry that ontologically includes and that is

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[15] Kierkegaard discussed the aesthetic, ethical and authentic as spheres of existence, one higher than the other, namely, authentic being higher than the ethical which is in turn higher than the aesthetic.

methodologically based on the living, embodied, dialectical and auto-phenomenological educational AR cycles that I shall suggest below, and which will enable me to work upon the LET approach in order to transform it into ontology and a constructive critical humanistic psychology of the human subject and human existence. I also needed a methodology for my approach where individuals could truly express themselves - their learning, their struggles, their creativeness and innovativeness and their reflections - in terms of their self-therapeutic, creative and cathartic, freefall expressions and free associations, and their personal, ontological and professional developments, growth, empowerment, and transformations. I wanted this to be accessible to as many intended engagers and audiences as possible, at the lowest cost possible, and within an interactive manner that allows an open, authentic dialogue and engaging debate among various individuals.

I sought for a methodology that would enable me to know and fully appreciate and comprehend myself better, heal, and get productive, meaningful and constructive, feedbacks from my peers. Similarly, I wanted for the engagers and readers of my enquiry to find the practice of reading and engaging, dialoguing with it and commenting on it, to be an equally productive, meaningful, worthwhile and technologically straightforward task. I hoped that the readers and engagers would be able to appreciate and comment on my growth, creativity, achievements, transformations, innovativeness and empowerment across, within and over well-defined time, space. Likewise, I hoped the readers would be able to do so by comparing and relating my analytical, creative and critical writings at various times and ontological places in my self-dialectical development, growth, creativity and transformations. I also hoped the comments would be constructive, critical, meaningful and insightful, and to draw on the life experiences and history and insights that belong to a different being-in-the-world (Dasein[16]), namely the reader.

I also wanted the methodology to enable the accessibility of the account to as many individuals from as many countries and cultures as possible. This is with an intention to enable as much cultural and ethnical variability as possible. I therefore required my medium of presentation to be easy to use and maintain and accessible to most people at the lowest cost possible. I wanted the engagers to be able to actually see and identify for themselves the developments, growth, empowerment, creativity and transformations over time, space, practice and enquiry of a given living, embodied and active person in, with, and towards the world. I sought for the engagers to be able to follow and engage with my learning and educational, ontological, epistemological and psychological development, growth, empowerment and transformation in what I was doing and valued as important. I needed the readers to have the ability to follow, identify and engage with my self-therapeutic struggles in the world to self-improve, empower, grow and self-fulfil as a relating and engaging individual in, with, and towards the world. I wanted for these

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[16] Heidegger (1962) perceived Dasein as "essentially an entity with Being-in" (p. 84) and as "that entity which in its Being has this very Being as an issue" (p. 68) and in "which each of us is himself" (p. 27; SIC). I (Serper, 1999, 2009) see it as an autonomous, unique, living and embodied individual in the world. In this respect, I follow the Dasein-analysis of Binswanger (1958, 1963), Boss (1963, 1977), May et al., (1958) and the commentary of Dreyfus (1991).

elements to unfold ostensively and explicitly in front of the engagers' eyes as they read and creatively engage with my writings.

I was very conscious of the vulnerable, self-exposing, nature of personal, living, self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological, and embodied, narrating of this sort. As a result, I sought to make absolutely sure and to leave nothing to chance that those individuals who attempt to do so are given a space and technical means and possibilities thereby to embody themselves in and protect themselves from any attempts on the part of any other engagers to exploit the vulnerabilities of the ontological self-enquirer for the sake of their own agendas, interests, pleasure and recreation and intentions. I thus wished to establish inbuilt protections for the enquirer and account producer in the face of any attempts at bullying or exploitation, and for any bullies or exploiters to be tamed, disciplined or/and physically removed from the intended creative and qualitative dialectical dialogue at any time the enquirer and account producer wished to. This hopefully would lead me (and those individuals who wish to replicate my own work in their own ontological and self-dialectical AR expeditions and enquiries) into those situations and experiences of a more meaningful and self-fulfilling existence in the world.

Likewise, I wanted the self-enquiry narrative analysis to be as spontaneous, creative freefall and free association, unedited, uncensored, and unmediated as possible in its communication, therapeutic devises and applications and presentation. Please note here that the freefall technique in creative and therapeutic, cathartic, ontological writing implies throwing oneself into and falling, without a parachute, within the words as they come, the thoughts prior to their full formation in the person's cognition and the unplanned structures that are being shaped. This is without setting off to contain and internalise them. It is indeed a therapeutic, cathartic and creative writing method that is designed to connect individuals with their innermost intention in writing and to enable them to write with authority and grace. The reader could consult the works of Barbara Turner-Vesselago (1996, 2009), on whose definition of freefall writing I drew in the above description of it, Angelica Wienrich (2009), the *Lapidus – Creative Words for Health and Well-being group* (Lapidus, 2009), Judy Marshall (2004, 2001, 1999), Natalie Goldberg (1986, 1990 1993) and Susan Wooldridge (1996, 2007) on freefall writing and the use of the freefall technique in creative and therapeutic ontological writing.

Textual and verbal engagement was also very important to me. I required a form of textual presentation and representation for my heuristic tool, solution and approach. This should emerge within a linguistic and verbal form that is not wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated, predicting, profiling and generalising, but is rather living, embodied, emerging, dialectical and ostensive. Indeed like many clinicians, therapists, educators, artists and writers (e.g., Bolton, 1999, 2005; Bolton et al., 2006; Sampson, 2004; Sims, 2010; Maza, 2003; Rush, 2005; Morrison 2010; Lapidus, 2009; AHSW, 2010; Liebmann, 1994, 2008; Gersie, 1997), I also believe in the cathartic, self-enriching, soothing, evocative, educational and self-educational, and empowering power and capabilities of creative writing and creatively and systematically writing up and logging oneself. Similarly, I also share Richardson's (1994, 2000b) belief in the cognitive ability of the practice and process

of writing to generate for the writer a clarity of thoughts and the production and summoning up of new insights and transformations, empowerment and developments of ideas. Moreover, I also shared with Richardson (1994, 2000b) the conviction that writing is therefore more than just a way of communicating, conveying and presenting ideas and verbal representations among individuals. Like Richardson (1994, 2000b), I also advocate that it could actually be made into a cognitive and ontological tool thereby to make sense of and clarify matters to oneself. I associate this making sense for oneself with the working out of ontological security where one's understanding of himself/herself, his/her ideas, cognition and his/her being and creating in the world increases and he/she feels more secure, stabilised and empowered within himself/herself, who he/she is and what he/she is doing and intending to achieve in the course of his/her life and professional and ontological practices. I take this to be at the centre of a phenomenological, therapeutic and self-liberating cathartic, educational and ontological AR enquiry and methodological tool that is intended to enable the enquirer to work out and create and recreate oneself, self-develop, auto-transform, grow, evolve, empower and auto-progress as a cognitive, ontologically secured and all figured out and social and engaging, fuller and more complete being-in-the-world.

Yet I also wanted a methodology that would avoid the total free-association of simply publishing whatever comes into the person's mind and instead enable the account producing individual to organise creatively and systematically the chosen insights within a clear, disciplined, and well-structured format and manner. Consequently, I wanted the methodology to rely entirely on the self-discipline and writing talent of the producer of the creative account. Nonetheless, I wanted the textual flow of events, anecdotes, discussions and accounts, and the developments, formulisations and transformations of ideas and new possibilities, to remain concrete and applied and dynamically emerging, living and progressing, as well as embodied, dialectical, reflexive and dialogical. I wanted these textual accounts to include the propositional insights, texts and citations of appealing works of others in their self-dialectical movement and transformation, whilst remaining faithful to their living, dialectical and embodied essence. Moreover, I also sought a textual and linguistic form of presentation and representation where the flow of the self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological and ontological re-evaluation and contemplation is not interrupted by linguistic interpretations and textual mechanistic and artificial divisions and sections, but rather allowing its own creative and natural flow.

I certainly did not want and was dreading and anguishing about the possibility that language and linguistic regulations would destroy and prevent the occurrence of this creative and dialectical natural flow and possible growth. I was concerned about the constraining conventions and expectations to write within an artificial and coerced, forced and forceful, attempt to make the writing neat, well-ordered and polished, without repetitions, passion and long, untidy and complex and complicated sentences. I wished for the applied ontology and self-dialectical educational AR account to follow and embody real and authentic life and the genuine phenomenon of being a living, evolving, forming and struggling person in the world. I wanted the creative ontological account and story of personal learning about oneself and one's healing and struggles with oneself and one's life to include some narrative wreckage

and by no means to be artificially and mechanistically smoothed and well-polished into neat, tidy and orderly wholly propositional, cold, abstractive, dead, passionless, soulless and mechanistic linguistic propositional statements and argumentations.

With this in my mind, as wholly theoretical, cherished and value-laden intentions and aspirations for what I wanted to work out, establish and accomplish, I went on to search for a methodology for my approach, which I have been entertaining and wanting to construct, achieve and test out with my intended peers, readers and colleagues. I have sought to build on and creatively and dialectically transform, expand, recreate and develop the ideas already put forward by Whitehead and McNiff and the LET approach.

Hence, wanting to draw dialectically on something that is already in existence and that has been already legitimated academically, through the legitimation of doctoral theses that were based on it, and then modify, reconstruct, recreate and qualitatively and dialectically transform it, I transformed the type of educational AR that has already been constructed and applied by Whitehead and McNiff. I added to the LET approach to educational, action and practitioner research the ontological, Existential, humanistic, psychological and therapeutic notion of a person who is struggling and labouring to construct and work out for himself/herself a more meaningful, securing, hopeful, engaging, full and complete, and self-fulfilling and empowered existence in, with, and towards the world for himself/herself.

In significantly modifying the LET approach, I have drawn on the insights of several action and practitioner researchers who had pleaded for a methodological inventiveness, creativeness, autonomy, pluralism, diversity and freedom on the part of the action and practitioner researchers and for greater latitude, variability, creativity and pluralism in academic action and practitioner research. I have made use of Dadds and Hart's (2001 p.167) point that traditional empirical AR is just

> one of the viable and valid methodologies available to practitioners, alongside many others which have already been created and others which will, inevitably, be created

and which

> have equal status and potential in their ability to help practitioners gain new insights into their field of practice, with a view to applying their new knowledge to the improvement of that practice. (ibid)

In the section on "**The importance of methodological inventiveness**" (bold in original), Dadds and Hart (2001 pp.166-7) suggested that

> for some practitioner researchers creating their own unique way through their research may be as important as their self-chosen research focus.

They admitted that whilst they "had understood for many years that substantive choice was fundamental to the motivation and effectiveness of practitioner research (Dadds 1995)" and "that what practitioners chose to research was important to their sense of engagement and purpose", they had "understood far less well that how

practitioners chose to research, and their sense of control over this, could be equally important to their motivation, their sense of identity within the research and their research outcomes.

Furthermore, Dadds and Hart contended that

> If our aim is to create conditions that facilitate methodological inventiveness, we need to ensure as far as possible that our pedagogical approaches match the message that we seek to communicate

as well as the

> awareness that, for some practitioner researchers, creating their own unique way through their research may be as important as their self-chosen research focus…and subsequently they should create enquiry approaches…that enable new, valid understandings to develop…understandings that empower practitioners to improve their work for the beneficiaries in their care.

They cited and recited Lomax and Parker's (1995 p.302) plea for action and practitioner research to

> be pluralistic, rather than monolithic, and diverse, rather than constrained, so that they can celebrate the unique, personal, and subjective strengths of individual action research and help researchers display their own personal signatures.

These insights have, in fact, been drawn on by Whitehead (2004a, Introduction) in his suggestion that his own analysis of the evidence from the self-study accounts of educators has led him to the conclusion

> that each researcher creates their own unique way through their research by exercising their methodological inventiveness

and that subsequently

> just as each s-step researcher can be characterised by a unique constellation of values, so their research can be characterised by their forms of methodological inventiveness.

Furthermore, on his part, Eisner's (1988 p.20.) expressed his hope that

> we will be creative enough to invent methods and languages that do justice to what we have seen

and

> that through such work, through the primacy of experience and the expansion of method, our politics will become a liberating force for both understanding and enhancing the educational process.

Similarly, Lewin (1946 p.44.), himself, pointed out that

in social management, as in medicine, the practitioner will usually have the choice between various methods of treatment and he will require as much skill and ingenuity as the physician in regard to both diagnosis and treatment…Science gives more freedom and power to both the doctor and the murdered, to democracy and fascism. The social scientist should recognise his responsibility also in respect to this.

Consequently, encouraged by Whitehead, McNiff and the LET group, I have utilised my creativeness and inventiveness and transformed the LET approach from being confined to the disciplines of education and educational research, and from epistemology and the practice of making significant contributions to the body of knowledge in educational research, into the disciplines of ontology and critical psychology of the human subject. I have also transformed its leading dialectical enquiry into how to improve my practice and what I am doing and how to fulfil my ontological values in the course of my professional practice into the more ontological, cathartic and auto-phenomenological, dialectical enquiry into how do I lead to a more meaningful existence in the world for myself and reverse and transform situations and experiences in my life. Likewise, I have transformed the original self-dialectical cycles of the LET approach onto my own specifically constructed cycles that are now based on a new form of cathartic, self-therapeutic, auto-phenomenological and auto-poietic educational AR.

My original intention was to work with the living educational theorists and introduce them to another use and possibility that could be derived out of the concrete and applied, living, embodied, dialectical and dialogical approach to educational action research and reflective practice. Still, alas, with the continuous emergence of the LET approach as an 'inclusional' approach, along with its insistence to abandon textual and verbal means of formulating, presenting and communicating LET accounts, I have gradually abandoned this intention. I had moved instead to the practice of offering, introducing, teaching and explaining my own approach to clinicians, theorists and academics. I should like to convey now how my criticisms and concerns about the LET approach have enabled me to transform, empower and develop my research, and create and work out my own approach to the human subject.

2. 2. A Critique and the Transformation of the LET Approach from an Epistemological Approach to an Ontological Approach

My first criticism of the LET approach was that it over-emphasises epistemology and living educational theorists making a significant contribution to the body of knowledge of educational, action and practitioner research. Whitehead has created and grounded his approach within his/an intention to contribute to an epistemological transformation in the fields of education and educational knowledge, and the enhancement of professionalism in education through the creation of living educational theories (Whitehead, 1989a, 1989b, 1993, 1999, 2004a, 2009b) and "*Action Research Living theory*" (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). His intention in developing the LET approach has been to establish a new epistemology in terms of living units of appraisal, standards of judgement and logics (Whitehead, 2009c .p. 4).

In the LET approach each LET account constitutes a unique and personalised explanation of the professional practice and educational, professional, epistemological and ontological development of an autonomous and distinguished practitioner researcher who works at improving his/her professional practice and fulfilling his/her ontological values in the course of his/her practices. As such, LET theorists hold their accounts to be a significant contribution to the field of educational research and also to the area and subject of the particular practice and practice development in question. McNiff (2005, p. 1) claimed that the validity of LET accounts is grounded in the practitioners' capacity for creative critical engagement, as they explain how they transform their practices into processes of critical theorising, using their articulated values as their living epistemological standards.

Hence, the LET approach is grounded within the explanation of the way that a given practitioner is able to show himself/herself and others (within a convincing, authentic and clear manner) the unfolding meanings and implications of the ontological values that he/she utilises and adapts with an intention to give meaning and purpose to his/her professional and personal life. The reader's evaluation of the LET accounts, whether or not the unfolding and explanation of the way these values have in fact been fulfilled in the course of the practice, is able in its own right to account for the dialectical, living and embodied empowerment and self-fulfilment of the account producer as a practitioner and a human being. This is coupled with the establishment by the reader of the account of the ability of the account-producer to adequately theorise, conceptualise and convey his/her professional practice and development, and the embodied knowledge that he/she has been able to amass in the course of carrying out his/her practice in a manner that could significantly contribute to educational research and the subject of the particular account in question. For example, a person with spiritualistic values explains his/her practice improvement based on spiritualism (e.g., Walton, 2008; Adler-Collins, 2007; Punia, 2004; Finnegan, 2000) and is able to generate to the particular field in question a LET account that is grounded within the identification and fulfilment of spiritualistic values.

Likewise, a person who values compassion works to explain his/her professional practice, development and empowerment based on his/her commitment, or passion, to compassion (Naidoo, 2005) which is in turn set to account for his/her professional practice and practice and educational development as a LET account of practice and practice development and improvement which is committed to the demonstration and legitimation of the significance of the important living and embodied value of "passion to compassion" for the subject of health care practice. At the same time, a person who values helping others works, in putting together his/her LET account in the like of, "how do I help others in the course of my professional practice and practice development and improvement?" (my own example), to explain his/her practice and practice improvement on the basis of his/her commitment to and appreciation of the value of helping others (e.g., Pound, 2003; Farren, 2005) which subsequently becomes the epistemological standard of judgement of the AR account and its validation and distinguishing as a LET AR account. The significance of valuing and working to help others therefore becomes the way to look at, critically

engage with and examine and validate this particular LET account of practice, practice improvement and the fulfilment of living and embodied values in the course of one's professional practice and personal (ontological), professional, educational and epistemological development and dialectical transformation.

Hence, the idea is that such accounts of practice improvement, educational development and the fulfilment of one's living and embodied values help and provide the explanation of practice and practice improvement and demonstrate and illustrate how and why certain actions and practices take place and how practices are being developed and improved, living and embodied values are being fulfilled and professional practitioners are being empowered and self-actualised in the course of what they do and practice. This however is grounded within the overly-romantic and quite unrealistic and idealistic assumption that all teachers and professional practitioners are caring and engaging individuals who through using the LET approach will be able to realise their living contradictions upon encountering and recognising places in their professional practice where they have been practicing authoritarian and disciplinarian methods and indoctrinating and disciplining students and peers, or, for that matter, working monotonously and mechanistically just to have another day of ungrateful and excruciating professional practice over and done with. And in turn work to dialectically reverse these living contradictions and improve their value-laden practice as caring and engaging individuals.

Accordingly, their working on identifying, processing and transforming their 'living contradictions' of being disciplinary and impatient rather than truly engaging and attentive could induce them into working out a valid, reliable and rigorous explanation of their professional practice and development as educators and health practitioners and why they do what they do in their professional practices. Consequently, the LET approach is a surprisingly mechanistic, over-simplified and conventional approach that is grounded in the cause-and-effect premises of positivistic empiricism. This is despite its attempt to challenge this very premise and place more humanistic, existential and humanising values and premises in the positivistic grounding of educational and practitioner research.

Moreover, often practitioners are too absorbed in and occupied with their daily practices, struggles and life to add such methodological and elaborated reflection and theorisation to their already exhausting professional practice and life and also their professional practice is for them little more than a means of economic and physical survival, often whilst pursuing graduate studies and a type of professional practice that they feel more passionate about than teaching in schools, yet which cannot sufficiently support their materialistic needs. Nonetheless, Whitehead has been complaining about the detachment between educational practitioners and educational theorists, yet he seems to unintentionally be following up on this detachment through not realising that for many educators and certainly health professionals (such as nurses, social workers, health visitors and nurses-assistants) life is too hectic to carry out such systematic and rigorous AR reflections in and on practice and they are forced to teach in schools or work in hospitals, the community of weak and difficult population groups, outpatient surgeries and Geriatric centres to survive and/or complete their graduate studies and develop their true vocational

calling. I personally think that a good account of practice should look, within a wholly detached and propositional manner and analysis, at the historical, political, socio-economic and economic factors that make the works of the educator and health practitioner so difficult and ungrateful and also examine, within a self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological and autoethnographical manner, his/her dealing with these factors that are well beyond him/her and his/her living and embodied values and merely get worse in the present political and socio-economic climate of the day with serious shortages of staff and resources and economic cut-backs. But then, could we really expect a person working very difficult and ever so exhausting shifts to start writing clear and propositional accounts analysing the issues and history of capitalism, gender and racial discrimination, globalisation and neo-liberalism and the healthcare and education systems?

In creating stories of educational practices and developments, prior to his recent movement to non-textual audio-visual means of narrating and presenting LET accounts of practice and professional and educational development and improvement, Whitehead has been influenced by Connelly and Clandinin's (1999, 2000) work on the creative narratives of educators and educational practitioners who are seeking and working to explain, reflect on, re-evaluate, recreate, process and account for their educational practices and developments. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) had addressed the question of how professional identities are being formed by creatively unfolding, re-evaluating and analysing the stories of the educational practices of teachers and administrators, describing the educationalists' actions, values, cavils, concerns, objectives, goals, ambitions, frustrations and satisfactions. Similarly, Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) book had focused on the re-centring of voice through narrative enquiry.

The conclusion of Connelly and Clandinin's extensive research work on narrative enquiry over the years is that narratives ccould be utilised as a creative and meaningful educational epistemology, thereby to study, examine, unfold and communicate teachers' knowledge. They base their narrative enquiry approach to educational research on two key assumptions: that educational research should strive to understand teachers as knowers of themselves, of their situations, of children, of subject, of teaching, of learning, and that human beings lead storied lives and therefore narratives could be a powerful manner and tool thereby to identify, locate and comprehend their values, experiences, knowledge and learning.

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) had used the phrase 'stories to live by', which was given meaning by the narrative understanding of knowledge and context, to refer to identity. It concluded that a teacher's identity is to be understood as a unique embodiment of his/her story to live by and in turn is one that is shaped through the landscape of the past and present in which she/he lives and works. Moreover, Connelly and Clandinin described in their 1999 book the professional context of educators as a narrated, constructed, and created landscape and as having a history with moral, emotional and aesthetic dimensions, space, place and time, incorporating people, things, events and relationships.

I have found Connelly and Clandinin's approach to narrative and narrative enquiry to be inappropriate for my research, due to its being predominantly epistemological, as opposed to psychological, psychoanalytical, ontological and phenomenological. I am critical of their use of narratives and narrating to merely convey teachers/educators' embodied knowledge, rather than to analyse and delve critically and creatively into their being, living and developing in the world over time and space. I thought the explanation, re-evaluation, comprehension and communication of the professional developments of practitioners should be based on and grounded within ontology and an ontological analysis of the meanings of empowerment, self-fulfilment, and a more fulfilling and constructive aesthetic, ethical and authentic quality of life and relationships between oneself and other people.

Hence, I thought that a profound ontological, auto-phenomenological and self-dialectical, analysis of the experience of a more meaningful existence in the world for the enquirer should be made the bases of the epistemological explanation of the practitioners' professional, educational and epistemological development and their embodied knowledge of their practice and development as practitioners and practitioner researchers and theorists. I took it that the self-dialectical basis of the ontological and auto-phenomenological analysis permits the enquirer to include an evaluation of the meanings and implications of his/her experiences of ontological void and insecurity and angst and malaise in his/her re-evaluation of what a meaningful, securing, hopeful and self-fulfilling existence in, with and towards the world and relationships with both himself/herself and other people signify to him/her. I thought and argued that the intention to lead a more meaningful, fulfilling, ontologically secure, hopeful and empowering existence in, with and towards the world and the direct dialectical reversal and transformation of experiences and situations of existential angst, frustration and alienation and ontological void and insecurity to the reflective practitioner enquirer into those of a more meaningful, fulfilling, securing, hopeful and engaging existence in, with, and towards the world for himself/herself should be placed as the focus of a dialectical educational action research approach to practitioner research and a human existence.

Likewise, I also thought that what is missing out from the LET approach is that it systematically refuses to go into the destabilising ontological experiences of angst and ontological insecurity and void. I drew my inspirations from art and creative writing in which a piece of work is judged by the engagers to be of good-quality, as well as powerful, invocative, aesthetically pleasing, authentic and with a clear message, intention and fulfilment of intention, and enabling an identification with the human-all-too-human experiences of pain, yearning, sorrow and hope and contentment. I set on writing about my history, background, values, what is important and valuable to me, what moves and evokes me into action and commitment (engagement), what upsets me and what fulfils and energises me and what I wish to do, create and establish in the course of my life. I would spend the day writing until I felt a complete saturation and the need to stop. I then evaluated my success in my being able to qualitatively and dialectically transform, shift and redirect my overwhelming experiences of frustration, yearning, existential angst, despair and pain and ontological void and insecurity into those cathartic experiences of release and relief of tension and an utter experience of content, hope, optimism,

energy and being energised and self-liberation. I evaluated the success of my therapeutic approach in my actual noticing and feeling an improvement in my quality of life and the way that I felt. I thus stopped my writing task for the day as soon I felt contented and liberated. Still, when the ontological evaluation of some of the experiences was too difficult and painful to bear, I stopped and discussed my experiences with trusted friends and the University counsellors. Subsequently, I approached the writing task the next day. I was guided by the/my need to understand and fully grasp for myself and reach the core of my existential pain and ontological void and insecurity. When I felt I have fully grasped it, I felt a cathartic liberation, contentment and energy.

I moved on to engage with the praxis of critically and creatively judging, identifying, re-evaluating, recreating, processing and engaging with psychological narratives of the construction of identity, interpretation of experiences and the meanings of human life within a holistic and systematic fashion. By narrative I mean a way to recount and communicate a given phenomenon and experience within an authentic, convincing and experiential fashion. I was used to historical, propositional, abstract and theoretical evaluation and explanation of propositional theories, ideas and phenomena by experts who researched these theories and phenomena without any personal involvement and reflection and exclusively within an intention to contribute to wholly propositional bases of knowledge and the understanding of these phenomena. I was certainly not used to reflective and reflexive accounts of given phenomena and situations by those who have lived through and experienced these situations and phenomena firsthand and who are therefore deeply involved in these phenomena and situations, are personally affected by them and have personal interests in these phenomena and situations and in modifying them. An example of these accounts are messy and emotional action research narratives (e.g., Maclure, 1996) in which a person struggles to come to terms with his/her life and autoethnographical accounts (Ellis and Bochner, 1996) which I have already described and explained above in the introduction. Yet, at the same time, I needed to form, create and establish my own way of describing, writing up, re-evaluating, identifying, recreating, conveying, presenting and accounting for my heuristic way of understanding my being, living and developing in the world.

I wanted to ground my style of narrative within my self-therapeutic endeavour to improve the quality of my existence and relationships with both myself and other people. I also wanted it to serve as a tool for me to understand myself, my ill ways of relating to the world, other people and myself and reflect on these ill ways and how I could alter and modify them. I identified my ill ways of relating to the world when I brought upon myself an alienation from both others, whose support, comprehension and closeness I sought, and from myself and also induced upon myself feelings and experiences of self-disappointment and even self-disgust with myself. I sought to use my writing as a way to move and enable other individuals to help me fulfil my desire to relate more constructively and meaningfully to other individuals and the world and to enable and evoke me into relating to myself more productively and meaningfully. By relating to others more meaningfully I mean the way that encourages mutual support and a caring, engaging and transforming, means

of relating to social others that is capable of improving and empowering the ontology and quality of life of all the involved participants.

I related to the de-reflection method of Frankl (1978, 1985) in which the reflecting individual is able to treat himself/herself as an external reader and avoid the painful feelings of self-pity, despair and paralysing angst. I liked this idea of transcending the counter-productive feelings of self-pity, despair and malaise. I also connected to the desire in autoethnographical accounts for the direct and firsthand reflection on the part of the autoethnographer, on his/her experiences of a given situation and phenomenon, to contribute to and assist other individuals who are also living these same experiences, situation and phenomenon and are therefore equally interested in them and wish to know more about them. I sought to account for and narrate my own experiences of leading and living my own existence and relationships in, with, and towards the world within my intention to improve their quality for myself as a distinctive and new type of auto-phenomenological, ontological, living, embodied and self-dialectical form of educational AR and reflective practice that is intended to summon up a life of greater well-being, meaning, ontological security, hope and self-fulfilment to the enquirer and creative writer.

This was needed as I engaged with the task of constructing AR cycles. I started by writing accounts of who I am, my family background, my values, the things that I have done in my life that I consider important, valuable and which gave me pride, empowerment and fulfilment and which disappoint me and of which I am ashamed. How have I become the person that I am now? What has been and is of an important value to me in my life? What would I like to achieve before I die? What aspects of my life and actions would I like to go back and change? Where do I see myself in four years, ten years and forty years time? As a result of these writing tasks, I understood this form of creative psychological account and narrative as telling, re-evaluating, identifying, recreating and conveying my life in a narrative form with a structure of a plot and a dynamic and systematic movement and qualitative and dialectical transformation of beginning, middle and end, gradually, livingly, creatively and systematically building to and from a climax and a catharsis. I perceived this form to differ from confession by the goal being the taking full self-accountability for one's flaws and ill doing and working to dialectically reverse them, learn from them and empower and self-fulfil and not merely inducing cathartic relief.

I came to this understanding by following carefully and attentively evaluating, studying and engaging with the creative and analytical writings of other individuals and experiencing with it myself within my own life. I regard it to be different from autobiography in its existence and essence as a direct, concrete, practical and hands-on, tool and means of improving the quality of the writer's life and his/her relationship with himself/herself and other people where the goal of inducing learning, self-improving, empowerment and self-fulfilment is what moves the writing. In other words, the writing is more than self-expression and auto-communication. It is a lever and method for self-learning and auto-improving.

I re-evaluated, identified, processed and engaged with, judged and studied, Lieblich and Josselson's (1994, 1995) and Lieblich et al's (1998) publications that addressed the issue of individual identity in the context of a familial heritage and more explicitly how one's sense of individuality relates to their style of management and research, and creatively identify, re-evaluate and account for the ways in which individuals construct their identity, interpret their experiences and their meaning in their understanding and analysis of human life in a holistic and systematic form and fashion. They noted that the culture and the dialogical interaction with other members of that culture is an important essence of the individual's identity and that verbal narrative accounts can provide insights into the lives of the individuals and the way they experience reality. Amia Lieblich has pioneered the methodology of psychological holistic narratives in Israel and elsewhere at a time when psychology, ontology and the study of human behaviour, experiences, feelings and identity were completely grounded in traditional positivistic and quantitative research. She examined human experiences and interactions without going to quantitative and statistic tests at a time when a non-positivistic examination, that merely relied on qualitative validation and did not use any quantitative means of validation, was taken to be subjective and unscientific and the subject of folk psychology rather than of empirical psychology.

Lieblich and Josselson (1994) explored how women creatively and qualitatively construct and reconstruct the lives of other women in biographical work, how individuals conduct and recreate their lives and their life episodes in patterns similar to the plots of stories, how the women's movement influenced three women's adult lives, and how girls' sense of themselves inclines to change as they move into adolescence. For example, they looked into how the situations and variables of socio-economic, ethnicity and age group affiliation affect the life of women, their relationships and identity. The emphasis of these narratives is on the psychological analysis of the relationship among women at particular places and situations, as well as their development and growth in these particular situations.

I also engaged with the practice of identifying, processing and studying Kleinman's work into creatively constructing and utilising creative anthropological narratives. Kleinman is a well-known psychiatrist and medical anthropologist who has pioneered the approach that the understanding of the patient requires the understanding of his/her family background and extensive, history and life-story, and not just the physical symptoms of his/her illness. He developed this approach at a time when medicine had become a very technical profession for the diagnosis and alleviation of physical symptoms. He has pleaded for an ethnographic approach to moral practice in medicine that could include the infrapolitical context of illness, the responses to it, the social institutions relating to it, and the way it is configured in medical ethics. The culture, ethics and politics of being ill are examined in a holistic narrative account which looks at them as well as at the physical symptoms. He illustrated the way creative anthropological and ethnographical narratives could be utilised to convey the need for a creative holistic approach to medicine. His aim in doing so was to contextualise and locate the ill person and his/her illness in a holistic ecological and social context of families, work place, home, society and culture,

provide more control, power and understanding, and re-humanise both the illness and the ill.

I studied the way Kleinman (1988) had used and drawn on the creative narrative approach in order to produce narratives of chronic illnesses that depict the patients, their surrounding circles and the relationships among them, the medical practitioners, the medical establishment, and the world of the patients and their families. I learned that narratives could convey the person as a whole. By whole I am meaning in terms of relationship with self and others and his/her cognition, psychology, social relationships and culture. Indeed, in the creative narrative approach, the doctor is giving a comprehensive account of the day-to-day life of the patient which goes well beyond the physical symptoms and covers matters such as his/her personal background, past and present life and intentions for the future, his/her family, his/her relationships with those close to him/her and with his/her doctors and the medical establishment, his/her home, his/her personal and professional interests, ontological values and 'personality'.

I wanted to examine the way in which narratives could be used to illuminate and support the hypothesis and thesis that an illness is more than a physical manifestation of a mechanical and physical malfunction within the organism and is grounded in, bears effects and influences on and belong to an entire (whole) person and his/her ecological and social surroundings of families and human interactions that include relationships with oneself and other people. I identified, processed and examined the way it creatively constructed and offered

> a holistic, integrative account of the illness and the patient embedded in a context and life stories of human sufferers rather than a disembodied account of a mere medical, physiological condition dislocated and separated from any external context and influence beside the condition and physiological/medical disorder, (p. 48)

and how it aimed

> to construct and communicate the meanings of a chronic illness 'to make over a wild, disordered *natural* [italics in original, AS] occurrence into a more or less domesticated, mythologised, ritually controlled, therefore *cultural* (italics in original) experience' (p. 48)

and the manner in which it had opened up "practical behavioural options in its treatment" and enables the ill "to order, communicate, and thereby symbolically control symptoms".

This enabled me to appreciate the value of holistic narratives in complementing and transcending the traditional case-history diagnoses that focus on little else beyond a description of physical symptoms and their manifestation in the patient. This comes to being in creative holistic narratives of illness depicting and accounting for a person's direct experiences of malaise, hardships, despair and hope and the way seemingly unrelated factors such as the support of relatives, past and present life and future intentions and 'personality' are in fact able to affect the patient's healing and coping with the illness in a more comprehensive and rigorous fashion. Likewise, it

has also enabled me to fully recognise how each person is autonomous and distinct in relating to and coping with an illness and hardships, and the way his/her personal and distinctive background and idiosyncratic circumstances are able to shape and work out his/her unique way of coping with the illness and the relationships with himself/herself and those close to him/her who are equally affected by his/her illness. Nonetheless, he/she is still able to convey his/her experiences of coping with his/her illness to his/her social others, fellow human subjects, due to his/her experiences of being human and subsequently due to him/her constituting a human being who is capable of being understood and related to by fellow human beings.

After that, I moved to living, embodied, concrete and dialectical, reflective and reflexive and phenomenological and auto-phenomenological forms of narrating that I took to enable the person to research, re-evaluate, explain, describe and account for his/her own ontology and professional and personal practices and epistemological, educational, professional and ontological development as a practitioner and a human being. In these forms of narratives, individuals reflect on their lives and living within specific cultural, human and social phenomena, and create an account that could enlighten these phenomena and their idiosyncratic way of dealing and coping with these phenomena.

I wanted to move beyond the narratives of individuals by the practitioners who are set to examine and understand them. I wanted to eliminate the mediation of the practitioner and to examine the way individuals are able to narrate, re-evaluate and account for their own experiences of living a particular human phenomenon and situation and convey these directly from within their own experiences and their reflections and interpretations of both the experiences and the propositional accounts of the phenomenon and situation as produced in the professional literature. I have carried out this move by experimenting with and studying autoethnography and creative writing, logging, blogging and enquiring within-writing&b/logging into one's life. I shall discuss this below.

However, Whitehead asserts that the examination of the psychological, anthropological and sociological roots of the educational and epistemological development of the self-dialectical, living, embodied and dialogical educational action research account is outside the LET approach. His problem is that psychology and ontology are fields which stretch beyond his research scope and that his intention in developing the LET approach was to contribute to the disciplines of education and educational research. I was encouraged by him to extend the LET approach to the fields of psychology and ontology and to approach it as a psychologist and ontologist. Well meaning though this has been, I was dissatisfied with this 'division of labour'.

I myself have been arguing to the LET group that ontology and an ontological evaluation of the existential/ontological experiences of the practitioner are essential in and for generating a valid and reliable type of LET account and should therefore be at the centre of LET accounts. I said that to consider the ontological aspect to be something that can be explored, but is something that is not essential to LET is itself a mistake because ontological reflections are essential to be able to theorise and

conceptualise the professional, epistemological, educational and personal development of the practitioners, turned LET enquirers and researchers. Hence, without a proper ontological and auto-phenomenological critical analysis and systematic re-evaluation on the part of the living educational theorist of the ontological meanings and implications of his/her living and embodied ontological experiences of self-fulfilment and empowerment and self-disappointment and self-dissatisfaction with his/her professional practice, practice and educational development and his/her fulfilment of his/her living and embodied ontological values, which are turned into the epistemological standards of judgements of his/her LET account, in the course of his/her working to improve his/her practice, within its unit of appraisal of knowing one's practice, the LET approach will not be able to fulfil its true potential and to extend beyond being a very marginal approach to educational theory.

In the next section I shall show my way of responding to Whitehead's argument that a LET account does not need an authentic and rigorous ontological and existential evaluation on the part of the LET enquirer of his/her situations and experiences of ontological insecurities, void, angst, saturation, frustration and lack of fulfilment and passion in his/her professional and personal life. I shall make the case for my plea for the LET approach to base and ground its claim to be the epistemological explanation and conveyance of the educators and practitioners' practices, embodied knowledge and educational development on and within an authentic and rigorous ontological, dialectical, auto-phenomenological and existential analysis of their ontological security. I shall build and establish the ground for my offering dialectical, living, embodied and dialogical AR cycles which are more ontological, auto-phenomenological and cathartic (self-therapeutic) than the ones put together by Whitehead and McNiff.

2. 3. Appealing for the LET Approach to be Grounded in an Ontological, Auto-Phenomenological, Self-Dialectical and Existential Analysis of Ontological Insecurities

This section presents my case for the incorporation into LET accounts of ontological and existential, accounts on the part of the practitioner, in general, and the educator, in particular, of his/her existence in the world. In December, 2004, I gained sufficient confidence to directly and publicly challenge for the first time Whitehead's LET approach. I have done so in the "*Discuss This Article*" section of Whitehead (2004b) which was an online AR paper which he considers (2009b) to be his "most ambitious publication to date", as it had summed up the development of the LET approach from the 1970s up to 2004. I challenged it for being wholly focused on the epistemology of putting together explanations of professional practices, while neglecting the ontology of being in the world.

I based my critique on Bullough and Pinnegar's (2004 p.319) plea for

> The consideration of ontology, of one's being in and toward the world…[to] be a central feature of any discussion of the value of self-study research

which had just appeared in Loughran et al's (2004) *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher-Education Practices* and was received with a great deal of enthusiasm by Whitehead and many of the living educational theorists (whose LET doctoral and master accounts could be displayed from the Living Theory Theses section of Whitehead's Homepage at http://actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml.)

In evaluating his own and LET's development over four decades, Whitehead presented (2004b) an account of frustration, angst, alienation, solitude and anger and at the face of his being mistreated and even abused by his colleagues and peers without a proper justification. Yet I thought that this account should really include the more ontological act of delving inside the roots, meanings and reasons for these living and embodied experiences, as experienced and gone through by the author, and conveying a more ontological account of the way Whitehead has been able to draw on them in order to work on, process, and re-evaluate them and transform them into the more constructive experiences and situations of self-fulfilment, empowerment and a meaningful and productive life for himself as a human being, an educator and an educational researcher and theorist.

I explained that my response to Bullough and Pinnegar (2004 p.319.) is that a true ontological self-study self-dialectical AR enquiry should involve the following ontological practice of an individual. It should involve an ontological practice in the course of which the individual enquirer takes full accountability of and for his/her being, living and developing in, with, and towards the world, and his/her relationships with other people and himself/herself, and engages with the act of auto-phenomenologically, self-therapeutically, cathartically, creatively and auto-poietically delving inside, identifying and processing, his/her ontological experiences and situations of existential angst, frustration and malaise, and ontological void and insecurity. Subsequently, he/she is working self-dialectically to reverse and qualitatively transform, shift and redirect them.

I argued that Whitehead's 1991, 1993 and 2004b accounts of his constructing a LET account out of his political experiences and ontological feelings and experiences of situations in the course of which he has been wrongfully abused and mistreated in his place of work, whilst being courageous, lack substance and greater analysis and rigour, despite describing and re-evaluating the experiences of frustration, angst, insecurity and alienation, and the way the author has been able to turn them into what he calls "life-affirming-energy" and contribution to "the hope for the future of humanity". I asked Whitehead at that time: "how could we study, comprehend, clarify, define and appreciate ontological security without including ontological insecurity in the clarification and analysis? Could we have the hope, love, self-fulfilment, empowerment and optimism without fully understanding, internalising, clarifying, re-evaluating and analysing the despair, void, angst, saturation, hatred and pessimism and integrating them into a more existential, auto-phenomenological and ontological account of human existence that seeks to fully grasp it and improve its quality for the person who is living it?".

I expressed my view that a true and genuinely ontological AR approach to the human subject and human existence means completely delving inside the ontological, lived, living and experienced, experiences, carrying out a rigorous heuristic phenomenological reflection into what those experiences really mean to the individual, and communicating this reflection to others in a manner that they can comprehend it for themselves. I pointed out, based on my own self-therapeutic and cathartic work, that this is a very painful exercise which inclines to render the enquirer very vulnerable and existentially terrified and exposed, and to destabilise the researcher and completely take on his/her life, personal and professional combined, and in turn requires him/her to commit a massive amount of resources to it, everything he/she has got and more. I noted that I attribute this flaw in the paper (Whitehead, 2004b) to the fact that the author's extensive resources that he has been describing and analysing in the paper have been diverted to the epistemological need and research component.

Whitehead's reply was that I raised very challenging questions about the creation of a constructing critical psychologist of the human subject. He noted that he understands that the boundaries in his own research could be extended by those researchers, like myself, who are willing to directly face their own ontologies outside any commitment or responsibility as an educator to research their educational influence in the learning of others. He also pointed out that his own research into his educational relationships as a professional educator has been held firm "within the expression of hope in the flow of a life-affirming energy in the expression of my ontological security" as he works to achieve what Erich Fromm advocated and face the certainty of death without panic while creating purpose through "my own loving relationships, and productive work in education". He also referred to Tillich's *The Courage to Be* and noted that he had associated his choice of becoming a professional educator with the flow of life-affirming energy of his ontological security that has not yet given way to ontological despair.

I myself argued and responded back then that I disagree with the idea that educational research should avoid a thorough existential analysis on the part of the practitioner who seeks to theorise his/her own practice and educational development. Subsequently, I expressed the counter-argument that educational research should embrace ontological insecurities, angst and concerns and lack of empowerment and self-fulfilment in the generation of authentic, rigorous and valid accounts of practitioners' embodied knowledge and educational practice and development. I expressed my strong belief that in order to be able to relate to and work with others in a constructive and educational manner, the educator must spend time studying and getting to know himself/herself and ensuring that he/she has worked on, cleansed and transform the ontological places in his/her being where he/she is experiencing saturation, angst and despair, and ontologically insecure and empty in his/her professional and personal life in, with, and towards the world, on the one hand, and himself/herself as being irrational, immature, biased, prejudice and unstable, on the other hand.

Afterwards, I contended that in relating to younger and less experienced individuals within his/her educational responsibility towards them, dialoguing with them and

opening up and creating the conditions for both educatees and educator to develop themselves ontologically as members of a community and society, and learning how to do so and achieving this in a meaningful and constructive manner, the educator must work at transforming his/her ontological insecurities into a proven ontological security. I stressed that an educator must truly evaluate the points of his/her existence where he feels an ontological saturation, void, insecurity, despair and anguish in order to improve his/her relationships with his/her students and in turn his/her educational practices and developments.

I suggested to Whitehead that seeking to explain, account for and convey the educational development and practices of the educator and educational researcher without analysing the existential and ontological meanings of the educational, ontological and epistemological development to the researcher in his/her working to construct a more meaningful, securing and fulfilling existence in, with and towards the world for himself/herself is not merely inadequate and inauthentic, but also follows up the very traditional and mainstream view of academic research, in general, and educational research, in particular, that he is constructively challenging in his LET work. Indeed, the mainstream view does not favour existential thinking and philosophy and in turn does not regard ontology to precede epistemology. It inclines instead to hold the positivistic position that perceives epistemology to precede ontology and which separated ontology from epistemology and discarded ontology from an epistemological and valid positivistic account (Kolakowski, 1968; Serper, 1999, 2006a, 2006b; Heidegger, 1962; Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Sartre, 1943a, 1947, 1952; Camus, 1942a, 1942b). Hence, whilst Whitehead claims to provide an existential and humanistic type of educational research, he remains committed to the position that epistemology precedes ontology. Naturally, I question this claim and the entire originality and meaning of his claim to develop his LET approach to educational research as a reflective approach to educational research and development that really enables the educator and practitioner to examine himself/herself and his/her life and actions and practices and his/her self-empowerment and self-fulfilment/actualisation.

I stressed to Whitehead and the LET group then that this is the true meaning and concrete significance of a person in, with and towards the world and of the phenomenon of being in, with and towards the world. I am talking about a Being-In-The-World who is creatively and courageously facing experiences and situations and scenarios of existential angst, frustration and solitude, existential and ontological crises, and ontological void and insecurity and labouring and struggling, as hard as he/she can, to auto-phenomenologically identify and fully comprehend and internalise and self-dialectically reverse and qualitatively transform, redirect, shift and transmute these hard human-all-too-human experiences and the situations that provide them. I also emphasised that this is the real beauty and sublimeness in and of human existence and the phenomenon of being a person in the world that does not appear to be held into account by the LET approach, which subsequently misses out on the most important characteristic of the human subject: resilience, adaptability, labouring hard on oneself and changing and transforming one's life and one's quality of life significantly and drastically.

Moreover, I contended that an educator who seeks to explain his/her educational practice, influences and relationships must be displayed as a Being-In-The-World who is capable of weaknesses and insecurities which he/she embraces for the sake of his/her empowerment. I suggested that this implies studying and getting inside the core of these weaknesses and insecurities in order to be able to do something about them, shift and transform them and empowering as a more secure Being-In-The-World. I also argued that failing to do so means and implies in real-world and concrete situations accepting and even condoning ontological insecurities and weaknesses.

In my view, a valid and reliable educational research should encourage the practitioner to delve inside his/her ontological insecurities in order to work on means of dialectically transforming these experiences into the more positive ones of ontological security, energy and hope in what he/she is doing and in his/her personal and professional life. I believe educational research should help and support the practitioners in doing so and be there for them as they struggle with their professional life and development. Dismissing this duty as being the duty of the psychologist is in my mind erroneous and inclining to miss out on the need on the part of the educational researcher to exercise the same degree of human compassion as the one required by the psychologist, health practitioner, a friend and a human being.

Likewise, I believe academic educational theorists and researchers like Whitehead who assume ontological securities and "life-affirming-energy" in educational practices and the ontology of the educational practices tend to, unintentionally of course, increase the saturation on the part of the unfulfilled practitioner, intensify his/her anxiety and make him/her blame himself/herself for his/her difficulties and ignore the real social, ecological, socio-economic, political, cognitive, psychological and mental causes for his/her feeling and experiencing anxieties, ontological insecurities, dissatisfactions, and frustrations in his/her educational practices and development. This leads to alienation rather than providing compassion, mutual understanding and support.

I think psychologists like myself should hammer this point again and again to rather traditional, yet passionate and committed, educators and educational theorists such as Whitehead who incline to view the role of the educators as conveying knowledge and learning, while also failing to account for, understand, and relate the educator as a real human being with anxieties, fears, weaknesses and ontological insecurities. I think that with all their passion for education and educational research, they are inclining to elevate the educators beyond being a real human being. Just like a psychologist and psychotherapist is a very ordinary person with feelings, insecurities and anxieties, as it was beautifully shown to us by Perry and Graat (2010) and Samuels (2010). Romanticising the practitioner and elevating him/her from being an ordinary person with feelings and experiences (both negative and positive), as it is customary in traditional practice research, actually does the practitioner harm. It alienates him/her, damages his/her professional practice, and professional and educational development, and can even cause him/her to embark on a career change or early retirement.

The present trend in practitioner research and the communication of professional practices, learning, knowing and developing/improvement (e.g., Bolton, 1999, 2005; Bolton et al, 2006; Lapidus, 2009 AHSW, 2010), is indeed to hold the practitioner as a real person with anxieties, flaws, wrong-doing and psychological issues, and observing him/her as he/she accounts of these matters, does something concrete about them and improves and empowers himself/herself, his/her life and his/her professional, ontological, epistemological and educational developments in what he/she does and cares about. Whitehead's claim to wish to avoid victory narratives will not be realised until he is capable of realising my arguments here and to implementing them in his/her LET practices.

I shall introduce in the next sections a new method for a new type of ontological educational action research. This is based on the improvement of the well-being and ontological security of the practitioner and the quality of his/her life and relationship with himself/herself and other people.

Subsequently, the 'I' in my new approach is indeed an anguished, solitary and insecure value-laden Kierkegaardean and Nietzschean 'I'[17] who is systematically logging, creatively writing, blogging and enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into his/her ontological, living, lived and embodied, experiences and the way in which he/she can transform these into a more meaningful, securing, hopeful and self-fulfilling existence in, with and towards the world.

Naturally, the 'I' in my new approach to educational AR still wishes to connect and interrelate with and influence other people. What healthy person wishes himself/herself to undergo severance, conflict and alienation and remain stuck in the same place rather than progress in what he/she is doing? But the 'I' in my ontological approach and improvement on the LET approach is above all an 'I' who is seeking and working towards empowerment, meaning, engagement, collaboration and ontological security for itself/himself/herself. I would love to see Whitehead and the LET enquirers take into account my suggestions here and carry them through. I think that in doing so, they will be able to improve the LET approach quite significantly. In the next section, I shall convey the manner in which the 'I' in my ontological approach to LET is able to do so and achieve empowerment, ontological security and self-fulfilment/actualisation in his/her personal and professional life.

2. 4. Modifying, Developing and Transforming the Four Original Ideas of the LET Methodology

Let me show you now the way I have creatively used and drawn upon the ideas of the LET methodology. To do so, I re-engaged with the following four ideas that I knew well from my propositional critical engagement with humanistic and continental critical psychology of the human subject (Serper, 1999, 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2009).

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[17] The autonomous and free 'I' who seeks independence, freedom, agency, security, liberation and empowerment.

First, Heidegger's idea of Dasein and Being-In-The-World.

Second Husserl's (1970 p.184) proposition that

> All of mankind, and the whole distinction and ordering of the personal pronouns, has become a phenomenon within my epoche.

Third, the interpretation of the last proposition by Moustakas' (1994 p.58) as,

> I am the person who gives existence its essence, the one who returns essence to existential life.

Fourth, a beautiful verse in Laing (1967 p.156),

> The Life I am trying to grasp is the me that is trying to grasp it".

In addition, I also reconnected with the criticism on the part of Kierkegaard of the abstraction and mechanisation of the human subject, and his pleading for the person to put a stop to his/her alienation and detachment from himself/herself and return to himself/herself and resume his/her identity and autonomy as a self-defining, constantly changing, creating, recreating, forming and transforming person.

Furthermore, I also reconnected with the philosophical and theoretical criticism of Heidegger by the Marxists and Critical Theorists. This criticism is well-illustrated in Schroyer's *Foreword* to Adorno's (1973) *The Jargon of Authenticity*, in the course of which Schroyer had noted that "Adorno's thesis is that Heidegger's notion of selfness remains a reified tributary of Husserl's concept of the subject" and that "this concept of subject, in attempting to overcome the pure possibility of the ontic, claims to be itself concrete".

Schroyer (p. vii) had also pointed out that

> Heidegger dogmatically proclaims his concept of existence as something in opposition to identity - while at the same time he continues the tradition of the doctrine of identity with his implicity definition of the self through its own preservation.

He then explained that

> Adorno examines the notions of "Dasein," "authenticity", "death", "care", etc., and shows that their use evades the issue of historical determinateness by means of a primary and absolute creative subject – which is, by definition, supposedly untouched by reification. (ibid)

And that

> the aura of authenticity in Heidegger is that it names "nothing" since "the "I" remains formal and yet pretends that the word contains content in-itself. (ibid)

What Schroyer meant here is that Heidegger's notion of selfness inclines to abstract and disembody the attempt to make the self a concrete, embodied, living, autonomous and emerging Being-In-The-World and subject. The reason for this abstraction and disembodiment lays in Heidegger's treatment of "Dasein" within theoretical and philosophical regulations, arguments and meanings and interpretations, analysis and re-evaluations.

Schroyer then contended that through including the matter of historical determinateness as a concrete, autonomous, living, embodied and emerging human subject in the world, Adorno was able to re-embody and re-humanise the human subject as a real human being, rather than a formal concept.

He thus concluded that

> for Adorno, Heidegger's existentialism is a new Platonism which implies that authenticity comes in the complete disposal of the person over himself – as if there were no determination emerging from the objectivity of history. (ibid)

The new knowledge of Whitehead and McNiff's LET approach has made me creatively revisit this Marxist critical theory criticism of Heidegger's concept of Dasein. I started working on the construction of means of re-embodying and re-humanising the formal, theoretical and abstract idea of "Dasein" and took historical accounts of the person of his/her life, being, living and developing in, with, and towards the world and his/her way of improving the quality of his/her life and relationships with himself/herself and other people to be essential in doing so.

I have also worked with Moustakas and Van Manen's insights on heuristic research, inquiry and methodology, and reflective and self-reflective (auto-dialogical) phenomenology as an empirical research tool for the study and critical analysis of embodied ontological experiences (Moustakas 1981, 1990, 1994; Van Manen, 1990). Moustakas worked at constructing, creating and recreating an empirical and qualitative methodology and a methodological and heuristic approach out of Husserl's phenomenology.   Moustakas had claimed that the objective of transcendental phenomenology is to develop a method for understanding the objects that appear before us. He made the point that such a science requires a return to the self and the employment of a self-reflective process that enables the searcher/inquirer increasingly to know herself or himself within the ontological, living, lived and embodied, experience which is being investigated.

Van Manen, on his part, reconnected phenomenology and human science with verbal, discursive and textual language. He suggested that western human science aims at obtaining understandings about concrete lived experiences through the method of language. He contended that Heidegger (1971) has suggested that language, thinking and being are identical and that language constitutes a fundamental part of our humanness. He noted that this makes all human experience and interactions some kind of text as it was in fact suggested by Ricoeur (1981). He associated human experience with language and phenomenological description with textual interpretation or hermeneutics. He made the point that influenced by post-

modernism, deconstructionism, and other language-oriented human science approaches, phenomenology and the epistemology of experience and perception have transformed themselves to incorporate an epistemology of language and text and now aim to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence. In the new form of phenomenology and the epistemology of experience and perception, lived experience possesses and embodies linguistic structure.

Nonetheless, the LET approach perceives tacit knowledge and non-verbal ontological experiences of being, which are inadequately and poorly expressed in text and language, to be the core of its approach. It seeks to display this type of living, lived, tacit, personalised and embodied, knowledge through non-textual and non-verbal means. It regards it to be superior to the idea that all experience, cognition and understandings can be communicated and expressed explicitly, verbally, linguistically and textually.

My new understanding and knowledge of the LET approach have enabled me to criticise and transform, within my own approach, the epistemological and methodological bases of Moustakas and Van Manen. I view Moustakas' labelling of the lived, living and embodied ontological experiences of the person in the world as "the objects…before us" as problematic as it tended to reduce, objectify, alienate and mechanise the person who embodies, lives and experiences them. Moustakas typified the problem in traditional phenomenology of looking at the living and embodied experiences of the person. This is instead of directly looking at the individual who experiences, lives and undergoes them as he/she is trying to lead the most comfortable, meaningful, securing and self-fulfilling existence in the world for himself/herself.

As a critical humanistic psychologist of the human subject, I criticised throughout the 1990s the way Wundtian empirical psychologies tend to reduce the human subject within their controlled observation and experimentations. After I went to and used phenomenology as an alternative, I could not but entertain the possibility that traditional phenomenology itself reduces and abstracts the person and his/her heuristic enquiry, critical analysis and methodological theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation into ontological lived, living and embodied experiences. I was, in fact, dreading the possibility that traditional phenomenology is just as abstractive, objectifying and reductive towards the human subject as the other tools, solutions, approaches and models. I was afraid that applying the Moustakas' method and plea for such a method would objectify the person within his/her experiences that are "the object of the analysis".

Alternatively, I offer the following possible AR cycles as an indication of the manner in which the concrete and applied, living, embodied, auto-phenomenological, autoethnographical, dialectical, auto-poietic, auto-dialogical, creative, innovative, cathartic, auto-liberating and dialogical heuristic action research enquiry could be done. I formulated, developed and worked out the below specific AR cycles during the summer of 2004. A lot has happened since. I came to understand the importance of creative writing and text, and the appreciation of the

social in self-analysis and auto-re-evaluation and of the perception of the LET approach as a tool that requires criticism and significant improvement.

i. (I) experience a concern because my human-all-too-human desire and intention are negated and instead of feeling myself leading a more meaningful existence in the world for myself of greater empowerment, fulfilment, actualisation, gratification, engagement, dignity, integrity, ontological security and sustainability and general well-being, I actually feel myself leading a greater existential/ontological void, solitude, malaise, insecurity, angst, self-dissatisfaction and self-frustration and even auto-disgust.

ii. (I) reflect on the situation: I analyse the roots and causes of this feeling of mine: Why do I feel this way? I ask myself: Is it rational, educationally productive for my educational, cathartic, auto-poietic and self-educational learning and endeavours and ontologically authentic and securing? I creatively use friends and trustees for this, as well as a very cold, creative and pragmatic form of the type of de-reflection (namely, looking at and reflecting on a situation by transcending it and looking at it from a detached distance) that Frankl (1959, 1969, 1973, 1978, 1985) had talked about. Frank's *Logotherapy* Existential and humanistic approach to psychotherapy perceives the person as a being who searches for meaning, empowerment and self-fulfilment in his/her life. It is based on the logotherapist helping the patient in fully comprehending and transforming his/her experiences of ontological void and lack of meaning, self-fulfilment and empowerment. It includes a cold and detached reflection that is intended at transcending and understanding painful situations which are very difficult to bear and lead and which Frankl terms de-reflection.

iii. (I) evaluate, creatively and dialectically converse and dialogue with myself on the implementation of my aspirations and intentions and the direction that I ought to follow: I creatively ask myself: What I am to do; What I have been doing; Real-life results in the real-world, experiences and comments and reactions of social others. I think and write my feelings and thoughts on these questions.

iv. (I) reflectively, creatively, phenomenologically, auto-poietically, auto-phenomenologically, self-therapeutically, cathartically and autoethnographically, auto-dialogue as for the reasons, reasoning and roots for and of my experience and experiencing of a dissatisfying, frustrating, solitary and anguishing existence in the world. I rationalise it. I evaluate it. I work out my ideas as for what makes me feel so frustrated, alienated, self-disappointed and anguished in and with my life and myself.

v. (I) imagine a creative solution to this problem. One that could make me identify, process, re-evaluate, recreate, redirect and reverse, transform, shift and transmute my feeling and experiencing this situation of a difficult and heartbreaking dissatisfaction, frustration, solitude and angst and void with my life and my being and living in the world and with what I do in and with my life and my experiencing a wholly dissatisfying, anguishing, solitary and frustrating existence in the world. I anticipate and build for myself a what-if scenario of a solution that could solve and rectify these experiences of frustration, alienation, self-disappointment and angst. I then work at attaining this made-up scenario in my real life and future. I am referring to a creative reversal and a qualitative transformation, shifting and redirection towards my feeling and experiencing an empowerment, fulfilment, meaning, fullness, completeness, well-being, ontological security, creativeness and

self-actualisation with my life and being and living in, with and towards the world and within and with what I do and a more meaningful, empowering, securing, fulfilling, engaging, full and complete and self-actualising existence in the world and in what I do in it and seek to achieve in and for the/my future and present.

vi. (I) creatively and systematically reflect on this creative heuristic solution and analyse, re-evaluate, recreate, identify and process its meanings and implications for me and my life and being-in-the-world and living, developing and self-transforming in the world and on how it can productively, creatively, qualitatively and dialectically transform, recreate, redirect, shift and transmute my life into a more meaningful, empowering, engaging, full and complete, fulfilling, actualising, constructive, productive, dignifying, creative, ontologically securing and sustaining one for myself in, with and towards the world. I work upon making my imagined situation of a better life and relationship with myself and others a matter of reality for myself in my future life.

vii. (I) creatively take a grip upon myself and act out in the direction of this creative heuristic solution and this meaning of my actions and reflections productively, creatively and constructively. I do not allow myself to delve in and indulge myself in counterproductive self-pity and paralysing angst and despair. Instead, I creatively fight, recreate and kill the self-pity, the paralysing angst, solitude and despair and the unproductive and uncreative self-imposed restrictions and shackles. I think of and work out creative ways thereby not to allow myself indulge and delve in the counterproductive self-pity and paralysing angst. I creatively recreate, fight and kill the natural embracement of and the irrational clutching to the existing, the accustomed, habitual and routinely (Camus, 1942a) and the fear of change and the unknown and rationally. Instead, I creatively embrace and make myself delve into and indulge the need for change, growth and engagement and for drastic measures and recreation, redirection, shifting and transformation. I make myself wish to cause a change in my life, rather than delve in the routine and mundane.

viii. (I) take a full grip upon myself and move on to kill and creatively destroy and demolish the feelings and experiences of grief, sickness, solitude and self-pity. Rather than allow myself pursue with self-pity, grief, passivity and isolation and take them to be my life, I take on these experiences and situations hands-on and work to reverse, shift and transmute them. I creatively empower and auto-liberate myself and move on to creatively fulfil my ontological and ethical obligation towards myself to auto-poietically, cathartically, creatively and self-therapeutically construct, work out, recreate and develop for myself in the world and summon up and bring about the most meaningful, engaging, empowering, fulfilling and actualising existence in, with and towards the world that is possible for me and that I am capable of under the circumstances. I think and imagine experiences and situations of self-satisfaction, empowerment and self-fulfilment and work upon summoning them in and onto my life.

ix. (I) let go. (I) immerse myself into and within the cathartic release, relief and auto-liberation. (I) enjoy it and make the most of it. (I) let go and move on with my life, my ontological development and practices. After reaching that ontological change, I take time to embrace and appreciate it.

I repeat these cycles at will, whenever I find this exercise to be of need and benefit for my well-being, healing, personal and community development and growth and

auto-liberation, as well as to my ontological security, self-fulfilment and empowerment and engagement and interrelationship with, in and towards the ecological and social world and myself.

Hence, the 'I' delves creatively, phenomenologically, auto-phenomenologically and self-dialectically into the contradictions of trying and working as hard as it can to identify and process, and then reverse, negate and transform and release, redirect and liberate its existential and ontological malaise, insecurity, solitude, frustration and void, self-disappointment, auto-frustration and self-disgust and lack of fulfilment.

What guides my approach is the supposition that the user of this approach would experience a creative shock and a most unpleasant, disturbing and shaking, and human-all-too-human, ontological, living, lived and embodied, experience of ontological insecurity, to the point of a most disturbing sickness-unto-death sensation of existential angst, absurdity and dread. It is this ontologically shaking and disturbing experience of being in the world that would lead and induce the self-enquirer into constructing, creating and recreating, an AR enquiry in the course of which he/she would research innovative heuristic ways thereby to fully grasp and comprehend, identify, re-evaluate, recreate, redirect, shift and process this very unpleasant shock and severe ontological anxiety, solitude and frustration, and to reverse, transform, recreate, redirect, shift and transmute them into a more pleasant, secure, creative, and engaging form of life and being and existing in the world for himself/herself. Thus, one arrives at the transformed existence and the catharsis after an enquiry that would really, authentically and creatively, get inside and into this living and embodied experience and situation of an undesired, lonely and isolated and wasted life, what has prompted and summoned it, and why it is there, and which would lead and enable the enquirer to do something concrete, active, constructive, creative and meaningful about it.

What makes this approach distinctive from the LET approach? Whitehead and McNiff's LET approach does not really move from an approach to educational AR into the AR approach to a human existence Whitehead (2009b) claims the LET to be, but fails to deliver. My approach achieves this. These specific and explicit elements and components of ontological, existential, humanistic and phenomenological and auto-phenomenological, analysis have been missing from the development of Whitehead's LET approach for almost forty years. I felt this lack of an ontological existential analysis to hold back the LET approach from really fulfilling its true potential and its recent claims to be an AR approach to human existence. It therefore hinders LET from actually becoming a real approach to a human existence and from becoming what it claims itself to be.

2. 5. A Critique of the Dismissal by the LET Approach of Linguistic Text in Favour of Non-Textual Multi-Media and Audio-Visual Clips

After searching for the most appropriate textual means thereby to work out, construct, convey and narrate living educational theories and experiencing with epistemological narratives (Connelly and Clandinin's, 1999, 2000) and phenomenological narratives like autoethnographical, personal, reflective and

reflexive narratives (Roberts, 2003; Ellis and Bochner, 2000, 1996; Holt, 2003; Sparkes, 2000, 2002b) and autobiographical writings (Anderson, 2000; Sparks, 2002a), Whitehead and his LET group have abandoned the textual, linguistic and verbal means of presentation and moved to non-textual means (see, Whitehead, 2004b, 2009a, 2009b, 2010).

Whitehead presently takes the written word and textual media to miss out on the full ontological experience. He claims that audio-visual clips, which he makes available in his website or the YouTube website, better represent human practices, development and experiences.

He noted (2008a) that

> The fourth idea is that while we live with the relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that Rayner (2004) refers to as inclusionality, our present ways of representing our educational knowledge in the propositional and dialectical theories legitimated in the Academy and in established and renowned internationally refereed journals tend to mask this relationally dynamic awareness. They also mask or omit the educational significance of our flows of life-affirming energy. Multi-media narratives of living educational theories are shown to reveal the meanings of such flows of energy and values. When combined in the living boundaries of cultures in resistance they can be a transformatory influence in educational change.

By insisting upon the use of "Multi-media narratives", Whitehead draws on a new regulation at the University of Bath for graduate research that permits the use of non-textual means of presentation in and for the thesis. Whitehead and Huxtable (2006) in fact concluded by noting that the five doctorates that have been awarded under the change of regulation at the University of Bath in 2004, that enabled the submission of e-media, have removed some of the limitations in textual representations that relied solely on meanings being communicated through a printed page. They added that the multi-media LET accounts that they present in their paper presentation have enabled the legitimation of "new living and inclusional standards of judgment" and the flow of the living educational theories through web-space "as sociocultural artefacts that are freely available for all those with the appropriate web-technology".

They then, after making this point, expressed their conviction that,

> the living standards of judgment, such as equality of power-relations, life-affirming energy, enquiry learning and love, that have already been legitimated in the living educational theories flowing through web-space, are making a contribution to this transformation.

They also expressed their present intention to re-focusing their attention on

> spreading the influence of this recognition and legitimation in local, regional, national and global social formations.

They also noted that the embodied values, to which they refer in this paper,

are increasingly being expressed as sociocultural relations, flowing through web-space from http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/living.shtml that can influence the learning of social formations with living theories and standards of judgement.

Two good illustrations for the movement of the LET approach to non-textual audio-visual video clips are firstly Whitehead's (2004b) declaration that multi-media technologies help to overcome a problem in trying to represent, in text alone, the meanings of individuals' embodied values as "explanatory principles in educational theory generation and testing". And then, secondly, Whitehead's (2009a p.85) claim that this is done "from a perspective of inclusionality and in multi-media explanations" that centre on the embodied knowledge of action researchers.

Furthermore, a text that accompanies one of Whitehead's Youtube clips (Whitehead, 2010), summarises the Youtube audio-visual clip and notes that Jack Whitehead is pleading for the use of multi-media accounts for an epistemological transformation in educational knowledge in a belief and hope that this will be achieved by researchers who

> recognise the importance of communicating the energy-flowing values as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning.

Please note here as a footnote that in referring here to this particular text and *Youtube* clip, I am referring to what Whitehead (2010) had mistakenly called his 17th of May, 2009 videoblog and has placed and made available in the *Youtub*e website[18] – which therefore cannot make it his blog which must be his controlled, living and embodied, webpages and organised as a chronological list of posts, with and within a well-defined theme, with comments and feedback dialogue section in order to be defined as his blog and a blog in general – at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFj9vdcO1nc.

I completely disagree with Whitehead about this. I do not think the problem is located in the representation or misrepresentation of values and epistemological, ontological and educational, personal and community development of individuals in written text, words and creative and active reading and writing. Or, for that matter, in the failure to convey, describe, explain, account for and illuminate the meanings and implications of living and embodied human values as standards of judgement in the production and development of textual and linguistic accounts of educational, ontological and epistemological development of practitioners and human beings on paper or a computer screen using written and linguistic means of communication. I think and believe the problem is laid in individuals' failure to produce good writings, solid and skillful, creative, caring, and convincing use and mastery of creative words, written language, verbal communication and written text and in the word count limitation of academic treatises, theses, papers, essays and dissertations.

I believe creative words and actively and dynamically playing with written text and language can do a far greater and better job than audio-visual video-clips, which I do not think could properly display, introduce, convey and show human values.

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[18] Which is by no means a blogging website or platform

Furthermore, I think it also provides the analysed and theorised individual with greater control over his depiction, what to include and keep and what to omit and not to include in the cognitive, ontological, educational, epistemological and phenomenological analysis, re-evaluation, recreation and conveyance to others.

Seeing an individual allegedly acting out his/her life, inner-self, embodied and living values, relationships, interactions and interrelationships, cognition in the world (e.g., Shanon, 1993; James, 1890; Gibson, 1950, 1966, 1979), embodied, tacit and personal knowledge (Polanyi, 1958, 1966; Polanyi and Prosch, 1975) and educational and professional developments and transformations (Whitehead, 1993, 2009b) in audio-visual video clips - that are usually displayed by Whitehead et al., in the *Youtube* Website, in the Jack Whitehead folder, or channel, (Whitehead, 2010) - does not convince me that there is a real, authentic, genuine, pragmatic, profound, comprehensive and intensive, self-dialectical, auto-dialogical auto-phenomenological, cathartic, active and auto-poietic ontological, educational and epistemological analysis there, or for that matter a true catharsis and cathartic relief, liberation, change, empowerment and transformation of individuals' being, living and developing in, with and towards the world. Not at all. Far worse, I think it cheapens and commits a great injustice to the sublimely grotesque and grotesquely sublime phenomenon that we call and label human existence and the human subject.

The clips are available at Whitehead's *Youtube* Channel at http://www.youtube.com/user/JackWhitehead. They keep growing and multiplying in numbers and seek to illustrate Whitehead's approach in regards to video-tape clips being superior to a textual communication alone.

This is particularly apparent when there is a researcher who is filming audio-visual and multi-media clips, in the name of the approach which he is advocating and developing, but who is nevertheless interpreting and using the filmed scenarios for his own needs, claims, purposes and intentions. Consider: the following questions:

Is a displayed facial gesture in a *Youtube* audio-visual clip, in the like of those that appear in the Whitehead's Channel in Youtube (Whitehead, 2010), a smile or a twitch?

Is another exhibited facial gesture and expression, as shown in this clip in Whitehead (2010), the outcome of an act of deep thinking or a display of doubt and deprecation?

Does the presented smile and laughter in these clips express pleasure or being totally overwhelmed by things?

Is yelling and hitting the desk (my own example) an expression of frustration or excitement?

Why? What does it mean? What is the history and historical meanings of these presented gestures and displayed acts? What has prompted them? What do they imply and denote? Why not just let a person creatively and actively write down,

explain, re-evaluate, recreate, describe and share his/her ontological feelings, experiences, emotions and cognitions and interactions in, with and towards the world for others to read, comprehend, ask questions and request clarifications and elaborations and dialogue? Any literate person who knows to read and write can write down and share - either at will or upon minimal encouragement and support - his/her feelings, experiences, cognition, situations and emotions, do a good, authentic and explicit, job of it and feel and experience a terrific cathartic liberation, relief and release which is human-all-too-human, shared by most if not all human beings in common and are evident to fellow human beings.

What does showing the cogniser and enquirer in an audio-visual really add? Doesn't it deprive us from and deny us of the possibility of really engaging with his/her private inner-self, thoughts, emotions, feelings and experiences that are expressed and shared in intimate writing (between himself/herself and himself/herself) and a piece of wholly vulnerable piece of text, within a safe and comfortable space, on paper or a computer screen? What is wrong with a bit of hard work of working and struggling to make and illuminate sense out of a creative, actively written up and conveyed text and work, at its full understanding, with the help of the author and a creative dialectical dialogue with him/her? Would the average person be willing to be displayed in such a vulnerable and intimate manner on *Youtube* for anyone to see and comment on and to take out of context? Would such display be wholly authentic?

I believe creative writing provides a greater naturalistic authenticity than audio-visual clips made public. Would a filmed individual, knowing his behaviour, gestures, etiquettes and sayings be placed on *Youtube* for all to observe, be able to display his/her true feelings, self and being in the world, or, rather, be eager to be publicly displayed to others in a good and pleasing manner? Does it likely to change his or her behaviour when s/he knows s/he will be viewed, and when he/she acts in front of others, camera(wo)man and fellow participants? Compare this with the type of logging one's feelings, emotions, experiences, frustrations, alienation, angst, void, anger, insecurities and despair to one own self, in isolation, to a computer screen and keyboard. Which method be more authentic, genuine and real and depictable in portraying real, auto-phenomenologically living, embodied, dialectically, actively and dynamically unfolding, transforming and developing and changing, and auto-poietically transmuting human emotions and experiences?

2. 6. A Critique of the Departure of the LET Approach from Dialectics into Inclusionality

Whitehead's main preoccupation since 2006/7, as far as the development of the LET approach is concerned, has been legitimating and reinforcing his claim that he has managed to carry through Schön's (1995) plea for the development of a new "epistemology of practice for the new scholarship" (Whitehead, 2007, 2008, 2009b). Whilst being following the idea of 'inclusionality' and becoming increasingly intrigued by it since 2002/3, since 2007 he sees this suggested Schönian epistemology as 'the third epistemology and logic of inclusionality' and is rather convinced by this suggestion of his.

He noted (2007) that

> the originality of this research lies in the expression of a new epistemology for the educational knowledge and theories being generated by practitioner-researchers. At the heart of this epistemology are values-based living standards of judgement. These standards are distinguished by their life-affirming, energy-flowing values. The living educational theory approach for validating the living standards includes digital multi-media explanations of educational influences in learning by self-study researchers. The processes of legitimation include the living standards of judgement of some 20 living theory doctorates flowing through web-space from http://people.bath.ac.uk/edsajw/living.shtml. The epistemology and cultural significance of these living educational theories, flowing through the interconnecting and branching channels of communication of web-space, is considered through the lens of ecological feminism.

He added and explained that

> the main objective is to present the energy flowing values that constitute the relationally dynamic standards of judgement used by self-study researchers in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' The presentation is informed by an expression of inclusionality. Inclusionality is a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries as connective, reflexive and co-creative (Rayner, 2004).

What is 'the third epistemology and logic of inclusionality'? 'Inclusionality' is essentially a response to what Rayner (1997) described as a form of reality, awareness and relationship that is "fixed, impermeably solid and resisting, selective, divisive, severing and imposing".

By this Rayner (2006) meant that

> Correspondingly, boundaries that from an orthodox perspective are regarded as discrete, fixed limits (smooth, space-excluding, Euclidean lines or surfaces) of isolated objects or systems, are seen inclusionally as pivotal, relational places.

Hence, through 'inclusionality', Rayner seeks to transform rigid, fixating, alienating, severing and uncompromising boundaries that he perceives as what is grounding the traditional thinking in academia and elsewhere into more flexible, flowing, including and connecting ones that would ground 'inclusional' thinking.

To grasp the meaning and essence of inclusionality we need to look no further than a single paragraph from Rayner's (2004, a, b, c, d, repeated in 2006) papers:

> At the heart of inclusionality, then, is a simple shift in the way we frame reality, from absolutely fixed to relationally dynamic. This shift arises from perceiving space and boundaries as connective, reflective and co-creative, rather than severing, in their vital role of producing heterogeneous form and local identity within a featured rather than featureless, dynamic rather than static, Universe. We thereby move from an unrealistic *impositional logic* of discrete, assertive (independent) objects (simple entities) transacting in Cartesian space, to a *relational logic* of distinct, inductive places (interdependent, complex identities) communicating

between reciprocally coupled insides and outsides through intermediary spatial domains. This relational logic removes the paradoxes of completeness characteristic of atomistic thought and enables evolution to be understood primarily as a process of *contextual transformation* rather than the operation of external selective force on discrete informational units lacking internal agency. (italics in original)

The entirety of inclusionality can be seen as a series of attempts to explain this paragraph. Alas, this simple challenge and declaration of intentions regarding what needs to be done in order to solve the problems highlighted by Rayner and his fellow inclusionalists in that paragraph above, and what Rayner and many others work to constructively challenge (namely the abstraction, mechanisation and dehumanisation of the human subject by the traditional propositional and dialectical epistemological grounding in and of the academy), has been transformed with time to a rather simple and oversimplified, one sentence, theory of all theories of everything and all the phenomena in the world that includes that of the human subject and existence.

Throughout his writings on 'inclusionality' Rayner describes it as a "type of awareness" which

> radically affects the way we interpret all kinds of dynamic processes in living systems, from cellular differentiation and embryonic development to individual and social evolution. Boundaries that from a rationalistic perspective are regarded as discrete, fixed limits - smooth, space-excluding, Euclidean lines or surfaces - are seen inclusionally as pivotal places comprising complex, dynamic arrays of voids and relief that both emerge from and pattern the co-creative togetherness of inner and outer domains, as in the banks of a river.

Rayner's websites at http://www.inclusional-research.org/, http://www.inclusional-research.org/ and http://people.bath.ac.uk/bssadmr/inclusionality/,

describe inclusionality as

> an awareness that space, far from passively surrounding and isolating discrete massy objects, is a vital, dynamic inclusion within, around and permeating natural form across all scales of organization, allowing diverse possibilities for movement and communication.

He thus describes these possibilities as ones which

> are not fixed limits - smooth, space-excluding, Euclidean lines or planes

and which instead are

> pivotal places comprising of complex, dynamic arrays of voids and relief that both emerge from and pattern the co-creative togetherness of inner and outer domains, as in the banks of a river that simultaneously express and mould both flowing stream and receptive landscape

I think this demonstrates the way Rayner inclines to use convoluted language to conceal that he is largely repeating the same slogan in response to any and all

possible questions and attempts by others to engage, include themselves in the discussion, and find out what 'inclusionality' is.

In his University webpages at http://people.bath.ac.uk/bssadmr/inclusionality/, Rayner defines the "Hopes and Goals of Inclusionality" as:

> To help develop a more empathic, more fulfilling way of thinking/feeling about relationships amongst ourselves, other organisms and our living space, which acknowledges the fact that the boundaries we inhabit are not absolute and fixed but rather inform dynamic, interactive domains that allow a rich variety of patterns to emerge and transform our lives. To develop and apply the relational logic of inclusionality to understanding the dynamic boundaries within and between life forms and their living space, and within and between academic disciplines. To promote creative interactions and dialogue between Science, especially Biological Science, and the Arts and Humanities, in local, national and international arenas.

He adds to these declarations of intentions and hopes for 'inclusionality' that it enables the person who practices and advocates it to

> move from perceiving space as 'an absence of presence' – an emptiness that we exclude from our focus on material things – to appreciating space as a 'presence of absence', an inductive 'attractor' whose ever-transforming shape provides the coherence and creative potential for evolutionary processes of all kinds to occur

and in turn to

> extend beyond orthodox impositional logic [which is] based on the notion of discrete objects transacting within pre-set limits of Cartesian space, to the heterodox inclusional logic of distinct, ever-transforming relational places with reciprocally coupled insides and outsides communicating through intermediary domains.

He explains that

> in other words, we move from the 'logic of the excluded middle' to the 'logic of the included middle.

He consequently refers here to the propositional logic of eliminating contradictions in one statement and to the dialectical logic of using extremes and contradictions to transform. He perceives these two forms of logic as causing tension and aggression and seeks to develop a more relaxed, engaging, inviting and accepting form of thinking and relating.

Subsequently, Rayner goes on to say in his University website that this practice of inducing this shift merely requires the appreciation of the spatial possibility that "permeates within, around and through natural features from sub-atomic to Universal in scale" and that we are addicted to "the illusion of 'solidity" that has made us prone to regard 'matter' as 'everything' and 'space' as 'nothing' and subsequently to get "caught in the conceptual addiction and affliction of 'either/or' 'dualism'" that are powerful and insidious to the point of restricting our

philosophical horizons and undermining our compassionate human spirit and creativity.

Supposedly, Rayner (2004b, 2005a, 2005b, 2006) means a way that brings together currently divided scientific, artistic and spiritual views so that they complement and enrich rather than oppose one another. He explains that this is to be done through

a relationally dynamic process of mutual attunement.

This, according to him, entails a process that inclines to be "dynamic, reflective, transformative, co-creative, flowing, porous and permeable". He is meaning here a process that smoothly shifts and transforms ideas, beliefs, values and conceptions into a richer form of complementary and advancing harmony that is made of them. This is as a "togetherness of distinct but not discrete" beings.   What Rayner therefore claims is that he seeks to create a way in which science, art and spiritually all live together in harmony and compensate and complement each other.

Nonetheless, Rayner does not explain how to bring about this shift. All he says is that if we all manage to change our present way of thinking into an inclusional way of thinking and perceiving the world and ourselves, then inclusionality can lead us from our present world of exclusion, conflict and alienation and into a wonderful world of inclusion that is manifested by harmonious relationships.

He asserts the following in his University webpages:

Our current environmental and social crises and associated need to develop 'sustainable ways of living together' cannot be resolved governmentally without a radical shift from the logical premise of discreteness and consequent independence of material contents ('objects' or 'things') from their spatial context that has led to these crises. Inclusional logic provides a basis for this necessary shift in understanding, whilst being fully grounded in current knowledge.

Hence, we are informed by Rayner that our previous ways of thinking have led to our present ecological isolation and that we need the inclusional logic to make amends, repent, and change our ill ways in order to solve these crises for which we are responsible through our erroneous and traditional way of thinking and living. For me, this is the statement of a preacher. When it is made in an academic context by a Reader at a self-respecting University, it leads to alienation and ridicule.

In 2004, after working out the meaning of the inclusional idea as "an awareness and challenge to the impositional logic", Rayner moves to draw on it for a theory of the human subject. Indeed, in his University webpages, in a piece of writing under the subtitle of "*From 'Everything' to 'Everywhere' - And From Dislocated 'Individual Self' to Relational 'Complex Self'*" (my italics), Rayner introduced his idea of the "*Complex Self*" that is emerging from his view of evolution and human relationships. He perceived the *complex self* as the idea that a person is made up of both inner relationships with himself/herself and outer relationships with social others.

He also wrote in this same piece of writing that this way of understanding natural form radically affects not only the way we interpret all kinds of irreversible dynamic processes, but also the fundamental meaning of 'self' as

> a complex identity comprising inner, outer and intermediary domains, rather than an independent, single-centred entity.

I believe very few psychologists would see the self as a "single-centred entity". Even the most radical behaviourist would have an issue with the way the human subject is ought to be studied empirically and objectively but not with the human subject being a complex and involved being. They would simply consider the interrelation with this complexity as literature, art and folk psychology. Almost all psychologists and human and social scientists have conceptualised and treated both the self and the human subject as complex beings who relate to both themselves, others and the way others treat them and they reciprocate. Rayner has in fact made something of a straw man out of psychology, and human and social science.

For example, Rayner complains that traditional psychology fails to regard identity and the human subject as a dynamic and living interrelationship between a relationship with oneself and one's inner world and a relationship with other people and the outer world, and that inclusionality will correct this flaw. However, this complaint is based on a failure on part of Rayner and his fellow 'Inclusionalists' to understand the way Gibson's ecological psychology has made a good case for the interrelationship between the person and the world in which he/she is situated and living, as did phenomenological psychology (e.g., James, 1890; Shanon, 1993; Serper, 1999) and the post-structuralist paradigm in empirical psychology. It seems that Rayner needs to study the history of psychology.

Furthermore, Rayner asserted in his University webpages that

> Our cultural denial of this 'triple-aspect Self' through our conventional rationalistic focus on 'discrete individuals' as 'contents abstracted from context'.

He represented this situation as something that

> is, I suspect, the source of profoundly damaging and abusive internal and external conflicts, including those that induce human beings to indulge in going to war and to punish others who do not share their beliefs and values.

He claimed this situation to be one in which

> In sensitive people, these conflicts manifest in various kinds of 'escape mechanisms', including addictions and psychoses, and are at the root of the epidemic of 'stress in the workplace'.

Nonetheless, Rayner has assureed us, the readers, that in this utopic inclusional world of his we shall become

> Aware now of our place as local expressions of everywhere, we are not alone – we belong with, but decidedly not to one another, together, coherent through the connectivity of our common space, unique in our individually situated identities. Identities that we can both express and accommodate, as needs arise for differentiation and integration.

Rayner then went on to insist:

> Hence, we can each perceive our natural being as a complex self, a coming together of inner with outer reciprocally coupled through intermediary spatial domains rather than a dislocated, self-centred individual imposing upon and imposed on by others. And this perception may actually enable us to transcend the I/You, Us/Them divides that engender so much human conflict.

Afterwards he added that

> We differentiate outwardly when and where there is external plenty, and integrate inwardly when and where there is external shortage. Inspiration from the outer, collective aspect of our complex self enables our inner space, individual aspect to grow and thrive

and that the

> Expiration to our outer aspect brings scope for renewal and transformation. Our consciousness surfs the crest of a waveform, the dynamic intermediary that couples inner with outer. There is no single-centred controller; the centre is everywhere, both nothing and everything, together.

I think that what emerges from these citations from Rayner is that such language tends to obscure rather than clarify, and could therefore illustrate to us the way in which Rayner uses convoluted language in order to conceal the fact that he is largely repeating the same slogan in response to any and all questions.

What's more, Rayner also wrote in his University WebPages that an "addictive, vampiric quality" is rooted in traditional cognition and scientific, mathematical and governmental methodologies and interpretations.

He claimed that this "addictive, vampiric quality" damages them and

> abuses power through being unable to share across the boundary that gives it form

and is manifested

> in the wide variety of inconsistencies, hypocrisies and conflicts that beset modern human culture.

This so-called "addictive, vampiric quality", according to Rayner (2004d, 2010), explains the reasons for the following situations: The academy finding certain kinds of enquiries "beyond the pale' and rejects those that transgress some unwritten rule"; Science drawing the line "at questioning and changing its methods and logical

premises in the light of new findings"; Religious faiths persecuting "others that don't share their beliefs"; business organizations distinguishing themselves apart from and exploiting and manipulating "the needs and desires of the customers they serve and depend upon"; democratic governments operating on the principle of 'majority rule' "administered by 'leaders' who impose their 'mandate' to make executive decisions in accordance with their own 'strategic vision". Educational systems "imposing restrictive 'standards' and 'curricula'".

After explaining the issues concerning the "addictive, vampiric quality", Rayner then noted that

> As in all cancers and parasites, the vampiric quality embedded within orthodoxy depends for its sustenance on one-way flows that drain the host system or community of its creative resources….As the term itself implies ('ortho' means 'linear', 'right' or 'perpendicular'), orthodoxy is based, most fundamentally, on the imposition of fixed, space-excluding (i.e. Euclidean) boundary limits around and within what our scientific investigations have ironically informed us is the primarily non-linear, dynamic, nested, curved space geometry of nature.

Hence, by "vampiric quality", Rayner means to invoke the metaphor of a parasite that thrives on sucking the blood and life of others.

Subsequently, Rayner (2004d) went on in his explanations as for why the world is such an awful place that desperately requires inclusionality.

He wrote in his webpages that

> Fearful of the apparently chaotic unruliness and uncertainties of the natural world and universe we inhabit, it attempts to formulate abstractive 'rules' and 'administrative mechanisms' whereby those suitably placed in positions of hierarchical power can feed from and govern the rest in comfort and security.

Hence, akin to Judeo-Christianity, inclusionality presupposes some Fall of Man, some inherent rift with the divine grace, but it not quite confident enough to locate this Fall in Lúcifer's temptation to know, to stand isolated in Pride, and gaze upon all Creation from the vantage point of one who is ontologically free. Instead, Rayner appeals to some vague fear, as if it were not of natural origin, but he is unable to say from whence it came.

He explained that

> Hence human is given primacy over non-human, and human beings are ranked according to their understanding of and ability to administer and conform with or corrupt the rules to their own advantage

and that

> this pyramidal ranking, with few and ultimately one at the top imposing conformity upon and draining the many and varied below - linearity given primacy over non-linearity - is, however, a vampiric inversion of natural dynamic organization in

which all local contents or features are wave-form expressions of their wider context.

Thus, like Mary Shelley, but without her literary skill and narrative insight, Rayner seeks to cloak his romanticism in the guise of a rebuke of science, yet using the same metaphors as a nineteenth century sophist puffed up with his condescending vantage point over an already unfashionable Newton.

He also pointed out that

> Humanity as a gathering of dislocated yet increasingly uniform individual selves aspiring to dominance thereby becomes cancerous, and ultimately unsustainable, parasitizing itself and destroying the diversity and complementarity that is so vital to its ability to attune with an ever-transforming world.

This, to me, constitutes a very controversial assertion about humanity. One that fails to acknowledge and discuss philosophical and ethical argumentations such as the idea of the dualism of 'good' and 'evil', 'right' and 'wrong', and 'moral' and 'immoral', that he seems to reject within his dismissal of divisions and polarities, and the location of the "Archemedian point", upon which he can transcend the dynamic and cast judgements upon the particular, shifting forms that it takes. Rayner therefore seems to me to selectively discriminate and indiscriminate for the sake of putting this assertion forwards.

He (2004d) in fact stressed that

> If humanity is to avoid suffocation by orthodoxy, the vampiric potential of its underlying 'impositional logic', or, more familiarly, 'box-logic', therefore needs to be exposed and transformed. Such exposure and transformation has, consciously or unconsciously, been the 'Grail Quest' of many 'heterodoxies' and 'heresies', whose common theme is the immanence rather than external authority of divine spirit, that have emerged only to be suppressed over the course of recorded human history.

Rayner seems to include personal resentments in a scholarly plea which does not require the last comment.

He also noted that

> it is at the heart of the many legendary and mythical versions identified by Joseph Campbell, of the story of the 'Hero's Journey' into darkness and danger and triumphant return with the boon that brings peace and harmony to the fractured and threatened communities from which he/she set out.

Nonetheless, in making these assertions, Rayner seems to forgo that what he is arguing here requires a conceptualisation/representation of "the good", which is at the heart of all great philosophy, creative writing and literature, but is nevertheless utterly absent from inclusionality, aside from the absurd and circularly declaration on the part of the advocators of inclusionality that inclusionality is a good-for-itself and all other possible ways of thinking/speaking, oddly separate and discrete, as "non-inclusional", are to be rejected as somehow flawed. This does beg the

question, doesn't inclusionality fall afoul of exactly the same kind of dualism it purports itself to escape from, without being able to tell us why we should?

After that, he argued that

> to question the authority of orthodoxy is, correspondingly, to undertake a perilous but vital journey. Perilous because those empowered by orthodoxy are inevitably resistant, consciously or unconsciously, to any form of inquiry that identifies and threatens the seat of their power, which they are therefore only too ready to use to quash any prospect of rebellion. At the same time, they may often sincerely see themselves as doing good by purifying the world from 'evil and corruption', and, through their teachings, bestowing the gifts of their knowledge and understanding upon generations to come.

However, this begs the question of whether or not "bestowing the gifts of their knowledge and understanding upon generations to come" constitutes the declaration of intention and the hope of both Rayner and inclusionality.

Afterwards, Rayner (2004d) wrote

> So, the question is how to liberate human creativity and diversity from vampiric influence without invoking a suppressive orthodox backlash? This is a question that I have found myself addressing through my own experiences as an educator and researcher in biological science. From where I am currently placed, there seem to be several preconditions.

I myself question Rayner's use of the terms to "to liberate". I am aware of Rayner's interest in language and the careful use of linguistic words to express one's meanings and therefore ask for his use of the term 'liberate'. Why fear backlash? Isn't this fear just perpetuating dualities?

After producing these circular statements, he has moved on to describe his inclusional solutions. He wrote that the damaging implications of the vampiric nature and of the internal contradictions, logical root, self-perpetuating restrictive practices and deceptions of the orthodoxy need to be publicly acknowledged and fully grasped. Then, and only after this acknowledgement, the liberators need to gather

> protective strength through inner self-knowledge and the support of others that can help resist vampiric power and stem the one-way flow that sustains it [and] a compassionate way must be found to permeate and mobilize, but not eradicate, the vampiric boundary, so that sharing, revitalization and transformation becomes possible.

This, however, requires the liberators to overcome the temptation to

> alienate and punish orthodoxy - to use the methods of orthodoxy to suppress orthodoxy.

That is

if the communication barrier through which vampiric power becomes asserted is not simply to be reinstated.

It also requires

a witch-hunt for the witch-hunters!

for

it is the thinking that leads to the abuse of power by 'chief executives' and their unwitting accomplices, rather than the people themselves, that needs to be exposed

and

it is not even that orthodox logic needs to be dispensed with, rather than subsumed by inclusional logic

for

the ability to establish and work with linear relationships and one-way flows is an understandable and in its place necessary and valuable human characteristic, just as it is in non-human living system

and it

has played an immensely important role in human technological development, if not in understanding the implications of such development.

My position is that Rayner inclines to ascribe, in describing and criticising rationality and scientific thinking, a view of "atomism" that has not been accepted by scientists since the 19th century. Indeed, the developments of Relativity and Quantum Theory have radically transformed the way space, time, and matter are understood and represented by scientists.

For example, he writes (2004d) of 'inclusionality' that

there is every reason, including every scientific reason, to believe it is more realistic than the view coming from detached objectivity. This is because the apparent 'solidity' of 'substance' and vacant passivity of 'space' are illusions. Not for want of trying, we have never found any 'solid, massy' atomic particles at the centre of every thing, only distinctive spatial domains. And boundaries that appear as smooth, impenetrable barriers from afar always prove on closer inspection to be variably permeable transitions from one 'depth' or region of space to another. The 'real' geometry of the Universe is not a static 'Cartesian box' of matter distributed through space as discrete particles, but a dynamic 'nested holeyness' of space distributed through matter over a vast array of scales….This way of understanding natural form radically affects not only the way we interpret all kinds of irreversible dynamic processes, but also the fundamental meaning of 'self' as a complex identity comprising inner, outer and intermediary domains, rather than an independent, single-centred entity

It seems to me that Rayner has not taken post 19th century scientific developments into account, even though he uses the representations of matter that have been produced during these developments in physics, in order to 'refute' a scientific conception of the Universe that had already been refuted by the same science that he takes it upon himself to refute.

In a section, "*Reconnecting Art, Science and Spirituality*", Rayner (2004d) remarked that

> If the vampiric potential implicit in orthodoxy originates in the unilateral excommunication of the observer from the observed and the governor from the governed, then the restoration of two-way communication via the opening up of the vampiric boundary represents an obvious way to obviate this potential. Inclusionality and the associated concept of 'complex self' not only offers this prospect of restoration, but also does so through a perception of space and boundaries that brings back into complementary partnership the 'Two Cultures' of Art and Science. These cultures effectively became excommunicated post-Enlightenment each to pursue their own peculiar and ultimately insufficient but complementary kinds of abstraction, with science tending to exclude implicit context from explicit content and art tending to remove explicit content from implicit context.

These remarks seem to further back up my impression that Rayner seems to disregard developments in scientific thinking. Indeed, since the 1920s and the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Theory, the relationship between the observer and the observed has been a central philosophical question for scientists. The "Two Cultures" split between science and art (which has been discussed at length since C.P. Snow talked about it in the 1950s) is the result of professionalisation, which has taken place during the 19th century, not due to the Enlightenment.

He added to that remark the following note:

> So, what can our Art and our Science contribute to our overall understanding of the natural world and universe when they work inclusionally together rather than in isolation? Perhaps most fundamentally, our art draws our attention to the dynamic relation between inner and outer space, figure and ground, how each reciprocally breathes space into and out from and so relates to the other. I tried to express this idea in the painting shown in Figure 1.

He then displayed a piece of painting to back up his textual statements. Indeed, with considerable naivety, Rayner assumed that the presentation of one of his paintings conveys to the viewer the meaning of inclusionality, as if there was no possibility of alternative interpretations.

He also wrote the following notes that seem to be outdated and not taking into account development in the field;

> For if, as Rudolf Steiner was wont to suggest, the implicit spatial awareness of Art is brought together with the explicit substantial awareness of Science, what emerges

is the ghostly, holey form of the spiritual realm. A universal attractor or 'nested holeyness' that holds all, coherently, relationally and dynamically together in place, rather than the anarchic free for all envisaged through impositional logic to call for the rule of some higher authority. An immanent divinity of energy-space, of which all features are local, wave form manifestations, with inner, outer and intermediary aspects. This is the ternary (three-aspect) realm of inclusionality and inclusional logic, which recognises that at no physical scale in a dynamic system can any 'thing' be isolated as a discrete, independent object that can only be moved by a purely external force....Rather, everywhere is coupled with everywhere. When one 'thing', in reality a relational place somewhere moves, the possibility space of everywhere transforms, as I tried to express in the painting and poem shown in Figure 2.

He then produced a piece of poetry.

Hence, it seems to me that Rayner is conveying here a Newtonian representation of matter and force that was already being criticised in the early 19th Century and by the end of that century was shown to be too abstract and inadequate.

I was very concerned by the choice of language, metaphors and ideas that I experienced as alienating and which seeks to work on the sentiment of the reader and to evoke and stir him/her into agreement, rather than to work on the intellect of the reader and in turn make him/her critically analyse and reflect on the meanings of these statements.

Furthermore, I have been particularly concerned that 'inclusionality' is a little more than a circle of a few individuals who work together to change the world and to amass more and more supporters by evoking emotions, feelings and sentiments.

In his University website Rayner indeed described 'inclusionality' as an

> an ongoing co-inquiry, by a small group of people with very different backgrounds, into the implications of inclusionality, from scientific, artistic, social, environmental, governmental and spiritual perspectives. We hope that this inquiry can help us to re-examine our most deeply held ideas about Our Human Place in the World and rediscover, where we may have lost it, what we have always known when our Emotions join with our Reason in the Spirit of Spatial Togetherness.

This seems to me to have all the characteristics of a cult.

Beside my concerns about Rayner's use of metaphors in the like of "vampires", "vampiric", "'Grail Quest' of many 'heterodoxies'" and "heresies" to describe and explain his ideas and "the third epistemology, theory and logic" of inclusionality, two matters have particularly concerned me about using 'inclusionality' as the basis and grounding of my approach as I was recommended by Whitehead to do.

First, in September, 2006, after nearly a decade of contemplating and seeking to develop the idea of inclusionality, Rayner has published in a number of forums and his University WebPages the guidelines to inclusional enquiries. This consists of ten

guidelines which has made me reminisce on the biblical 'ten commandments' and which goes as follows:

Ten Guidelines to Inclusional Enquiry. (September 2006)
1. It seeks understanding of nature and human nature
2. It is unprejudiced
3. It recognizes the restrictive nature
4. It does not isolate reason from emotion
5. It corresponds with to natural dynamic processes and geometry obviating conflict and paradox.
6. Not impose an artificial rectilinear frame upon nature or regard linearity as precursive to non-linearity.
7. Not exclude or ignore some vital aspect of nature for the sake of convenience.
8. All form is a dynamic inclusion of space not definable in absolute (axiomatic) terms.
9. All is included in and influenced by all
10. Love

I am not sure about the meaning of "unprejudiced" and I also take the sixth guideline to demonstrate blissful ignorance of the discussions of non-linear mathematicians and advocates of "*Chaos Theory*" since the 19th century. Likewise, I am also aware, in regards to the eighth guideline, that the notion that space and mathematics could be defined in absolute terms has been rejected by the scientific community since the mid 20th century.

I have an inherited suspicion of such statements in what ought to be a scholarly idea that is to be scrutinised and critically engaged with.

The second matter that has made me very anxiously think that 'inclusionality' is merely a call for a revolution, rather than a scholarly idea that is well-developed, rationalised and critically engaging with itself and the ideas of others, is Rayner's reply to the ninth question, "*Are you calling for a revolution?*" (my italics), that was presented to him on the 9th of December, 2006, in the course of a radio interview on the "*ViratoLive New Paradigm*" Radio programme on Consciousness, that is broadcasted every Saturday morning live from Asheville, North Carolina, and in which he participated on that morning of the 9th of December, 2006.

Rayner's reply to this question was (italics in the original)

Yes, but not in the mechanical sense of the turning of a wheel or the overturning and *replacement* of one form of governance or understanding by another. I am calling for a revolution in the sense of a re-evolution, an evolution that includes loving *re*ceptivity in its thinking and framing of reality. I am calling for a *transformation* from the solid fixtures and oppositions of the logic of the excluded middle, to the fluid dynamic receptive-responsiveness of the logic of the included middle, with space incorporated. I feel this transformation is vital if we are to bring our sense of human place in Nature back into more realistic proportion and navigate the psychological, social and environmental troubles that we have made for ourselves through fearfully disregarding the enormity of our immaterial aspect. Meanwhile, let's liberate our minds from the mechanistic, confrontational and competitive

thinking that binds us in old patterns of being, thinking and acting. Let's transform our scientific, mathematical, artistic, philosophical, governmental, social, religious and educational practices so as to be more attuned with one another and the re-cycling processes of Nature. Let's recall what Leonardo Da Vinci once said: 'Human subtlety will never devise an invention more beautiful, more simple or more direct than does Nature, because in her inventions, nothing is lacking and nothing is superfluous.' Let's accept our transient no thingness and work imaginatively, common-spiritedly and respectfully together within our natural neighbourhood as our flow-forms emerge and subside! We might just transform global crisis into a story with a happy non-ending!.

The problem in such calling for revolutions is that it lacks an analysis of the existing and just calls for the destruction of the existing in favour of a new order of things. In all his writings, Rayner seems to me to be seeking to work on the sentiments of his engagers rather than on their intellect and their scholarly ability to critically reflect, engage and judge ideas and possibilities. The above reply is, in my mind, a good example for this. What is more, Rayner seems to denounce critical thinking and engagement as being part of the old paradigm and to rely on the unconditional acceptance of inclusionality as part of inclusional thinking.

Whilst I certainly believe in the value of connection amongst human being, interrelationship and inter-dialogue, I prefer to draw on the writings of dialecticians and dialectical educators in the like Freire, humanists in the like of Buber, Heidegger, Laing and Rogers and theorists like Freud, Adler, Shotter (1975, 1984, 1990), Shanon (1984, 1993), James (1890, 1912) and Heath et al., (2006).

Alas, influenced by these writings of Rayner, Whitehead (2004b) became very emotional and personal in his publications when explaining the influence of inclusionality on him and his educational, ontological and epistemological developments over the years.

Whitehead noted that

> As I look back on the continuing story of my learning in my educational enquiries from 1993 to 2004, I can see that my understandings of educational knowledge are also being transformed with the influence of my daughter Rebeccas lovingly inclusional way of being with her father and others and with the influence of Alan Rayner's ideas into inclusional ways of being and knowing in co-creative togetherness: Inclusionality is an awareness that space, far from passively surrounding and isolating discrete massy objects, is a vital, dynamic inclusion within, around and permeating natural form across all scales of organization, allowing diverse possibilities for *movement and communication. Correspondingly, boundaries are not fixed limits - smooth, space-excluding, Euclidean lines or planes - but rather are pivotal places comprising complex, dynamic arrays of voids and relief that both emerge from and pattern the co-creative togetherness of inner and outer domains, as in the banks of a river.* (Rayner, 2004 http://www.bath.ac.uk/~bssadmr/inclusionality/). Rebecca sustains such an inclusional and loving way of relating that continues to call me back from my tendency to severance and the pessimism of the intellect, to a sustained and life-affirming optimism of the will that I hope continues to flow through me until the end of my life-time. The extension of my cognitive range and concerns continues in

the growth of my educational knowledge through the educational influence of others in my insights into ecological feminism (Ladkin, 2004), post-colonial theory (Murray, 2004) and inclusional ways of being (Rayner, 2004). (italics in original)

Whitehead (2004b) also noted that

> I also think that the AERA Symposium at http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw//multimedia/aera04sym.htm shows a quality of inclusionality that respects the living boundaries of the identities of the individual researchers, while showing the transformative potential of inclusional self-studies for sustainable global educational networks of communication. At the heart of my ontology is the expression and recognition of a flow of life-affirming energy and pleasure. I know that many people connect their expression of a spiritual energy to their submission, within a religion, to the will of a deity/God. My own preference is to feel the creative power of such a spiritual energy in the face of the certainty of my own death without experiencing the need to submit to such religious tendencies. In my paper on my ontological commitments in my AR Expedition you will see that I acknowledge the influence of being certain of my death in living a productive life, in contributing to the growth of educational knowledge and in contributing to post-colonial practices in the inclusional spirit of Ubuntu.

I was worried about Whitehead's perception of the intellect as severing and pessimistic and of the emotional and spiritualistic as optimistic. I do not share this view. I perceive the intellectual as hopeful and optimistic and as capable opening closed doors and fulfilling true potentials. I am having difficulties to relate in a critical manner with these ideas of spirituality. The ground of my own research and being in the world is a Western, continental form of analysis and thinking and reasoning.

He then added that living educational theories are evoked by the image

> into hope for the future of humanity as we respond together in the flow of our loving spirits.

He defines living educational theories as educational accounts which seek to reveal a specific influence in the education of social formations, in the learning which is manifested in the way in which the living contradictions, that are being experienced in the holding together of our humanity and our lack of humanity, are being transformed.

He noted his belief that this hope

> flows through our recognition of the loving and life-affirming dignity in and to those who are suffering in a crime against humanity and in our researching together in our AR Expeditions how we can bring the values that carry this hope more fully into our world.

This appeared to me as a rather naïve statement. I think that human indignity and suffering bear their roots in history and politics and therefore require a profound

analytic understanding and overcoming of deep historical and political issues and systems that transcend individuals and human beings.

I had extreme difficulties in relating to such emotional responses. I chose to alienate myself from these kinds of emotional responses and to focus on the development of my suggested alternative approach.

Whitehead was not pleased with my decision to alienate myself from 'inclusionality'. He was emotional and personal.

He told me during a personal conversation in January 2007 that

> The reason that I think Alan's idea of a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries is useful is that when combined with your heuristics of a human existence it goes beyond Heidegger (who was criticised by Schroyer and Adorno in the Jargon of Authenticity for offering an 'I' that remained formal while pretending to contain content in itself).

He added that

> I think your 'I' is authentic and that your heuristics show you generating meaning with an 'I' with content in itself.

He noted that

> With Merleau Ponty I think he helped enormously to focus on the primacy and phenomenology of perception and to bring the idea of embodiment into academic language. However with his Adventures of the Dialectic I think he lost connection with the lived, that you retain through your relationally dynamic awareness that remains connected and reflective in your living experience. I think you avoid the infinite regress of Husserl's phenomenology through enquiring 'How do I lead a more meaningful life'.

I was very concerned at the movement of LET from reason and a rational analysis and way of doing research into the inclusional way of arguing and thinking.

Furthermore, to my questioning the originality of 'inclusionality', Whitehead replied that he was impressed by the way in which he can articulate his own experience of space and boundaries with the help of Rayner's language and takes the originality of inclusionality to be grounded in the relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries. He added that much in the same way that he regarded Riegel's argumentation for dialectical psychology as superior to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, when Riegel demonstrated the value of dialectical operations as the final stage in cognitive development, in contrast with Piaget who finished at the formal stage of operations, so he could now see how Rayner's inclusionality is superior to the dialectics.

Whitehead seems to me to have become mesmerised by 'inclusionality' and the World Wide Web and pins too many intentions and hopes on this way of public

communication. Still, the World Wide Web is by no means some sort of magic. It is just a way for individuals around the globe to connect. My question of course then goes: Could a video clip really analyse the meanings of values? Is a video clip an appropriate means of engaging with ontology and a person's being in the world?

I myself have no interest in contributing to the 'third logic and epistemology of inclusionality' for reasons that should already be clear to the reader. It is antithetical to the scope and intention of my research. I much prefer to draw on writers and theorists whose writings and ideas are clearer and more comprehensible, at least to me.

I therefore prefer to base and ground my own suggested approach to the human subject and human existence on the dialectics of Gadamer (1975), Collingwood (1939) and earlier Whitehead and Mcniff, prior to the encounter of Whitehead with Rayner at Bath in early 2002, as well as on the clear ideas and writings of Freire (1996, 1973, 2004) and Health et al., (2006) on dialogue, and those of Habermas (1976, 1987, 2003) on communication amongst individuals, Polanyi (1958, 1966, and Prosch, 1975), Dreyfus (1979), and Dreyfus and Dreyfus' (1986) on embodied knowledge and those of Shanon (1984, 1993), James (1890, 1907, 1912), Merleu-Ponty (1962) and Gibson (1950, 1966, 1979) on cognition and the writings of Freud, Yalom, Lukas, Fabry, May, Beer, and Laing on the person and the client who seeks help and comprehension.

2. 7. Transforming the LET Approach through Creative Writing, Cathartic Logging and Self-Dialectical, Empowering Blogging and Enquiring-Within-Writing&B/Logging Into the Question: How Do I Lead A More Meaningful Existence In The World For Myself?

The methodology used by my suggested approach to the human subject and human existence is that of creative writing, cathartic logging, dialogical blogging and self-dialectical, auto-dialogical and auto-phenomenological enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into the question: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in, with and towards the world for myself? This approach falls within the research orientation of dialectical, living, embodied and dialogical educational AR and takes place in phenomenological, ontological, and self-dialectical stages (AR cycles) of reflection on and in action and practice. What makes it fall within this research orientation is the practitioner and enquirer working at re-evaluating and empowering his/her practice and himself/herself, the practitioner and enquirer, within direct, concrete, practical and applied action and systematic stages (cycles) of praxis and planning, executing, reflecting, recreating and re-evaluating and modifying, shifting, redirecting and transforming action that are intended to improve, enhance and empower the quality of this given practice. This enquiry transforms the epistemological emphasis of the LET approach into a more ontological emphasis that is cathartic, self-liberating and auto-empowering, in its dialectics. Whilst the object of the LET approach is to contribute to and improve educational research and knowledge and the subject of reflective practice and practitioner research, the object of my enquiry is to enable the enquirer to improve the quality of his/her life, well-being and relationships in, with, and towards the world and to heal, auto-empower

and self-develop within his/her life and professional practice as a practitioner and a human being.

The creative writing, cathartic logging, dialogical blogging and self-dialectical and auto-phenomenological enquiring-within-writing&b/logging is carried out exclusively through written text. As I noted above, I am a great believer and a passionate advocate of creative words, linguistic communication, dialogue and inter-dialogue and the active writing, sharing and reading of texts for health and well-being and personal, community and individual development, empowerment and self-fulfilment/actualisation. I see no reason to tame and suppress words and their immense power for the sake of control, order and discipline, in the name of being empirical, calculated and scientific.

I was inspired by three ideas from Freire's (1996) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

In this important work, Freire had pointed out that

> Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection (p. 69)

and that in turn

> while to say the true word – which is work, which is praxis – is to transform the world, saying that word is not the privilege of some few persons, but the right of everyone (p. 68)

and therefore,

> those who have been denied their primordial right to speak their word must first reclaim this right and prevent the continuation of this dehumanizing aggression (ibid)

and also that

> consequently, no one can say a true word alone – nor can she say it for another, in a prescriptive act which robs others of their words. (ibid)

Freire subsequently had suggested that

> as we attempt to analyze dialogue as a human phenomenon, we discover something which is the essence of dialogue itself: the word…[and] within the word we find two dimensions, reflection and action, in such radical interaction that if one is sacrificed – even in part - the other immediately suffers. (ibid)

Freire also pointed out that "human activity consists of action and reflection" and is subsequently "theory and practice" and therefore "praxis…and as praxis, it requires theory to illuminate it and [that] cannot…be reduced to either verbalism or activism". This is since "there is no true action that is not at the same time praxis" and thus "to speak a true word is to transform the world".

Hence, Freire was emphasising the importance of verbal language, the written and spoken word, and the practice of producing and uttering textual, linguistic and spoken words in human qualitative dialectical transformation, humanisation, re-humanisation, the phenomena of being and living as human and the verbal, linguistic and textual intercommunication and dialogue amongst human beings which he regarded as a most essential human endeavour, as I do.

I have worked out my approach upon the supposition that creative blogging enables the enquirer to analyse, re-evaluate, process, identify and re-establish what he/she is doing, who he/she is, how he/she has become the individual that he/she is, and who he/she is becoming, through living and acting upon these specific actions and intentions and practices to improve the quality of his/her life. In my suggested approach, the enquirer is having an authentic reflective, auto-dialogical, auto-critical and self-analytical conversation, dialogue and discussion with himself/herself. He/she is typing and logging things down within a direct, raw, spontaneous, creative, reflexive and authentic, reflective or de-reflective, free association or Gestaltian freefall mode of writing. She or he is writing for healing, growth, personal and community development, empowerment and self-fulfilment, health and well-being (Lapidus, 2009) and first-person, reflective, free association (Laing, 1967). This happens as he/she sits by himself/herself alone in front of a personal computer or a laptop and can take place in his/her private home, his/her study, a coffeehouse, the local public house or a travelling train on the way to work or pleasure.

For creative writing for health, well-being, healing and personal and community development, empowerment and self-fulfilment/actualisation, I draw on the work done by the *Lapidus, Creative Words for Health and Well-being,* organisation, the *Arts and Health* organisation "for people who believe in the value of creativity in enhancing people's health and well-being" (AHSW, 2010) and my local creative writing group (e.g, Morrison, 2010).

My creative writing follows the *Lapidus* guidelines and suggestions and is therefore

> dedicated to developing the potential and actual benefits of creative words in hospitals, health centres, mental health organisations, community settings, and with people who wish to grow and develop personally and creatively (Lapidus, 2009).

Lapidus is the UK organisation for creative writing and reading for well-being and health. It was Founded in 1996 and is funded by *Arts Council England*, within the intention of establishing "links for the exchange of information and ideas", promoting "appropriate training and ethical research in the field", providing "practical support for practitioners" and advancing

> ***HEALING AND PERSONAL GROWTH THROUGH WRITING AND READING,*** creative writing and reading for health and well-being (capitalisation, italics and bold in original).

and

well-being through creative writing and creative reading

These intentions have been devised and are implemented in the supposition that

> Creative writing inevitably involves creative reading of our experience, ourselves, our environment and our ways into the future'

and

> that words used creatively can be a powerful tool for health and personal and community development – through the writing, reading and performing of poetry, prose, fiction, drama and story.

The *Lapidus* members come from all walks of life and all have an interest in healing and personal development through writing and reading. They/We meet regularly to share, discover and promote in a wide variety of forms Creative Words for Health and Well-Being and to network with others to grow the field. *Lapideus* means "made of stone" in Latin and *Lapid* is the Hebrew word for *Torch*. Lapidus granite signifies *"a beautiful natural stone with exotic, warm and earthy tones"* and the use of the term *Lapid*, or *Torch*, therefore implies and refers to "illuminating meanings".[19]

I enclose "**THE *LAPIDUS* ETHICAL CODE**" in its entirety in the appendix. I think it is a fascinating and well-thoughtout document that reflects very well on my values as a professional, theoretician, a humanist and a human being and shares them with fellow practitioners, theorists and academics in common. I have a particular interest in the ninth point of guidance out of the ten points "*LAPIDUS ETHICAL CODE*" which is made available and accessible to all at http://www.lapidus.org.uk/ethical.doc.

This ninth guideline states that

> *LAPIDUS* members are expected to take responsibility for their own health and well-being and ongoing training and continuing professional development in order to practise safely. This includes regularly monitoring and reflecting on their work.

I am aiming to contribute to this specific ethical guidance by developing my approach into a therapeutic practice which is to be made available to the Lapidus members.

As for Gestalt free fall writing, as I already noted above, I draw on the works of Turner-Vesselago, (1996, 2009), Wienrich (2009), Lapidus (2009), Marshall (2004, 2001, 1999), Goldberg (1986, 1990 1993) and Wooldridge (1996, 2007).

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[19] The italics, capitalisation, bold and direct citations appear in this form in the original *Lapidus* electronic homepage/Website at http://lapidus.org.uk/ that is presently edited by the current national *Lapidus UK* chair Fiona Hamilton.

Indeed, in her impressive website on Freefall writing at http://www.freefallwriting.com/freefall/home.html, Barbara Turner-Vesselago (2009) noted that

> As the name suggests, Freefall invokes the courage to fall without a parachute, into the words as they come, into the thoughts before they have fully formed in the mind, into the unplanned structures that take shape, without prompting, to contain them.

She also expressed in that website her aspiration for freefall writing to help writers to

> connect with their deepest intention in writing, and to write with authority and grace.

Similarly, by the term "free association", I refer to the process of relating ideas without strict preconceived rules of writing and communication. I am meaning by it the practice of writing whatever comes into the mind and feels, senses and experienced to be authentic, true and right. I very much enjoyed the way Laing (1967) in the *Bird of Paradise* had written about experiences, feelings and life from his work as a psychiatrist and an "anti-psychiatrist psychiatrist" in some sort of very uneasy, emotional, spontaneous and free, and even grotesque, poetic free association writing.

As I explained in the Introduction, I have based my approach to dialogue on the ideas and works of Buber, Freire, Rogers and the superb article by Heath et al., (2006).

But why did I choose blogging? The literature that has begun to appear in 2006 on the meanings and implications of the practice and essence of blogging, the essence of blogs, the existential ontology of the meanings and implications of being "a blogger" and "a talkbacker" and the phenomenon of the blogosphere had convinced me that blogging is presently the most appropriate manner by which to carry out my suggested self-dialectical, living, embodied, auto-phenomenological, cathartic and dialogical ontological and educational AR enquiring and creative writing and logging and implement its theoretical and rather abstract and conceptual suggestions and implications.

This literature had noted that the term "weblog" was coined in 1997 by John Barger and was shortened to "blog" by Peter Merholz in 1999.

In chapter one of their *"Complete Guide to Blogging"*, in the begining of the subsection on "**What Is a Blog?**", the Editors of the Huffington Post (2008, p. 13) considered blogging as

> a new form of human communication – one that is more interactive, more democratic, and just more fun than what has come before

and which provides "any of the billion people on this planet who own or have access to a computer" with "new ways to communicate and make their voices heard".

They also noted in the end of that subsection that

> It is this multidirectional conversation -- giving all of us a platform, expanding the scope of news, and making it a shared enterprise between producers and consumers -- that makes blogs so revolutionary. (p. 14)

In that edited book, Bree Barton, *Dante, Degreed* blog, and blogger for *Cape Cod Today*, (Huffington Post) explained that he blogs

> As a Substitute for Therapy. (p. 22)

He also noted that his blog

> offered an opportunity to process my experiences by writing about them, (ibid)

He added that blogging gave him a chance

> to reflect and see the humor in my angst (p. 23)

and was also a way for him "to cope with the existential crisis of being a college graduate" and

> helped keep me sane when I very seriously considered gnawing my fingers off (or going to grad school, a close second). (p. 24)

Moreover, on his part, Bob Cesca, author of *One Nation Under Fear* and an *HuffPost* blogger, in his contribution to that edited book on blogging considered blogging to be

> a form of catharsis -- being able to respond to politicians and the corporate media without having to be employed by either, and while not necessarily having to walk a picket line (p. 26)

and noted with irony that

> If I hadn't discovered blogging during the Bush years, I probably would be in a padded room somewhere. (ibid)

At the same token, Notaro (2006) described blogs as an "Accessible and easy to use low-cost approach to Web publishing and reaching mass populations conveyance" that involves "ongoing interactive conversation through 'comments' bulletin boards attached to each post (Boese 2004)".

She also noted that a blog

> is a regularly updated webpage using blogging software which functions as a database-driven, dynamic, content-focused shell (Carl 2003, 1-3).

In the same special edition on blogs, blogging and bloggers - which entitled *"Theories/Practices of Blogging"*, appeared in November, 2006 in the online journal *"Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture"* at http://reconstruction.eserver.org/064/contents.shtml, and declared its intention is "to publish young researchers who are also bloggers" -, Johnson (2006) drew on Drezner and Farrell's (2004) definition of blogs and described blogs as

> periodically updated journals, providing online commentary with minimal or no external editing…that are usually presented as a set of 'posts,' individual entries of news or commentary, in reverse chronological order.[20]

She noted that

> the verb to blog means to add a new entry to a blog,

that the

> author of a blog is referred to as a blogger

and that

> The vast community of blogs is widely referred to as the blogosphere.

She distinguished between Personal blogs that focus on the internal world of the blog author and Filter blogs that concentrate on a topic, such as politics or technology.

Leaver (2006) described blog in the same special edition on it as an

> online diary or journal of an individual's day to day existence.

Vaisman (2006, 2009), in her turn, explained that a blog "blends personal narrative with performance narrative (Scheidt, 2006)" and that a blogging space has an "exchange relationship character (Langellier and Peterson, 2004; Langellier, 1989)".

She also added that

> a webblog is a non-synchronous multimedia format with a "pulse" consisting of constant updating and crystallizing norms such as personal and informal journal-type writing.

In a very impressive and important contribution to that special edition on blog and blogging, Boyd (2006) perceived blogs and blogging as a medium, or channel,

> through which people can communicate and document their lives and extend their expressions to others".

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[20] Nardi, et. Al., (2004, p.1) also see blogs as "frequently updated webpages with a series of archived posts, typically in reverse-chronological order"

She based this claim on McLuhan (1964, 1995).

She contended that it creates a dynamic that is "synchronous and asynchronous, performative and voyeuristic" and through which communication occurs. She also emphasised the embodied nature of blogs and blogging and the sense of protective ownership that a blogger has towards his/her blogs.

She pointed out that this existence of such a sense of ownership is in the sense that a blogger

> has the right to control what acts and speeches are acceptable and to dictate the norms in general in the blog.

She based this claim on Goffman (1959).

She also highlighted the relationship between bloggers and the readers of their blogs where

> for the blogger the blog is corporeal/embodied, but for the reader, it is a space to engage in conversation.

She noted that whereas the blogger does not perform to the space, but creates it as an artefact, the reader addresses the blog like a space. She also pointed out and stressed that bloggers perceive their blog as a reflection of their interests and values.

Elkin (2006), in her contribution to the special edition on blogs which she co-edited, emphasised the role of blogs and blogging as the construction of identity and noted that personal blogs, which recount the daily vicissitudes of the blogger, are a

> form of self-creation or identity production

where the bloggers attempt, through writing, to know themselves.

Likewise, she also pointed out the experimental nature of blogging that comes into being in the sense that blogging allows each little observation worthy of a bigger argument to be published and become available "before the book they belong in has been written, or even imagined".

Like Boyd (2006), Elkin (2006) noted that the relationship and dialogue between the blogger and the reader of his/her blogs

> sets blogs distinctly apart from other forms of writing.

She described the relationship between reader and blogger as

> mutually constitutive to the point where each exists in a dynamic, co-creative, and parasitic relationship to the other.

Herman (2006), in her contribution to the special edition, emphasised the critical nature of blogging as a method of observation, reflection on and in practice and action and communication and suggested that blogs and blogging are utilised to maintain a critical distance from the culture one is immersed in, keep the blogger from losing himself/herself in the problems and issues which he/she notes, reflects on, observes and describes.

She emphasised that the blog is

>   the tool of the observer, not the participant.

Efimova (2006), in her turn, incorporated the insights of Ellis and Bochner (2000) in the blogging method of enquiry and cited the chapter of the latter two authors in Denzin and Lincoln's (2000) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. She noted how reflexive ethnography interconnects the researcher's personal experience with the way it illuminates the culture under investigation and forms "a continuum" from starting research from one's own experience to ethnographies where the researcher's experience is actually being studied along with other participants, to confessional tales where the researcher's experience of doing the study becomes the focus of the investigation. She also noted Ellis and Bochner's (2000) insights on how participants are encouraged to take part in a personal relationship with the author (researcher), to be treated as co-researchers, to share authority, and to author their own lives in their own voices.

Two years after that special edition in "*Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture*", the Editors of the Huffington Post (2008) had defined the blogosphere and blogs as a community where bloggers and readers are

>   conversing, boisterously, around the clock (p. 14)

and the bloggers

>   often check back multiple times a day to see what their readers think

and then

>   engage with them. (ibid)

Hence, the Editors of the Huffington Post (2008) stressed that whereas traditional journalism tends to focus on large-scale conflicts, sensations and large paradigms, blogging can construct and formulate the common narrative by repeatedly, critically and systematically returning to and focusing on the mundane, personal and personalised and small details and their analysis and elaboration.

I myself believe that blogging enables the blogger to auto-dialogue, re-evaluate, identify and process, enquire in action into and work out for himself/herself issues of both interest and concern, and anguish and grief, to him/her within a public space that is accessible to others, the blogosphere. In turn it permits the blogger to share and get constructive and honest feedbacks from his/her readers (his/her social others,

Shanon, 1993) within a space that he/she is in charge of and even lives, constructs and embodies. The result is a constructive and creative epistemological, ontological, therapeutic and educational dialogue between blogger and readers, and among the readers themselves on the insights raised and produced by the blogger. The creative dialogue dialectically pushes, shifts, develops, redirects and transforms the blogger's insights.

Likewise, creative blogging also allows a large-scale creative writing, logging, blogging and enquiring-within-writing&b/logging account that is physically stretched and embodied over and within time, space, action, practice, enquiry and praxis. Creative blogging, writing, processing and sharing insights, inputs, values and one's life with others in a comfortable, pleasant, electronic space has a therapeutic, cathartic, and enriching, effect on bloggers and readers alike.

I suggest that blogs and bloggings can form and formulate the bigger picture of the meanings and implications of the phenomena of being a human subject in the world and the interrelationships between the human subject and the ecological (Gibson, 1950, 1966, 1979; Gibson, 1969, 1982; Gibson and Spelke, 1983) and social (Shanon, 1993) world. Furthermore, I take it that blogs and blogging could turn into an educational tool for professionals, subject to strict and already-available ethical code of research and education, where trainees and professionals would look at and critically and reflectively examine the blogs. This examination would be carried out in terms of both propositional theories and models and a direct critical, autoethnographical and hermeneutic analysis.

It is important that blogging occurs within a "safe space" (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999, 2000) that the blogger can control. I believe my approach to blogging could revive the ideas of the *Philadelphia Association* that was founded in *Kingsley Hall* in 1965 by RD Laing, Clancy Sigal, Aaron Esterson, Joan Cunnold, David Cooper and Sid Briskin with a view to challenge the traditional ways of understanding and treating mental and emotional suffering.

I am proposing to develop this into an online platform which would allow clients and professionals to co-participate and synchronise on their review, re-evaluation, theorisation, conceptualisation and processing of their cathartic, clinical, philosophical, educational and ontological insights, observations and developments. They can benefit, each within his/her ontological and professional needs, role, interests, intentions and expertise, from the insights, creativeness and innovativeness expressed in the blogs, and creatively dialogue and comment and become fuller and more complete, interactive, attentive and understanding human beings, whilst sitting comfortably in front of their home or office computer.

I have researched the therapeutic potential of blogging since September, 2002. I spent my research programme at Bath experimenting with creative ontological writing, logging and blogging. This involved conducting my own blogging, and reading, engaging and participating in the blogging of others. I shall include a discussion of how I have conducted my blogging and what this practice has meant to

me within my research at Bath in the appendix which will also include illustrative blogging posts of mine.

At first I worked with the LET approach and group. My work was referred to in McNiff and Whitehead (2006), Whitehead (2009b, 2004c, 2005b), O'Neil (2008) and Delong and Whitehead (2005) as an illustration of the possibility of an action researcher who is using AR cycles, b/logging and narratives to make sense of and self-dialectically develop and empower his being, living and developing in the world, and explain, re-evaluate and describe his actions and ontological practice and professional and educational values as he is doing so. This was a living exemplification and embodiment for the ontological, cathartic, self-therapeutic, innovative and existential use of AR and the LET approach.

Nonetheless, after moving away from the LET approach, I spent three years in complete isolation re-reading my blogging and working out my approach. Then, I discovered the *Lapidus – Creative Words for Health and Well-being –* organisation. With the support and encouragement of the Lapidus and Arts and Health South West organisations and my local creative writers group at Frome, I am presently working on developing my approach in both theory and practice. I shall show my present attempts at doing so in the appendix as I am finishing this research programme and moving on towards the future.

Part Three:
Conclusion

I remain ambivalent about my relationship with the LET approach. On the one hand, it has enabled me to work out the epistemological grounding and logic and methodology of my approach, and I am grateful for that. On the other hand, I feel alienated and disappointed by its attempt to rationalise the 'third logic and epistemology of inclusionality', and its movement away from text and creative writing and into non-textual means.

So, where am I? What have I learned? What are my hopes and plans for the future?

3. 1. Completing the Thesis and Moving on

What I wanted to do in this thesis is introduce the way I have worked out an alternative approach to the traditional means of approaching, re-evaluating, theorising and conceptualising the human subject. As part of this critical examination, I have looked at the LET approach and transformed it into a more ontological, auto-phenomenological, and therapeutic approach. I have also criticised the attempts of the LET approach to move itself into being an approach to a human existence that draws on the 'third logic and epistemology of inclusionality'. What I should like to do now, upon concluding this thesis, and as directions for my future researches, is to show and illustrate how my approach works in both theory and practice.

3. 2.   My Learning from the Engagement with the LET Approach

The human subject is not just a professional practitioner seeking to fulfil his/her educational and ontological values and work on and improve his/her professional practice. He/she is much more than this. He/she is a human being with all of his/her ontological glory and fragility, his/her complexities, intricacies, creativity and emotional, ontological, existential and psychological insecurities and resilience, as well as hopes, disillusions, heartbreaks and dreams.

Hence, I have developed LET to enquire into ontological, Existential and auto-phenomenological practice. The LET approach has therefore enabled me to reconnect the lived, living and embodied, phenomenological, creative and ontological experiences of the person directly within his/her/my creative practice of being, living and developing in the world and what I take and suggest to be the human-all-too-human self-dialectical, living, embodied, cathartic, auto-poietic, creative and self-therapeutic ontological heuristic enquiry into the question of how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?.

Moreover, the LET approach has enabled me to criticise constructively and creatively the reduction, objectification, dehumanisation, degradation and abstraction of the human subject. Prior to encountering LET, I typified Van Manen (1990) as an extreme form of the established phenomenon in critical psychology

whereby humanistic critical psychologists become attuned with Wittgenstein ideas and associate thinking and experiences with language, discourse and text, rather than with action, practice and activity. I was helped greatly by the Schönian and Freireian reflection in/on action on action, activity, and practice. For years this situation has been making me experience solitude, angst and frustration, and I was at last able to identify, process, reverse, recreate, redirect, shift and transmute these negative experiences into those of a more engaging, hopeful, creative, and self-fulfilling existence in the world.

Hence, I share with Gadamer, Collingwood and pre-2002 Whitehead and McNiff, the belief in the creative and straightforward dialectics of question and answer, and formulating the appropriate questions for the theorisation and understanding of the human subject.

I urge Whitehead and McNiff to consider the criticisms raised in this thesis. Whitehead and his LET group continuously plea for an inclusional engagement and "receptivity" to their ideas. Yet, so far I have not seen any evidence that they truly engage with the concerns and criticisms that other people have about "inclusionality". In my view, they need to try to comprehend, ask good dialectical questions, and make constructive criticisms and comments about my arguments, as given above.

However, I have my doubts that this will happen. In my experience, the responses of the advocates of 'inclusionality' to any criticising boil down to a series of attempts to show the critic that their choice not to follow and utilise 'the third epistemology and logic of 'Inclusionality' and non-textual, audio-visual, means of presentation and communication is an erroneous one. These attempts were by no means 'invitational', 'relational' or 'inclusional'. It seems that the response of the Inclusionist group is to state that if only the critics were to follow Inclusionality unconditionally then they would not choose to criticise it. Repeatedly, the proponents of 'inclusionality' call for others to be receptive, attuning, flexible and 'relational', but they are unreceptive and even rigid to the ideas of others. Again, this is more a characteristic of a cult than a research group.

The fact is that the LET group claims to find an alternative way to approach, engage with, enquire into and theorise human existence without really studying and reflecting on the need to move the LET approach into the type of ontological, auto-phenomenological, therapeutic, cathartic and auto-poietic living, embodied, dialectical and dialogical form of educational research that I have been describing in this thesis and including me and engaging with my insights independently and autonomously. This kind of absolutism frustrates and alienates me.

3. 3. My plans and hopes for the future

My intention is develop my approach into a therapeutic practice. In the appendix I have included my first attempt at doing this. This is an ongoing project which is presently at its beginning. I am also including in the appendix my present initial and raw attempts at constructing a clinical, educational and ontological electronic

platform for a virtual community. I am planning to work out over the next decade or so, together with fellow clinicians, theorists, academics and practitioners, a legitimate and reliable online therapeutic practice. So far the responses of colleagues from psychology, psychiatry, general medical practice, communication, economics and creative writing have been very encouraging.

My plan is to bring together a virtual support group of bloggers in which individuals self-dialectically log and then blog their lives and how they work at reversing angst, insecurity, frustration and solitude into greater security, self-fulfilment and productive relationships with both oneself and other people. The participants would share their personal life, struggles and working towards the fulfilment of intentions and work on ways to empower and heal themselves and support each others and support and heal themselves by supporting others. It is my suggestion, intention and belief that therapists, psychologists, clinicians, social workers, doctors, General Practitioners, chaplains, ontologists and the like could be trained by looking at the blogs and could complement their face-to-face sessions with the clients, supervisors, mentors and supervisees. It is also my belief and intention that educational professional training sessions that involve mentors and students working together, in the like of those discussed in Schön (1987), can take place electronically, even when clients, support groups' leaders or members, supervisees, mentors or therapists are away and unable to engage with a face-to-face session, whilst available for a virtual session through the electronic platform of their virtual community. I think the economic and environmental benefits of this virtual training sessions are evident.

I am hoping my new therapeutic practice will emerge from working out the theoretical ideas and challenges that will inevitably arise during authentic, active and spontaneous and experimental creative writing and cathartic blogging on, with and for others in clinical, educational, therapeutic, mentored and supportive virtual community. This therapeutic practice will:

   i.   Support struggling individuals in improving the quality of their lives, professional practices, and relationships with both themselves and other people.

   ii. Support, train, and develop clinicians, ontologists, and other theorists of human existence and the human subject.

More on that in the appendix and publications in preparation.

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Appendix One
My Creative Writing and Blogging

As directly and spontaneously b/logged in my University Webpages on the 9th of July, 2009, at http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/catharblog.html. Originally this was part of the fifth creative self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological and cathartic educational action research cycle of enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into the question: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?, of my original dialectical b/logging and creative writing thesis that could now, July 16, 2010, be accessed and retrieved from the URL, http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/bloggingthesis.html

Thursday, the 9th of July, 2009; 14:39:55

As soon as I transferred myself and my research programme at the University of Bath from wholly propositional critical psychology and sociology, philosophy and history of science work to the living educational theory approach, I have created my personal Wide World Web site and space. I then spent most, if not all, of my mornings from the summer of 2003 onwards creatively and systematically experimenting and enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into my intention to creatively, qualitatively and meaningfully produce a convincing, rational and well-rationalised, Doctor of Philosophy thesis manuscript. A manuscript of an alternative concrete, authentic, engaging, applied, creative, innovative and applicable, living, embodied, dialectical, auto-dialogical, auto-phenomenological, auto-poietic, cathartic, self-therapeutic and dialogical heuristic tool, solution and approach, to the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world.

This meant and implied that I have spent the morning of each day creatively blogging my ontological living and embodied feelings, ideas, angst, hopes, concerns, frustrations, difficulties, creativeness, innovativeness, aspirations and intentions and the creative and systematic ways in which I propose to creatively and systematically act upon my intentions, angst, frustrations, creativeness, innovativeness and hopes and plans and intentions for my own, living and embodied, and active, creative, innovative, productive and meaningful, progression as a radical, creative, creating, recreating, passionate and value-laden scholar and critical psychologist. This is coupled with my personal self-dialectical, creative, qualitative and innovative, developments, empowerment, relationships, qualitative, dialectical and self-dialectical transformations and growth in, towards and with the world. I indeed creatively and systematically experimented with poetic, stream of consciousness, cathartic, creative, innovative and self-therapeutic writings and textual and hermeneutical dialectical and self-dialectical, authentic, engaging, reflexive and concrete, living, creative, embodied, auto-phenomenological and auto-poietic self-reevaluations, auto-contemplation and auto-reflections that intended to re-construct, summon, create and recreate and amass up and work out a more secured, hopeful, engaging, full and complete, meaningful and self-fulfilling existence in the world for

myself and that I posted in the Wide World Web, through my website (homepage). This is in order to get constructive and creative feedbacks and dialectical and productive (transforming and enriching) dialogues and engagements on the part of my intended dialoguing and engaging social others on and to maintain for my own records, to look at and critically, creatively and systematically, analyse, process, recreate and re-evaluate in the future.

Likewise, I was indeed also creatively and systematically using and drawing on the dialogical and interacting elements of blogging to work on my creative relationships and qualitative intercommunication with the social world. I used blogs and blogging as a means of getting constructive, meaningful, significant, creative, engaging, concrete and authentic feedbacks from others, evaluating and re-evaluating them and my responses and reactions to them and learning to creatively and constructively dialogue with my social others in a more productive, empowering and engaging manner. In fact, with a view to improve the productivity, creativeness and efficiency of my relationship and interrelationships with the/my social and ecological world, I was producing daily posts on my daily life, intentions, reflections, contemplations, re-evaluations, creativeness, innovativeness, conceptualisations, research and personal and family background and life-history. This implies that I was creatively posting and making public on the Wide World Web, and more specifically my website and homepage, specific creative posts on who I am, where I come from and what I have been creatively and systematically doing, what I am and have been experiencing and yearning for and intending to constructively and creatively achieve, innovate and accomplish within and throughout my personal, creative and professional life.

Similarly, I was also creatively and systematically posting and publicising specific and explicit, authentic, creative, innovative and concrete, entries on the rationale of my research, my readings and analysis of and critical and creative judgement of my reading. I was also creatively and systematically posting creative posts on my experiences, sensations, creativeness and feelings as I experienced, sensed and felt them being felt and reflected and self-reevaluated, recreated and processed them whilst experiencing them. I was creatively and systematically blogging on my interrelationships and interactions with peers and colleagues and what I thought and felt of my attempts to creatively explain, rationalise, describe and clarify myself to them and to creatively, qualitatively, constructively and meaningfully engage, rather than alienate and antagonise, them in my rather radical, creative, innovative and challenging views, reflections, insights, works, enquiries, interests, intentions, aspirations, creativeness, innovativeness and values and value-laden and cherished practices and praxis.

The intention has indeed been to process, re-evaluate, recreate, identify and make sense of feelings, experiences and situations of existential angst, frustration, solitude, malaise and ontological void and insecurity and to concretely and authentically, auto-dialogically, livingly, auto-phenomenologically, auto-poietically, cathartically, creatively and self-therapeutically and self-dialectically, work out more fulfilling, engaging, hopeful, meaningful, constructive, full and complete and productive ways for me to engage and live and reconstruct, redirect, shift and

transform myself and my life in and with the world. I used my self-dialectical, creative, challenging and innovative, applied ontology, auto-phenomenology, self-therapy and auto-poiesis and action research cycles methodology and worked to identify, process reverse, redirect , shift and transmute the situations where it has appeared to me from the creative, dialectically, empowering and enriching, responses of the social dialogical others that I have clearly failed to creatively, qualitatively, constructively and meaningfully interact with the world in a way that is able to give me the enriching and empowering experiences of personal ontological satisfaction, fulfilment, engagement, empowerment, self-enrichment, creativeness and progress that I longed for.

What is more, I also creatively and systematically utilised and drew on my action research cycles in order to creatively reinforce, recreate and reiterate those encounters and actions in, with and toward the world of mine that I experienced to truly fulfil, qualitatively and dialectically transform, redirect, shift and empower and enrich me within what I do and intend to achieve and accomplish for myself, my future and my life. I have been doing so as I was reviewing, processing, identifying and re-evaluating, recreating and analysing the creative dialectical comments, engagements and responses of the social others. This is in regards to whether or not they are really being productive, meaningful, significant, creative and constructive in the fulfilment of my intentions and aspirations to creatively relate to the world within a constructive, meaningful, securing, empowering and self-fulfilling manner. This was done as part of my intention and working to construct an illustrative and creative dedicated dialectical public space and a heuristic tool, solution and approach, to the human-all-too-human labouring to auto-phenomenologically, creatively and self-dialectically identify, re-evaluate, process and reverse and auto-poietically and authentically transmute, shift and redirect and qualitatively transform experiences and situations in a person's life of ontological void and insecurity and existential angst, frustration, solitude and malaise into a more meaningful, securing, hopeful, engaging, creative, full and complete and self-fulfilling/actualising existence in the world for oneself.

I finished my reflective and creative writings, logging and bloggings in the afternoon and went on to read, search, re-evaluate and analyse the literature and to creatively, dialectically and constructively dialogue and engage with peers and colleagues on life, in general, the present state and history of the social and human sciences and empirical and clinical and therapeutic psychologies, current events and affairs and my Doctor of Philosophy work and their own professional practices, praxis and works. I have done so as I sought to creatively and systematically implement my reflective, auto-dialogical, creative and reflexive, learning of and from the re-evaluation, recreation, identification and processing of the responses of social others and of the way in which I myself interact, dialogue and engage with my social others and the social and ecological world.

In addition, I have also begun to critically and creatively engage with and re-evaluate, identify and process the medium and methodological tool of blogs, enquiring-within-writing&b/logging and blogging. I read, took part in and engaged and interacted with the blogs, blogging platforms, and webspaces and bloggers that

have begun to appear en mass then, beginning in 2004 and moving on to 2005 and 2006, and formed and developed my personal preferences and loyalty to specific blogs and bloggers. I also searched the academic literature for their analytic recognition and review of blogs, the blogosphere and blogging.

I also learned that my website (electronic World Wide Web homepage) (Serper, 2009) was referred to in McNiff and Whitehead (2006) and Whitehead (2009, 2004c) as an illustration of the possibility of an action researcher who is using creatively and innovatively action research cycles and narratives to contemplate on, make sense of, identify, re-evaluate, recreate and process and self-dialectically, qualitatively, meaningfully and creatively, develop, work out, recreate, redirect, shift and transform his being, living and developing in the world and explain, process, identify, re-evaluate, recreate, rationalise, clarify and describe his actions, activities, intentions, creativeness and innovativeness and ontological, practice, professional and educational values as he is doing so. And subsequently as a living exemplification and embodiment for the ontological, cathartic, self-therapeutic, creative, innovative and existential use of action research and the living educational theory approach to educational, action and practitioner research. I begun writing up thesis drafts on a new means of creatively, systematically, methodologically and heuristically engaging with, identifying, processing, re-evaluating, recreating and theorising and conceptualising the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world.

Hence, as soon as I transferred, shifted and redirected myself and my research programme to the self-dialectical, ontological, auto-phenomenological, self-therapeutic, auto-poietic, creative, innovative and cathartic action research enquiry in the summer and autumn of 2003, I created a University website (homepage) for myself. One that was accessible at http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/. It was indeed a very self-exposing, vulnerable, authentic, cathartic, creative, innovative and self-therapeutic public space where I creatively and systematically produced over and within time, space, enquiry, practice and praxis very revealing, personal, cathartic, self-therapeutic, creative, innovative and contemplating public postings on who I am, my insights on human existence and the phenomenon of my being a person in the world and the question and concrete, authentic, living, creative, cathartic, innovative and embodied self-dialectics of, how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?

I have done it in order for others to critically, systematically and creatively, engage with and authentically, constructively, meaningfully and livingly dialogue and engage and interact with. And also in order for myself to constructively, creatively, meaningfully and productively work out, formulate and develop my suggested, rather creative, challenging and innovative, heuristic tool, solution and approach, through creative posting entries and constructively, qualitatively and dialectically, engaging with and learning from the creative engagements and comments of others. I dated each creative blogging postings and had a JISCMAIL.AC.UK account at https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=ALONSERPER for people to creatively, dialectically, qualitatively and constructively dialogue, interact and engage with me and among themselves. Now, JISCMAIL.AC.UK indeed offers a

public, creative and constructive, electronic media space for constructive, meaningful, dialectical and qualitative electronic mail interactions, dialogues and engagements among a list of subscribers. I am talking about a living public and creative space that is public and in turn accessible and open to be viewed by all individuals with an access to the Wide World Web. Whilst it is now being a rather primitive form of dialogue among peers and colleagues, it is still being widely used in the academy and by academics and is continuously working at updating, recreating and improving itself and its technologies. But in 2003 it was a rather revolutionary cut age technology for a living public, open, creative, qualitative, meaningful, dialectical and interacting dialogue among academic peers from all corners of the world.

My focus was on creating, constructing and reconstructing a more meaningful, securing, hopeful, challenging, engaging, full and complete and self-fulfilling existence in the world for myself. This is as a creative, innovative, creating and recreating professional, a human being and myself and through genuine, living and embodied, concrete, applied, reflexive, applicable, engaging, creative, innovative and authentic reflections, contemplations. This is coupled with a focus on the practice of creatively writing and producing public, living and engaging, posts and postings and qualitatively, dialogically, creatively, engagingly, constructively and dialectically interacting, engaging and dialoguing with social others on my b/logging posts and postings.

I indeed wanted to constructively, qualitatively, dialectically, creatively and meaningfully process, work out, recreate, develop and reverse, redirect, shift and transform and transmute experiences, situations and feelings of existential angst, frustration, solitude, despair and malaise and ontological void and insecurity and to work out this exercise as a clear, creative, challenging and innovative and well-rationalised alternative heuristic tool, solution and approach, to the re-evaluation and theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world. This was certainly the practice that I valued and cherished the most and that empowered, fulfilled, challenged, gratified and enriched me the most and that I wanted my suggested alternative heuristic tool, solution and approach, to the understanding, re-evaluation, recreation, identification, processing, engagement with and theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world to be based on and grounded within.

In what follows now, I include the opening and accessible pages of my University of Bath homepage from which I linked the various creative, empowering, dialectical, cathartic and self-enriching, writing and blogging posts and postings that I shall include in the appendix. I wrote this opening and introduction pages in one single go, as creative, empowering and enriching, free association and free fall reflections, contemplations and expressions, on the third of November, 2003, a few months after transferring, redirecting, shifting and transforming my research, my work and myself to self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological, auto-poietic, cathartic, creative, innovative and self-therapeutic self-reevaluation and ontological and cathartic self-study. There are abundant posts in that website (homepage) that I have creatively

narrated, blogged, written and produced mostly between 2003 and 2006. I should just like in what follows to give you a flavour of it here in this thesis.

Likewise, I should also like to creatively discuss and illustrate the emergence and development of my blogging. This means that I should like to show and illustrate specific examples of my creatively producing and working out a specific blog and particular creative, cathartic and auto-liberating, blogging posts and entries and blogging and self-dialectical, living, embodied, concrete, authentic, engaging, auto-phenomenological, auto-dialogical, dialogical, auto-poietic, cathartic, creative, innovative and self-therapeutic enquiring-within-writing&b/logging. I am talking about very specific and particular creative blog entries and postings in the course of which I seek to systematically, methodically and creatively work out, identify, process, re-evaluate, recreate and analyse my experiences of existential angst, frustration and solitude ontological void and insecurity. This is as I lead my life then and encounter and interact, dialogue and creatively and constructively engage with very particular events, anecdotes and experiences which occur and unfold in the course of my leading my particular life and development in, towards and with the world. And in turn work and labour as hard as I can to creatively, cathartically and systematically redirect, shift and transmute these disagreeable and discomforting experiences and situations into the creation and reconstruction of a new and improved life for myself. I am talking about a creative, creating and recreating life with new ontological meanings, hopes, challenges, creativeness, innovativeness aspirations, intensions, ontological security and self-fulfilment and productive, constructive, creative, qualitative and meaningful engagements, dialogues, interactions and relationships with, in and towards the world.

Hence, in the appendices of this thesis I shall include the opening pages of my University creative writing and experimentation website and electronic WebPages creative examples of very specific creative, cathartic and auto-liberating, blogging posts and relate and connect them to my intentions and rationale for creating and conducting this suggested heuristic tool, solution and approach and in turn thesis and work. Here, in this specific cycle of enquiring-within-writing&b/logging, I shall provide explicit illustrative links to four specific concrete, creative and illustrative blogging posts and also extract, cite, recite, recreate and quote particular sections from them. Particular sections, citations and extracts that illustrate, live, recreate, identify and embody my authentic and genuine living, creative and developing attempts to systematically, constructively and creatively identify for myself, process, re-evaluate, recreate and work out and reverse and transform, redirect, shift and transmute situations and experiences of existential angst, frustration and solitude and ontological void and insecurity for myself in the world.

I am in fact explicitly doing so within an explicit intention to show, illustrate and re-embody and re-live and recreate for you, myself and others how I think about and creatively, systematically, innovatively and constructively relate to and reconnect with my creative, cathartic and auto-liberating, blogging and what blogging, in general, and the type of self-dialectical, concrete, authentic, living, creative and embodied, ontological, auto-phenomenological, auto-poietic, cathartic, auto-liberating and self-therapeutic enquiring-within-writing&b/logging that I am seeking

to creatively and innovatively introduce and rationalise here in this work, in particular, essentially and explicitly mean to me. This is within the contexts that I am seeking to work out in the present work. This is namely a person creatively and systematically working and labouring at making sense of, re-evaluating, processing, recreating and empowering and to qualitatively, self-dialectically, cathartically, creatively, systematically and self-therapeutically transform, shift and redirect his/her life and identity, process, recreate, reverse, redirect, shift and transmute situations, feelings and experiences of existential angst, frustration and solitude and ontological void and insecurity into a those of a more meaningful, hopeful, securing, engaging, full and complete and self-fulfilling/actualising existence in the world for himself/myself. The creative blogging posts themselves are included in the appendix.

I specifically select and choose four creative, cathartic and auto-liberating, blogging posts that I have creatively written, worked out and produced in the second half of 2003. As I already stated several times, it was a time period where I decided to transfer, shift and redirect my research from empirical critical psychology and the philosophy, sociology and history of science and social science to a direct auto-phenomenological, self-dialectical and auto-dialogical, living, engaging, concrete and authentic auto-poietic, cathartic, creative, innovative, auto-liberating and self-therapeutic enquiry into human existence and the meanings and implications of the phenomenon of being a living, embodied, creative, creating and recreating and developing person in, with and towards the world and, and through, the examination, re-evaluation, identification and recreation in action, action reflection cycles and concrete and creative praxis of the particular life and developments and transformations of a specific human subject, myself. I was creatively experimenting with very personal cathartic, creative, auto-liberating, empowering, transforming, enriching and therapeutic self-dialectical writings for the first time in a long time and for the first time as an academic research enquiry. I felt its healing, enriching, empowering, cathartic and stabilising effect whilst anguished at its being my academic work and specifically my Doctor of Philosophy research work.

I came to Bath, England, some ten months earlier, namely the autumn of 2002, after experiencing enormous pain, ontological void and insecurity and awful existential angst, solitude, frustration and malaise. I was completely overwhelmed and in an awful pain, grief and agony. I felt empty, insecure, angry, confused, frustrated, scared and solitary and very wounded and in awful pain, angst and distressed. I was deeply worried, concerned and anxious, about my future, my life and what would become of me in the present and future and as a means of creatively, meaningfully and constructively enriching and turning and rendering my past life and achievement meaningful, significant and constructive and worthwhile. I needed to do something active, concrete, creative, and living and authentic, challenging, stimulating, worthwhile, qualitative and productive, cathartic, auto-liberating and healing with myself and my life and dialectical transformations and developments in, with and towards the world. I needed a total change of environment, space, practice and life. I required a fresh start. I needed to creatively and systematically reflect, plan and modify and reconstruct, recreate, shift and redirect my life anew.

After some failed attempts, in the summer of 2003, as a result of good, supporting and encouraging, friends and creative relationships and interactions, I was at last able to verbalise and put into clear, creative, empowering, cathartically auto-liberating and concrete words and texts and share, communicate and reflect in public on the meaning of the experiences and concrete situations of pain, confusion, solitude, frustration, ontological void, insecurity, angst, grief and malaise and the event that has led me to move to Bath, England, and embark on this Doctor of Philosophy research programme. I titled the post *Self or no Self*. I linked it from the main University of Bath homepage using a link that I entitled [Examples of Self in the world](#).

The post was accessible from http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/self.htm. It works to identify, process, re-evaluate, recreate, engage and interact with and account for, identify, describe and explain to myself and others (as an introduction of what I have been seeking to construct, develop and introduce as an alternative, concrete, authentic, applied and applicable, living, embodied, auto-phenomenological, dialectical, auto-dialogical, auto-poietic, cathartic, auto-liberating and self-therapeutic, creative and dialogical heuristic tool, solution and approach, to the re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world) my experiencing a very specific complete and utter ontological void and insecurity and existential angst, solitude and frustration. This is as a result of a very overwhelming loss and grief that has completely and utterly shattered, wounded and destroyed me and that I needed to creatively work on, amend, identify, process and reverse, transmute, recreate, redirect, shift and repair. It was creatively written, blogged and posted in the 26th of July, 2003, as I was at last able to creatively and constructively put and redirect lived, embodied and living experiences, emotions, thoughts, behaviours and situations into a clear verbal and written text.

I indeed described, accounted for, re-evaluated, recreated, identified, processed and interacted and engaged, then and there, in Bath in the summer of 2003, in that specific creative, reflective and self-reevaluating post, with a very particular and significant chapter in my life in which I was completely committed to and immersed in a very specific task that took over my life completely. I wrote, "*My grandfather will always be strong, dignified, respectful, human, loved and adored, right to the very end. Just as he has always been. Just as he is. He will not be alone, abused, vanquished, non-human, undignified, weak and fragile and depended. He will remain him, will maintain his self and himself. This was my mission, my most cherished one. I immersed in it completely. I prepared myself to it for many years as I knew rationally about the certainty (the only thing certain and sure) of death and finiteness. It became me, my self, my being in the world*". I explained and clarified then in that post to myself and others that "*All my life, the inevitable separation from my grandfather haunted me and terrified me, stronger than anything, stronger than my own death, somewhere in the far future*".

That specific reflective and self-revaluating, self-dialectical, living, embodied, authentic, concrete and engaging, auto-phenomenological, auto-dialogical, auto-poietic, cathartic, self-therapeutic, creative and dialogical writing, logging, blogging

and enquiring-within-writing&b/logging post has indeed started with the following paragraph, "*On Monday evening March 19, 2001, in the only single room of the geriatric institute of the city of Tel-Aviv-Jaffa (the city that two decades previously has awarded him its most distinguished/honorary award for his life-long service to it and vowed to return favour and to cater for him in the best, most comfortable, loving, honorary dignified fashion possible), I told my grandfather, who was lying there glazingly looking and demonstrating that it is all over, he had enough, he is tired, ready to go, that he is free to go, that he is released. I said I can take over from him. I promised I shall manage, I shall go on, I shall be fine, I shall fight, I shall be strong, I shall empower myself, and I shall prevail and succeed. Half an hour later, he ceased to exist and I was launched to a complete gap of empty nothingness.*" Then, the third paragraph of that post has ended with my noting, "*I confessed that I do not know what to do, how to behave, that I feel weak, that I feel completely alone, anxious about existing alone in the world. I revealed that I feel my being, soul and self violently and aggressively ripped and torn apart away from me, leaving me with a great deep hole of nothingness*". Furthermore, as the text emerged and moved on, I explained to myself and my intended readers that "*I admired him, adored him for those qualities. I truly worshipped him. He was more than life and a human being to me. He was immortal, divine, a true God to me. Yet he was also my best friend, companioned in life, a mother, a father, an older, experienced wiser brother. I felt very comfortable, free with him*". Likewise, I also noted that "*This was the type of relationship we had. One constantly engaging with the other, forgetting himself and totally immersing in the other who thus became him and completely consumed his own self. In short we experienced a true, authentic love of the sort that Camus wrote about, claiming it cannot exist for it is not feasible to constantly think of the other sixty seconds a minute, sixty minutes an hour, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and so on. The other penetrated, incorporated and consumed the self of the other. Yet the self of the other was reached and perceived by the self of the perceiver. So the self of the other became the self of the self through the self for consciousness is personal and can merely be conscious through the self (see James, 1890, 1912 for example)*".

I took a special care to note my existential anguish, frustration, hopelessness, solitude, dread and terror of my/the future and my ontological void and insecurity as a young person being prepared for an inevitable ontologically destroying event. I embodied and relieved these experiences in the dialectical question and auto-enquiry, "*Could it be that this immortal being who empowered me, gave me strength, assured me so much, is in fact a mortal, finite being? Could it be that this profound love and passionate feelings are finite and have an end? Could it be that I would be deprived of all of this?*". I wrote, "*We were terrified. Him from being old and needy and me from losing him and being empty without him and all he symbolised and was for me*". I noted and epitomised the living, dialectical and self-dialectical drama and complexities of the phenomenon of being human and a living, embodied, interactive, engaging, creative, creating, recreating and developing person in, with and towards the world. I said "*He ceased to exist and I faced a dilemma. I promised. I assured. I gave my word. He suffered dreadfully, unwillingly, a whole month for this/me/my sake. Yet I felt completely empty. It was the anti-climax, after the climax. I was very confused. I lost myself. I was me, robot, himself, the*

other/me who has just ceased to exist. Then I became nothing and had to start some sort of construction, formulation and reformulation. I was very angry and frustrated with him and with the world. Yet I knew he has done his very best and more. I knew I was released, that I was completely free to concentrate on me, my life, my own existence, my own being in the world, to create, define, construct, organise, formulate and enhance myself, my life, my identity, my self. But I did not like this freedom. I was afraid. I dreaded it. I was anguished, in true, authentic angst. And the person for whom I wished to create and construct the best self that I can existed no more. It was very hard to create myself for myself. I needed the intentionality, the for whom".

I reflectively and creatively self-reevaluated, auto-identified, auto-processed, auto-contemplated, noted and self-explained, "*Guilt also plays a role. Will it be fair to have my existence in the world complete again? Won't it be a betrayal of the person who completely devoted himself to me and my existence? But this was his wish – his most cherished one – for me to be happy and to have a peace of mind and a complete existence in the world. Perhaps I owe it to him to be and have a complete existence in the world, a total, complete self? And not having one will betray him, his self, his mission and memory. Will perhaps make his own existence in the world less complete.* I explained and clarified that "*Rationally, I was too aware that this is life. People die. It was always in my conscious. My being and self has always been completely frustrated, suffering and angered as a result of my loss of my mother, to whom I was incredibly attached and who was a pure source of good, love and warmth, when I was merely four years old and the incredibly, undeservedly injustice done to me and even more so to my grandfather and grandmother*". I added that "*My mother was my grandparents' sole daughter and for my grandfather an only compensation for the complete destruction of his past. Later on, I replaced my mother and became his life (together with his life's devotion, as a community doctor in a very misfortunate part of town, to the needy and to humanity, in general, empowering them and himself [my interpretation]), with all the responsibilities it bore. And I have always been angry at this utter injustice of the need to separate, to cease to exist, to lose everything permanently, to have a complete, permanent nothingness. I dreaded it. I protested, objected to it with all my might and being*".

I reflectively and creatively noted and explained that "*Yet I do feel empty, what about my own authenticity and true feelings, experiences perceptions? Maybe a compromise? Not succumbing and going on searching, creating and reformulating the self anew. Just as he strived to do. Whilst at the same time be kind to the self, be authentic towards it, treating it nicely, not rushing things, taking things slowly and thoroughly, not forcing the self to do things it is yet to be ready to do. The valid, true thing to do is, perhaps, to live, emerge, engage and interrelate with the external world and to be authentic and true to oneself, to one's pain, suffering, sincere wish to be happy and fulfilled. Perhaps if one engages in/with life in this fashion then things would fall into place and arrange themselves.*".

I creatively blogged, identified, processed, re-evaluated, recreated and clarified my ontological dilemmas and my search for answers, "*I was contemplating existing just for the mere sake of existence, being for the sake of being, life for the purpose of*

living, fulfilling my physical part of the living self – enjoying the sun, the sea, the warmth, the birds, the beauty of the world just for their sake. Is it sufficient? I ask. How long can it last? Will I betray my grandfather if I found another intentionality, another for whom? Yet he wanted it so much. This was his biggest desire in his last years. For another source of security. But, he has not achieved it. Will it be fair to achieve it when he is no longer here? Would he have failed, had I achieved it? He who has never failed anything, who had the touch of gold, turning evil to good, pure gold".

I asked myself publicly in front of my readers, "*Is the answer me, my sake, for me, myself? Is it not solipsism, narcissism, egocentrism? Can't it be the answer for humanity as a whole, general entity? Live and love, life and love (Leben und Lieben) you, for you, yourself! Take responsibility for your self! Engage with yourself! Be true and authentic with and to yourself. And do so for yourself, your sake. Love yourself*". I noted and reassured myself that "*One needs an enormous strength, power (macht) and self-assurance to live this way. It is not for the weak and fainthearted. One needs to be empowered, to will to power (Nietzsche) to be able to do so. And is it feasible? Doesn't the self need to transcend him/his self in order to reach him/his self and be conscious of it (Laing; Frankl), conscious of the consciousness? Don't we need to dereflect in order to reflect (Frankl)? There is more doubt than assurance, more questions than answers. Is this human existence in the world? Questions, doubts, dilemmas, uncertainties, certainties of uncertainties, tensions, passionas and passions. Undoubtedly*". I completed the post feeling a bit better, with questions, repetitive self-reassurances and beginning of answers.

Earlier in the same month, on the fourteenth of July, 2003, I produced and created the creative blogging and enquiring-ewithin-blogging post *Human Existence*. The post was based on the events, feelings and experiences I just portrayed and clarified. The title of the link from the main homepage was Human Existence. It was accessible from http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/humaexist.htm.

In that creative writing, logging, blogging and enquiring-within-writing&b/logging post and specific concrete, living, embodied and authentic, alternative, self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological, auto-dialogical, auto-poietic, cathartic, creative, innovative self-therapeutic and auto-dialogical enquiring-within-writing&b/logging, I produced a poetic free association and free fall self-dialectical piece on a direct and intentionally creative, meaningful and constructive, dialogue between myself and the social other on what it is to be a human being in the world, working hard not to despair but to thrive, empower, recreate and create and self-fulfil and self-actualise in the world and within what is one doing. I indeed started the post by noting "*The following piece of writing is meant to show firsthand what it is to be/become a human subject, existing and emerging in the world*".

I then re-evaluated and recreated my conceptualisation of human existence and the phenomenon of being, developing, recreating and existing in, with and towards the world and noted to myself and others that "*It is the exact opposite from being an object, namely a static, fixed, designed, defined, built, structured (Sartre, 1943,*

1947, 1952). It is a very complex, very insecure, very powerful, very confusing, very irrational, undefined thing, full of constantly changing states of being, states of mind, different selves, states of consciousness, identities, emotions, feelings, passions, severe crises and dilemmas. It is a bursting, burning, fiery lava full of paradoxes and self contradictions gushing and moving down extremely rapidly. It is an attempt to figure this out, to make sense, to understand what is going on, to define, to reconstruct the self to the best of one's ability. There is no order, reason, determinism, logic, rationalism. Most of all it is a will to better the self and to achieve a bit of peace of mind and a little more stability and security, cooling oneself up a little bit. It is an optimistic hope for the future, a better one, despite everything. Being, becoming, emerging in spite of oneself, the world (inner and external) the human condition (Malraux) and the absurd".

I also explained and clarified and creatively blogged and enquired within-blogging to myself and my intended dialogical social other that "*The process is a very tiresome, tedious, satiating, ungrateful, anguishing one that consumes the entire self in order to create and construct and reconstruct the self. Yet because it takes and deprives so much and is so very difficult is a most fulfilling one.* I in turn made sure that the reader understands that "*Those are my perceptions, my views, my accounts, my reflections*" and that "*I feel a need to shout my humanity to the world at the top of my voice 'I am here. This is me. This is who I am. The following is the result of self awareness, reflections, consciousness of consciousness, introspection, self therapeutic analysis, self observing and observance, coupled with the observing of others, asking them, being interested and very curious in them and their existence/being in the world, immersing myself in them, spending more than three decades reading and listening to their accounts*".

I also self-reevaluated, recreated, auto-identified, auto-processed and noted in that piece of creative poetic blogging and enquiring-within-writing&b/logging post to myself and my intended dialoguing readers and social other that "*I am confused, lost. What is it? Where am I going in my quest for peace of mind, happiness, more meaningful/authentic existence*". I wrote "*I want to be. I want to be happy. I want to have the most meaningful, fulfilled life existence/being in the world to which I was thrown*".

I then shared and directly dialogued with the social other as authentically as possible. I told the social other what I continuously tell myself, my auto-dialogical, self-reevaluative, reflections on human existence, both as a phenomenon and as an event and practice that I am forced to engage with, act upon and live and make the most of. I wrote "W*e must fight, struggle. We have no choice. We have to be fully committed to our existence, to being in the world. We are obliged to it, for utter engagement with it. Our energies, our resources must be fully committed to it. We have to invest all our energies and resources to it*".

Furthermore, I emphasised to both myself and the intended readers that "*There is no justification for an inability to go on struggling for a better more meaningful existence, for the quest for authenticity*". I reminded myself that "I *am very strong. I gain the strength from my life. I have hope whether it is an illusion (Becket's En*

Attendant Godot) or real (Frankl, Nietzsche, Rogers, Camus, Kierkegaard, Voltaire), it does not matter. As long as I live I will hope for the better. I will work extremely hard (Voltaire's Candide Ou l'Optimisme) for I have no choice. Giving up is a death sentence. I may as well lose myself physically.".

I noted, self-reevaluated, auto-reassured and explained and told the social other and myself that "*I can be very harsh, very rigorous about the manner I live my life, far more than you can ever be. I do so because I have obligation towards myself, to care about myself, to love myself. I owe it to myself. I must do so. I am the only one who does*".

I also noted, creatively blogged and enquired-within-blogging and directly told the social other the following statements, "*You have to do your best. Show me how you fully immerse and engage with your self, your existence, your being in the world. Show me you are a tough, strong, pitiless (self-pity that is) killer... You have a world, objectives and, dare I say, obligation to be happy, of benefit to others, to have a meaningful/authentic existence and life. You can learn from my mistakes, my flaws, and my strength*". I explained to him/her and myself that "*I engage with my own existence and being in the world. I reflect. I dereflect. I want to improve myself, to become a better human being, happier, more fulfilled. As part of this need of mine, I wish to help you improve and become a better human being*".

Likewise, five months later, on Christmas day, 2003, I felt very agitated, frustrated, solitary, despairing and anguished. A series of things have been happening and unfolding in the United Kingdom for me since the summer of 2003. They have moved and shifted and directed themselves too quickly and suddenly, with no proper preparation. I lost control and panicked. It was all too much, too soon, too quickly. The unfolding events made me experience and indulge in self-pity, ontological insecurity, self-frustration, solitude and self-contempt and anguish. I was angry at and frustrated and anguished with myself and experienced a great deal of self-disappointment and lack of self-fulfilment and satisfaction with myself. I felt overwhelmed and losing control. A very nice and meaningful and anticipated Christmas holiday at a nice and securing place has turned into a very lonely and isolated, frustrating and anguishing one at Bath.

I produced a poetic and creative blogging post and a concrete, authentic, living, embodied, alternative, self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological, auto-dialogical, auto-poietic, cathartic, self-therapeutic, creative and dialogical enquiring-within-writing&b/logging entry in the course of which I directly and creatively dialogue, engage and interact with the social other about my existential frustrations, angers, angst, self-disappointment, solitude and ontological void and insecurity and the awful and overwhelming fights and struggles that I have been having with myself. It was indeed a true piece of cathartic and therapeutic blogging and self-dialectical and creative enquiring-within-writing&b/logging for I felt more comfortable, secured and relieved after carrying out this exercise.

The link to the poetic creative and cathartic self-dialectical post was <u>Self in the World - Me, Me and Me</u> – **The fight of the Self with the Self for progress. And**

the role of the 'you'. It was accessible from http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/Meme.htm#. I started the posting by placing the heading *Christmas Day, 2003 (25th of December, 2003)* and then framing the intended poetic and creative self-dialectical and self-therapeutic dialogue with the social other and explaining that "*I moved out of the 'self' that died in March, 2001 and to the attempt to find and create a new self. This self lost its security and itself. It panicked. It was too secured and happy for a while. It was terrified and died temporarily. I am not even sure whether it was real or an illusion. Not that it matters to me. I am looking for security, happiness, pleasure, balance and gratification not reality. I do not believe in reality. This self hopes to be resurrected, to learn from its mistakes that were made by terror, past experiences and inexperiences and to emerge stronger as another, refined and more mature and wise self. This self aspires to gain gratification, happiness, energy, vitality and pleasure*".

I then self-reevaluated and noted and clarified that "*I soon became ecstatic and lost myself so as to look for myself and to be a lot happier and marinated in pleasure, gratification, energy and happiness. I lost my guards and my cynicism in the process. I was aware of it and became increasingly terrified of it. The more I tried to calm down, the more terrified I became. I moved quite far, extremely fast. It all gushed. I outgrew myself. I waited myself to blow up. I dreaded the explosion. Yet I wanted the explosion to come up already and to take its inevitable course so that I will be able to be past it already, to get rid of it and to be after it*".

I added and wrote that "*I rushed and gushed and stormed and pulled everyone and everything else with me like in a powerful avalanche. This madness and extreme rush confused me and petrified me. The blood went right to my head*". I noted, "*As I promised to myself in 'human existence' and in 'self', I have done things for myself and only for myself. I kept up my promise. Too well, perhaps*". I explained that "*I tried to make happy and to be happy in the process. I became exhausted. I lost the energy and was drained from and of it. I panicked and became petrified.*".

In the actual poetic text, entitled **Me, Me and Me**, I creatively wrote, blogged, noted and explained, accounted for, rationalised and clarified to both myself and others that "*Not able to escape from the me is making me lost within the me and to lose me. I have asked me (myself) to go call me and to summon me as I was lost and I have lost the me who went to call me. It just disappeared and got lost as well. So I lost the me whom I sent to find me. How pathetic it is of me. I am angry at and with myself for being lost and losing myself and even managed to lose the one who was supposed to find the lost me. I am so frustrated and hurt and disappointed from me. I go chasing for me and hunting for me. I am full of vicious revenge. I am scared and petrified. I do it with so much passion, hatred, love, destruction, construction, pain and will and desire to learn, improve and better. But I am full of fear of destructive and destruction. I try to save me from me whilst at the same time very angry and pouring all this anger, disappointment, frustration on and at me. I try to defend myself and to attack back*".

I then left me and my creative auto-dialogue and direct living, concrete, creative, systematic and authentic, auto-dialogical engagement with myself, turned directly to and told the social other the following, "*You may be scared of me and repulsed by me. You may be puzzled…Originally, I said it as part of an amusing absurd anecdote to get in touch with you and to interrelate with you. It was said when I was completely scared, overwhelmed and in panic*". I admitted and clarified and noted that "*But this writing actually makes sense to me and makes me certain. It makes me self-assured, more powerful and confident. It makes me understand things. It permits me to go on and move on. Every joke has a serious side for/of it.*". I noted and explained that "*I say to myself 'just write what you feel and see where you go and end up in'. Hopefully, I won't end up sedated somewhere.*".

Likewise, I also creatively wrote and blogged the following statement "*And thus I asked me to go look/ing for me. This is a sheer act of bravery I think. You may say it is an act of insanity. This is security. Sanity or insanity are irrelevant as far as this notion is concerned. I am lost. And I am aware of it. I admit it here. I shout it clearly. It is my conclusion. And I have no clue. I just have me and my allegedly being here. And all of this mess and chaos. This is my strength and my security. It is my balance. It is, in fact, my sanity. It is my ontological stability. I cause it and construct it. It is my chaos and mess.*

I then moved to creatively write up, blog and describe, recreate and re-evaluate my fighting with me and the awful self-dialectical struggle with me and between me and myself. I wrote that "*I go out in the freezing cold and look for it. I wait to myself around the corner. I jeer at me. I insult me. I try to protect me. I am petrified of me. I assault me. I assault me back. I try to separate me from me. Stop fighting I say to the me. I do not listen to me. I fail in my peace making mission to prevent war. And a terrible, messy, vicious bloody fight commences. I need to protect myself from the world and to be happy. I need to make sense for myself. I am scared of the answers. Yet I have so many questions and dilemmas and internal paradoxes and confusions. I want to rest and I want to find a balance and security, ontological stability and sense making. I want to fight and live. I want to fight to have the best version of me possible and feasible. I want peace and tranquility. I want to comprehend. I am terrified from and of what I will find out and comprehend. I wish to be left alone. I want to go on forward and to progress. I want me. I disagree with myself completely. I lose patience with myself. I lose my tolerance towards myself. I turn to me. I am the only thing that is there. And I truly care and love me. I turn against me. And I start to fight with me*".

I then told, creatively blogged and admitted to the social other "*I turn to the me and yell at me. Why did I go to you [for]? I really wish to be secured, to feel good and balanced. But not at all costs. I will never make compromises in some things and elements. I refuse to lose myself and to alienate myself from myself for you. I do not have a clue. Not having a clue is the only thing I know and feel secured and sure of. If I'll go to you I'll lose me. I do not know whether to accept or reject. I do not know who I am. I do not know if it is a good thing or a bad thing. I confuse and puzzle me… I need to calm myself down. I need to find. But I am so scared of the findings. I go out of the me and I go to you again. I cannot define myself as you*

insist. I just wish to be with you without talking, explaining, analyzing, defining. Just to rest, calm down, cool myself down a bit, forget and gain and regain forces and amass the energy again. I wish to make sense to you without explaining or defining just by being confused and puzzled and in chaos".

I then creatively wrote, blogged and acknowledged that "*When I am attacked by myself in a tremendous deal of ferocity, hatred and severity and passion and aggression. And begin losing the battle and risking losing the war I swallow my pride and dignity*". I told the social other that "*I am so weak and exhausted. We hesitate and struggle – so many dilemmas, paradoxes and confusions. In frustration and desperation, I decide to play a game with you in order to survive the me within me. I need to entice you in order to find a refuge from me in the fight against me. I play such a nice guy that I manage to play with you and to deceive you.*" Likewise, I also told the social other that "*I need those war, pain, self-hatred, suffering, masochism and violence to progress and emerge stronger and better. It is the only way I know how to live and be and to emerge and to become. I know no other way. I need those things to be and live, to create a better version of me/myself for me/myself. I do not know anything else. I have done this all my life. I succeeded. I suffered. I was gratified. I loved. I hated. I was frustrated. I was empty. I was full. I was drained. And I was energized. And I was able to survive and to go on*".

I then creatively blogged, recreated, re-evaluated and reflected in public on the phenomena of the human subject, human existence and being human. I creatively wrote, blogged, noted, self-reassured and explained and acknowledged to myself and others that "*We need this rush to progress and prosper. We are masochistic and refine and improve ourselves whilst suffering and weeping. We enjoy it perhaps. We do nothing whilst off the guards and static in some sort of romantic and peaceful 'La La land', all romantic and compassionate and loving. We are little more than the teletabies when we are in peace and all loving and compassionate. We need fire and passion and emotions, love and hatred and pain and sorrow and weeping and condolences and sympathy. And there is no better than a survival war for life or death to accomplish it. There is no better than the rush and gush and fiery ferocity and the short period of tranquility and recuperation and exhaustion between wars that makes us appreciate, understand and comprehend and find out and learn*". I also noted, recognised and explained that "*I am in such a period right now. And I try to use it to make sense and understand and prepare myself for the next attack and contra-attack in life, against it and against me. I wish to learn for the next attack and contra attack and emerge stronger and wiser and better*". I felt a bit better and moved on with my research and work that made a bit more sense to me now.

What is more, in between the personal creative, reflective and poetic blogging posts, on the 17th of October, 2003, I posted a piece of creative writing, logging, blogging and self-dialectical enquiring-within-writing&b/logging entry that I titled *Who am I – Who I am*. It in fact was a piece of public creative dialogue and auto-dialogue that aimed to creatively tell the new engagers with my newly constructed research homepage about me, who I am and what I am trying to do, create, accomplish and achieve in the course of the personal, creative and research blogging and my

research programme. The link to the post from the main homepage was titled Who am I. It was accessible from http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/wai2.htm.

I have begun that post by creatively blogging noting that *"I am a very confused thinker of human existence in the world."*.   I also explained, self-reassured, recognised, acknowledged and clarified that *"I cherish and value both this confusion of mine and my claim to have it and be confused. I cherish the unknown. This is what has kept me going. I have no clue what/whom I'll become next. I act. I am very active"*.

I then creatively wrote and blogged, *"I do ask the following question. What is going on here in human existence in the world? I have no answers whatsoever. I know nothing. I do not claim to have anything but my existence in the world. I can sincerely vow for my sincere desire and ambition to live and learn so as to improve my journeys, quests and choice making, making them more meaningful, beneficiary and agreeable. I am very happy to share my findings and conclusions with you so as to try to assist you with your own journeys, quests and choice making... I can offer you no more than very difficult, complex, painful, questions, paradoxes, and dilemmas for you to contemplate on, reflect and dereflect very hard"*.

I also creatively wrote, blogged, self-reassured, identified and explained and noted that "*I need to give it my best shot, to give everything I got, to spend all my limited energy and resources on it, to immerse completely in it, to have the best existence in the world possible for me, my self. I have obligation towards myself to do so. I owe to myself to do so as part of my commitment to life and my desire to go on with/in it. If I do not do so, then I do not really live and exist in the world.   If I do not do this then my life is not as meaningful and worthwhile as it ought to be*".

Likewise, I also added that "*I just claim to be here in the world, that's all. I wish to be as satisfied as I can from my life. To die, satisfied and with an assurance that I have done my very best to become the best version of me that I could have constructed to/for myself. With this objective in mind, I go on and fight life, fight the human condition, fight the world, both the inner and outer, fight me, myself, sometimes. I want to have true and authentic, constantly growing happiness for myself. I want to have more peace of mind for myself. I believe I deserve it. I believe we all do. I wish to fulfill and actualise myself and my existence in the world to the best of my capability*".

I also creatively wrote, blogged and told the intended reader of and engager with my newly created blog and research homepage that "*I do believe we do share the universal objective of wishing and willing to become and be self-fulfilled, authentic and happy and improve ourselves and our journeys in the world.   Surely, our meanings, values and objectives are unique and individualistic but the desire to have them is universal*". I creatively wrote, blogged, identified and noted and explained to the intended reader and engager that *"I expect to have a very authentic, beneficial and meaningful interaction (engagement), a positive, true and authentic interrelationship/s. I expect the dialogue to be passionate, fiery, moving and wholly human. I expect it to be difficult, painful, challenging and rewarding"*.

I also creatively wrote, blogged, noted and told the readers/engagers that "*I am very optimistic. I truly believe in cultivating our garden (Voltaire, 1958). I believe that if I (and I dare say we) work very hard, struggle, endure the struggles and hardships, try to survive the strong turbulences and severe hurricanes, then the sun will shine and the birds will sing, beautiful flowers will blossom in the garden and strong, tenable and resistant trees (Alon means oak tree in Hebrew) will grow. I am utterly convinced and have evidence to show it*".

I added that *"I know I can make the sun shine on my life through my actions in the world and it will. I recommend and call upon you to do the same if you wish. I/We have to struggle very hard. I/We must not give in. I/we must fight truly believing I/we will prevail and emerge (a) smiling winner/s.*". I concluded the post by directly telling the reader, engager and follower that "*I place my 'heart', my soul, my being, my being in the world, my inner world, my emotions, my consciousness, my interrelationships with the external world and with myself in the open for you to be exposed to. I am very direct. I am very authentic. I am sincere and true. I am very honest. I try and do my best to be. It is not at all easy for me. It is sometimes very painful. Yet I find it very beneficial for my journey and quest. I also find it relieving, healing and soothing as well. I sincerely hope to make it meaningful and of benefit for you and your quests, searches and journeys as well. This is my intension. I keep a private journal for many years. It could have been sufficient. But I wish to involve you for all the reasons I have already stated here. Engage if you wish. Or don't if you don't*". I felt and experienced those experiences and sensations of hope, anticipation, empowerment and productiveness within what I do and seek to do, achieve and construct.

Thus, from the summer of 2003 to the summer of 2007, I creatively blogged and shared with my intended readers, engaging dialoguers and audience, who were loyal, faithful and engaging, my life as I have been leading it, my background, my past, present and intentions, hopes, anticipations and aspirations for my/the future. I creatively blogged and told my intended readers, engagers and audience what I do, my experiences, feelings, fears, angst, frustrations, hopes, dreads and self-reflections and my contemplations and reflections in and on action and praxis on what I do and what I want and aspire to do, create and realise and fulfil and actualise and what I yearn for. I tried to be as authentic, open, honest and truthful as I can. I built myself a very explicit audience of readers and readership. I received from them very sincere, constructive, creative, meaningful and helpful feedbacks, criticisms and questions and anecdotes and stories of their own in my email address and in my constructed JISCMAIL.AC.UK account at https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=ALONSERPER. I was also was member of other JISCMAIL.AC.UK lists with whose members and participants I creatively engaged and interacted regularly and shared and tested out ideas from my creative blogging. In fact, my direct engagement between July 2003 and January, 2007 could particularly be seen at *The Living-Action-Research JISC electronic discussion* list at https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=living-action-research and the *Practitioner Research JISC* at https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=practitioner-researcher.

Likewise, I also discussed my creative writing, logging, blogging and self-dialectical, ontological, self-therapeutic, creative and cathartic, enquiring-within-writing&b/logging and my life and developments, redirections and transformations on Mondays with the members of the living education theory approach to action research group at Bath and then followed the in-person discussion electronically. Hence, from the summer of 2003 to the summer of 2007, I explained, identified, re-evaluated, recreated, reprocessed, clarified, presented, communicated and accounted for and dialogued, shared and reported myself and what I do, my developments, my actions, my experiences, my praxis, my transformations and my reflections and self-reflections. I reflected on my creative writing and blogging postings and the engaged comments and feedbacks I received. I watched myself self-dialectically, livingly and auto-phenomenologically develop and transform in, with and towards the world, as a result of the creative auto-dialogues and dialogues and the/my active and systematic reflections in real-life practice and praxis on them and re-evaluated, recreated, shifted and redirected myself in this process. Then, in the summer of 2007, I completely retired from the social engagements and interactions. I worked out my position, thesis argument, view and perspective in action, praxis and creative action-refection-reevaluation in and on action and creatively wrote and logged my thesis and the developments, shifts, redirections and transformations of my suggested heuristic tool, solution and approach, within my personal, living, embodied, concrete, authentic, auto-phenomenological, self-dialectical, auto-poietic, cathartic, creative, innovative and self-therapeutic developments, shifts, redirections and transformations at Bath and Somerset from 2003 to 2009. I isolated myself for the intention of creatively constructing, working out and formulating the present draft.

Alon Serper,
Somerset, England,
July, 2009

From http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/

Alon Serper's Web Pages

Salvador Dali

Please note that underlined text means you can click and access a paper/writing and that this descriptive text of the homepage was written and placed/publIicised here on the third of November, 2003.

Who am I? Who is Alon Serper? How have I become who I am/he/it is? Do I fulfil my values/ideas/ontological principles of whom I wish myself to become and be in my becoming/emergence in the world? How? I happen to be me/him/it so I ask those questions.

You can and should do the same. You are you. This means that you are not me. I ask those questions throughout my entire being here. I hope to benefit from it in my ambitions, desires, values, goals and objectives in regard to my journeys, quests and searches that accompany my existing in the world. And I feel condemned to ask it. Other questions. Is there a way to have an answer to this first question above? So many theories and models tried and I believe failed miserably as they swallowed and tailored and catered the human subject in them.

Is this question above rhetorical? Does it make sense? Is it purely academic? Is there a way to study it and account for it? Is there a practical way? Is there a way to have anything that does not end with a question mark in dealing with it and/or dealing with anything? What is the best fashion to deal with it?

Well, let me try. Questions are beautiful. They are real knowledge. The only knowledge that is available to us. Being able to formulate questions is a good source of self-pride, of authenticity and of coping with existing in the world.

Knowledge is all about confusion and chaos. To be wise and knowledgeable means to be able to show a valid system and order in the chaos and confusion by which to deal with them. Questions are an excellent way to do so.

Still, let me toy with some ideas and thoughts. Hopefully, those ideas will elicit questions and confusion. The more the better.

The object here is to have a practical heuristic tool and epistemology in the discipline/study of the human subject and human existence and the social and human sciences so as to tackle this question.

The aim is to do so in a manner that will give us gratification, meaning, authenticity, peace of mind, satisfaction, ontological security, sense-making, rigour, happiness and pleasure. As those are unique, dynamic and changing individualistic and personal features then it is up to each one of us to construct and find out what they mean for him/her and to follow his/her findings throughout every point of his/her being in the world.

I am a human subject in the world. I am a totality in the world.
This means the following assumptions:

1. I am not an object.

2. I am here.

3. I am here as me. I am here as my self.

4. There is nothing but me as far as I am concerned.

5. Thus, since there is nothing but me for me and I see and feel you there and should assume that you are there in the world too and that there is something there in the world that is not me, namely you, then I assume that there is nothing but you to you as far as you are concerned just as it is for me.

6. Hence, we are all totalities, very much different, unique, personalised beings in the world.

7. This is my existence. This is my being in the world. This is my consciousness. This is my perception. This is my conception.

8. You are part of my consciousness, of my internal world, of me. I am part of your world, of your consciousness, of your being in the world.

9. We can merely relate to each other through our acknowledgement of our totality, mine, your's, his', her's and their's. This acceptance would enable us to tolerate and

accept ourselves and the social others unconditionally (Carl Rogers) without totalising the other. This acknowledgement and awareness will enable learning from and interrelating to/with others and with/to ourselves.

Hence, I am here and cannot be reduced to anything but myself. I should assume the same for you. Naturally, this means I (assuming you/us) cannot be generalised, theorised, categorised and collectivised to anything else. I (assuming us/you) cannot be mechanised, objectified and defined/determined by anything or anyone but myself, assuming us/you.

I construct myself and become whoever/whatever I wish myself to become and be by being/existing here and living here, acting, choosing, constructing, reconstructing myself accordingly.

I become and am by being susceptible, receiving and absorbing, engaging, relating and interrelating in the world to and with both myself and the social others in creating, constructing and reconstructing myself in the world accordingly.

I am active. I take responsibility. I initiate and devise a very personalised, dynamic process of being in the world to firmly determine my totality in the world. I am this process. And this process is me. Without this I am nothing. Without this I am not me.

I, thus, constantly observe, analyse, assess, reflect, dereflect and select. I constantly change, modify, create and become different versions of myself in accordance with whatever I sense/feel/believe is the most appropriate being in the world for me to become and be at that specific tempo-spatial moment of my existence in the world.

I have values I try to fulfil. I have goals I strive to achieve. I have objectives I wish to actualise. I have meanings I endeavour to construct and act out. I have ambitions I wish to live and try out.   I constantly create those in accordance with whom/what I wish to become and be at that specific point of my existence in the world and live according to them so as to create and construct whom/what I wish myself to become and be.

Because I live and act, take initiative and responsibility for myself and constantly choose and select I make mistakes. I endeavour to learn from those. I wish to improve. If I am already here then I ought to go forward and progress rather than backwards. As I emerge and become I wish to learn from my experiences of being here. I also wish to learn from the others' (those totalities who are not me) experiences of their own process of being here in the world.

I have constructed and attained flaws I wish to eliminate and modify. Perhaps I have achieved some strengths. I wish to strengthen and reinforce them in and throughout my being here in the world.

I assume my existence by living, acting and existing, by being conscious, by being conscious of my consciousness. As a living/existing/conscious being in the world I am certain of my death. I am aware of the fact that I am a finite being in the world. It will all end at some point. At some point I shall cease to be.

Death is the only thing that can reduce and mechanise me. It does so into nothing.   I am because I am alive here.

I wish to do everything within my power so that a second prior to my death, I would be able to look back and say to myself that it was all worthwhile. I wish to be able to say to myself that I have indeed, done my utmost, my very best, to construct the most appropriate, the most fulfilling, the most gratifying version of myself that I could have done for myself.

As I have no clue when my existence would terminate I must be and make sure that I leave no chances and that every second of my being in the world, every decision I take and implement, every choice I make, is the most authentic, meaningful and beneficial to myself and my process of becoming and being me, or in other words the best version of me that I can be in those circumstances and at that specific point of my existence.

I have to be completely sure that I have actualised and fulfilled the best potentialities available to me at that specific moment of my being in the world to their fullest extent. I have to be certain that I have done my very best so as to do so.

I think I owe it to myself. I did not choose to be here. I was launched into this existence (Heidegger's Being and Time). This was the only time in my existence where I have been and will ever be passive. This was the only decision/choice that was and will ever be made, carried out and implemented for me throughout the course of my entire existence.

This decision to exist was chosen for me by two individuals who are not me, namely the others, other totalities in the world. They took responsibility for/of my initial being here. They put me here. They turned me from a non-being into a being in the world. Then, everything else became up to me.

I did not choose to be here. Yet I choose to emerge and become and be whatever/whoever I am and will be. I have to be accountable for this choice and take responsibility for it.

Fine, I am here then. I have to assume this fact and live with it. I now have to be sure that I do it rightly, in the best, most fulfilling manner for myself that I can. This is my only 'job'. This is my sole duty. This is my only obligation. This is my sole responsibility. I owe nothing to anyone but myself. No one owes me anything. I have to become and be. That's all there is to it.

I use the social others, their totalities and the external world in fulfilling myself and whom/what I desire for myself to become and be. I sincerely hope the social other does the same with me. I am available for him/her to do so.

I share the world I am found in with the social others. One of the manners I can define and interrelate to/with myself is through the way I interrelate with the others. It reflects upon me. It reflects upon how I perceive myself and my goals/ambitions. I do so for me not him/her/them.

The social others are part of my being and becoming in the world. This is their role as far as I am concerned. I sincerely hope I play the same role for them/you.

The world will be such a better place if we would focus and concentrate upon ourselves and our beings/becoming in the world, upon improving ourselves as individum/s and our own, personalised, being/becoming here in the world.

All those collectives, groupings and categories destroy us and our common, shared world. They give us an opportunity to escape and become alienated from ourselves and our responsibilities, in general and towards ourselves, in particular, that are the same.

The only truth is an individualistic and personalised one of what is good/true/authentic/meaningful for myself/ourselves. As such, it is wholly irrational and passionate and very much subjective.

There is no universal, objective and collective truth. We can share truth as individualised and personalised truth. We cannot synthesise and generalise/collectivise truth.

Hence, the only truth for me is my own truth. I create, construct and reconstruct it and live, construct and reconstruct my being in the world accordingly.

Each individum is a total whole in the world. The whole is extremely complex. The whole is much greater than the sums of its parts. The whole is the only thing that there is.

I enclose some writings below that can give some sort of an idea of what I strive to achieve, whom/what I wish to be and become, whom I was when I wrote the final version of this writing, my values and desires, my internal conflicts, my living contradictions, my objectives and my ambitions.

Those writings are the parts that make up the totality that is far greater than them. I am greater than everything. I am greater than all the attempts to analyse and

understand me. I am greater than all my endeavours to explicate and analyse myself. I am much greater than all my writings about myself. I am greater than all the words that can be uttered about me.

On the other hand, I am just me. I exist here in the world. That's all. I am the product of my own life and being/becoming. This is all there is to it. I need to be considered and studied as such. If not, then what are the alternatives? And I expect an answer for I have no answers and I really wish to know.

I am well aware that most of those ideas I have been putting here are well worn out as a philosophy of existence. It can be considered as the saying of a flower boy from the 1960s who rebels and protests against the establishment. Yet I am very much part of the establishment. I am the establishment. I derive my power and strength from the establishment.

I feel that as a theory I have very little more to originate and say. A lot of it is already internalised and is common sense. Therapists act it out by virtue of being human beings and their own personas. Post-moderna has lost its youth and vitality. It has pretty much become like a mature middle-aged person.

I, therefore, try to engage with those ideas as heuristic tools for the creation of a well-structured, integrative constructive/ing critical empirical psychology as the discipline/structure/framework of the human subject/existence in the world and their studies. I try to implement those ideas in a very practical manner within the empirical framework.

I wish to turn a counter movement of a critic of mainstream establishment into a contribution towards a well-structured, integrative construction of a mainstream establishment, along with other epistemologies and heuristic tools. Enough of critics just for the sake of criticising. They lead nowhere on their own. The thing to do is to construct and create alternatives, based upon ideas/thoughts/values/acts/interrelationships, not so much to critic.

Hence, I try to devise and form a whole epistemology for the ontology of the human existence and human subject in the social and human sciences. It will be made available along side other relevant epistemologies and heuristic tools.

I wish to create an area of study completely dedicated to this conception of the human subject and human existence as I displayed here. I endeavour to create a post-positivistic alternative to radical constructionism, both social and cognitive, in the social and human sciences.

My goal and primary academic objective is to switch things around and for the human subject to control and determine his/her own study as him/her. Such accounts will be shared and interrelated to show firsthand what it is to be/become a human subject in the world.

I am giving a voice to the human subject to speak out, say and shout his piece to everything that has attempted/attempts to speak on his/her own behalf. I still have to establish what gave it (this 'everything') the right to try and do this, who has placed it in such a position if anyone did at all?

I expect this 'everything' to be silenced and listen to the human subject in the world. And believe me, this human subject knows best. He/she is strong, powerful, smart, wise and capable. More importantly, he/she is there and lives his/her life and being in the world. I know. I am one. So are you. So is he/she. So are they.

I endeavour to do so in a well-structured, rigorous, valid, standardised, reliable, scholarly, focused academic fashion. I wish this manner to be differentiated and distanced as much as possible from folk psychology.

Final Draft of Bath Ph.D. Thesis

- ▪ [My Blogging Thesis](#)
- ▪ [Four examples of cathartic, self-dialectical and auto-phenomenological enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into the question, how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?](#)
- ▪ [THE *LAPIDUS* – CREATIVE WORDS FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING ETHICAL CODE](#)
- ▪ [My Webpages at the Arts and Health South West](#)
- ▪ [My first attempt at working out practical workshop for my suggested heuristic tool](#)
- ▪ [My first attempt at working out an electronic platform for my suggested heuristic tool](#)
- ▪ [My future after getting the doctorate](#)

- ▪ [Who am I](#)
- ▪ [Where I am in June 2007](#)
- ▪ [Working on a succinct manuscript June 2007](#)

- - [My Academic/Scholarly Research Interests](#)
- - [Human Existence](#)
- - [Presentation at the International Conference of Critical Psychology](#)- 31st of August 2003
- - [Slides Presented at the Presentation at the International Conference of Critical Psychology](#)- 31st of August 2003
- - [Abstract of Presentation at the International Conference of Critical Psychology- 31st of August 2003: Kindly Search for me in the Data Base](#)
- - [Proposal for an Action Research Living Theory](#)

- [Proposal for A Presentation for The **ALARPM 7th & PAR 11TH WORLD CONGRESS**](#)

- [Paper for the Above World Congress](#):

The above paper has been successfully refereed and accepted: It can now be accessed with my Biographical details alongside the other accepted submissions at Boog, B. and Slagter, M. (Eds.). (2006). *WCAR 2006 proceedings*: on a CD: Copyright Hanze University of Professional Education. I am sincerely hoping to follow the correct practice, ethics, etiquette and ethos here, though not sure what it is

- [Summary of the Above Paper Presentation](#)

- [My ALARPM 7th & PAR 11th WORLD CONGRESS ACTION RESEARCH Workshop encounter and presentation- WEDSNESDAY AUGUST 23rd 2006 – 16:30-17:45, A-HALL 163 STREAM 6: OPEN SPACE/CREATIVITY](#)

- My own personal reflective notes for my above workshop

- My Photographs from the above Action Research World Congress and and

- The Four Main Ideas of My Ontological approach to the Living Educational theory Approach

- Writing up an illustrative explanation of my proposed Heuristics of Human Existence and my thesis that strives to argue and communicate my conviction that that this constitutes the most appropriate way to approach human existence and the conception, analysis and study of the human subject.

- Framing My Thesis

- Emerging Doctorate

- Working and Finalising My thesis' abstract

- Continuing Work on Abstract

- Working and Finalising My Thesis' Framing

- Continuing Work on the Framing

- What my Current Work is About?

- How Does it Work in Practice

- A Communication of A Very Brief Statement on [My] Methodology

- The Idea of Poiesis in Therapy and Auto-poiesis

- Paper for the Education Department at the University of Bath – Summer, 2004

- Abstract for the Paper for the Education Department at the University of Bath

- ▪ General Proposal for a Project in Constructive Critical Psychology Study

- ▪ My Contribution to the British Educational Research Association Practitioner-Research Special Interest Group Seminar in Bath, 19th of June, 2004 and to the Fifth International Conference of the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices, Herstmonceaux Castle, UK, 27 June - 1 July 2004: Autoethnographical, Ontologically/Phenomenologically Analysed Explanation of Who Am I and What I am proposing and doing.

- ▪ Presenting my Work, Ideas and Passion to the Education Department at the University of Bath: Giving a Departmental Seminar 14th of July, 2004

- ▪ Slides for My Departmental Seminar: 14/07/2004

- ▪ Locating My Work, Explaining it and Systematically Illustrating It In A Literature Review, Critical Discussion and Analytical Case-Study

- ▪ How this Work Came Into Being

- ▪ Abstract to my wholly theoretical thesis (Serper, 1999)

- ▪ Abbreviated Thesis (Serper, 1999) - *A Study of the Conception of Man in Empirical Psychology by Using Textual Analysis* – This thesis was accepted by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem as part of the requirement for the completion of a unique Interdisciplinary Individual Graduate Programme – by research, residence and interdisciplinary taught courses/seminars – 1994-1999. Members of this programme devise their own area of study, rather than engaging in research within an existing

discipline/area. The 2003 research report, below, summarised this part of my work/project.

- ■ ■ [Examples of Self in the world](#)
- ■ ■ [Practical Activities in the World – Windows Channels of Communication (1)](#)
- ■ ■ [Practical Activities in the World – Windows Channels of Communication (2)](#)
- ■ ■ [Practical Activities in the World – Windows Channels of Communication (3)](#)
- ■ ■ [An Example of A piece of Poetry and Explanation](#)
- ■ ■ [Three Examples of Interesting Empirical/Experimental Work in Psychology/Psychiatry](#)
- ■ ■ [William James (1890) on Consciousness](#): 1995
- ■ ■ [Why Thermostat Has No Consciousness?: Beginning of 1996](#)
- ■ ■ Short [Conversation](#)
- ■ ■ [What is it that I am trying to actually do, in short conversations](#)
- ■ ■ [Writing Notes to Myself As for Why I am doing A Specially and Purposely Devised Version of Living Action Research and How: February, 2004](#): Why my close affiliation and tie/connection with LAR
- ■ ■ [Example of Dialectical Conversations/Engagements](#)
- ■ ■ [Another Example of Dialectical Engagement/Conversation](#)
- ■ ■ [Nietzsche and Freud: Writings from 1994](#)
- ■ ■ [A Brief Acquaintance with Gibson: 1995](#)
- ■ ■ [Notes on Hutchins' Applied Distributed Cognition](#)
- ■ ■ [Examples of Letters](#)
- ■ ■ [A Soliloquy on soliloquy](#)
- ■ ■ [Examples of Pure, Passionate and Raw Reflections and Writings](#)

- - [Brief Presentation at the University of Bath 2002](#)
- - [Initial Broad and Brief Outline of My Research Interests](#): Summer 2001
- - [Research Report – Summer, 2003](#)
- - [Research Report – Summer, 2006](#)
- - [Applied Cognition](#)
- - [Beginning of this Research](#)
- - [Writing Notes for A Communicable Refereed Paper](#)
- - [Just a Tale: A fairytale: What in Yiddish is called tale of the grandmother: Bubbe ma'asses](#)
- - Twenty-five Analysed Auto-ethnographical Accounts of my ontological/phenomenological existence/being in the world are currently sitting in my personal drive and are awaiting ethical and self-embodied morality (of being and/or wanting to be a decent human being) clarification and assurance, self-assurance. They will be posted here, in the public domain as soon as this issue is cleared. I do acknowledge my social others' feelings and existence in my being/becoming in the world, especially those social others who are close to my heart.
- - [British Educational Research Association Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2004) and Code of Good Conduct](#) [Or in PDF Format](#)
- - [My List of My Self-Study Research Questions](#) or
- - [A Review of an Empirical Study of Socio-Cognition](#): Using Illustrations and discussions
- - [A Study and Critical Review of An Empirical/Experimental Study of Human Processes (Cognitive and Social)](#)
- - [And Another Similar Exercise](#)

- - [A Case of A Confused Thinker of Human Existence Endeavouring to carry out A Rigorous, Thoughtful Empirical Study](#) to show his theories of the study human existence - Due to recent events, this account is temporarily withdrawn and negotiated. The events are discussed here and a debate and discussion is called for.
- - [Apparatus for A Socio-Cognitive Empirical Study](#)
- - [Engagement with Others: A Book Review of Dennet (1996) *Toward an Understanding of Consciousness*: Automn1996](#)
- - [What is it to Know: Thoughts/Reflections from 1994](#)
- - [Ethnomethodology](#)
- - [Levy-Bruhl and Empirical Psychology](#): January 1996
- - [Article: Cry My Beloved Country - Haaretz](#) – Taken and retrieved from '*Haaretz*' on Sunday, 11th of January, 2004. - The article talks about the fight of the Self with the self. And discusses the dilemmas, problems and contradictions in calling for external, outside assistance. 'Who is going to save us from ourselves'? Asks the author. And goes on to conclude "when the beloved country does not cry out itself, only curls inwardly in indifference, there is no choice but to turn to the world, so that it cries out instead."
- - [Self in the World - Me, Me and Me](#) – The fight of the Self with the Self for progress. And the role of the 'you'
- - [Thoughts about a way of integrating the explicit and implicit as a heuristics in a truly living cognition, logic and psychology of human existence](#)
- - [Interests](#)
- - [Objectives](#)

- ■ **My Current life** – This research is everything to me. I live it. I eat it. I smell it. I sleep it. I make love to it. I interrelate it. I am it. It is me. I am condemned to it. I am a possessed man. There is no escape from it. I apologise to all of those whose lives have been affected. I must do it.

- ■ **A Confused Me trying to do many things simultaneously: Going beyond words and text into Multimedia**: Having a hearty discussion with myself and a soliloquy in a room full of people.

- ■ **Voice and Heuristics of Human Existence**

- ■ ■ **Questions for a discussion of my work with the Bath Living-Action-Research Monday Group- 1st of March, 2004**

- ■ ■ **Prompt and Short thanking letter to the Bath Living-Action-Research Group following the meeting of the 1st of March, 2004 which was dedicated to my work.**

- ■ ■ **Communicating My Inner World of My Work and Ideas to the Living Action Research Monday Conversation Group**

- ■ ■ **Thinking, Contemplating and Writing My Ideas: My Inner World**

- ■ ■ **Dali**

- ■ ■ **The case against self-contemplation – International Herald Tribute 30/12/2005**

Your thoughts and inputs (in the form of electronic mails) are crucial to me in my process of becoming and being myself in the world, in constructing and reconstructing my self. Your thoughts and reflections will become a property of my inner world and self. They will become available to my inner world.

I shall interrelate with them as parts of the external inputs that nourish and enrich the internal world. I thrive on these external inputs, perspectives and insights. They provide me with other ways of interrelating to similar questions and dilemmas, with different beings in the world.

I shall interrelate with the interrelationship between my self and your external perspective, insights inputs. Your insights and viewpoints help me become and be. They assist me to construct and reconstruct myself. They help me in my internal struggles with myself. They will provide me with some of the materials with which I construct myself.

They are beneficial to me precisely because they are derived from a world and totality that are not my own. They are external to my own. They provide me with an external perspective and insight in my internal wars and struggles with myself.

They serve as heuristics in the relationship I am having with my self. They assist me with the dilemmas I am having with myself in my construction, becoming and being. They help me in my self constructed contradictions, paradoxes and questions. They help me in my construction and assessment of values and meanings.

I have created an email forum community in which we can enrich the totality of ourselves and the other and through this enrichment enrich ourselves.

- ■ ■　　My community's email forum is
  alonserper@jiscmail.ac.uk

- ■ ■　　The Archives of the emails may be reviewed at
  http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/alonserper.html

Some of my ideas, comments, thoughts, interactions, interrelationships, dereflections, characteristics, values, ambitions, feelings and reflections are displayed in the Living-Action-Research email forum (from July/2003 onwards), either on their own or in the context of others' ideas and dialectical engagement and conversations with them. This writing to the forums displays and reveals several aspects/beings of 'me', which are different and autonomous and progressing according to and in the here and now.

- ■ ■　　http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/living-action-research.html

My work and ideas will be presented and discussed at the British Educational Research Association Practitioner-Researcher Workshop/Seminar, to be held at the University of Bath, England, on the 19th of June, 2004. In this Seminar/Workshop Living-Action-Researchers and Practitioner Researchers will meet to interrelate and discuss their own project and to contribute to one another.

This endeavour is discussed, in details, at
http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/wa.exe?A0=bera-practitioner-researcher&T=0
It is recommended to start with the month of February and to move onward from there.

And by either emailing myself or/and Dr. Jack Whitehead mailto:A.J.Whitehead@bath.ac.uk; http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/

- ▪ The British Educational Research Association Practitioner Research Special Interest Group, of which myself and my work are part of, is described here.
- ▪ As I said earlier, we have met on the 19th of June, 2004. The members are sending their remarks to the designated electronic mail forum, above, and at
- ▪ My personal email is

a.serper@bath.ac.uk

- Examples of Comments to the writings above
  - ▪ and their usage:
  - ▪ And
  - ▪ By Others
  - And
  - And
  - And Collaboration with Jack Whitehead for a validation exercise of our mutual educational influence at the Fifth International Conference of the Self Study of Teacher Education Practices, Herstmonceaux, UK, 27 June – 1 July
  - My Appearance at Bath Living Action Research Monday Conversation Group: 24th of May, 2004

The link to the present web pages is found in the award winning (2000) web site for Action Research www.actionresearch.net.

The web site www.actionresearch.net was a Links2Go Award Winner in 2000 and is widely acknowledged as one of the most influential sites for worldwide developments in action research.

The link to my Web pages is found at www.actionresearch.net/otherpages.shtml or http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/otherpages.shtml.

This can give a good feel of what is going on within the domains of Action Research, Living Action Research, Self-Study and Practitioner Research and theories of Logic.

I am in constant interrelationships with the Living Educational Theory Approach to Research and Action Research to which I try to complement, add and contribute my own passion and life project

A photograph of a self-study ontologist (circled) and self-educator (probably because no one else can educate me) with self-study teachers of others. Or http://educ.queensu.ca/~ar/sstep5/castle5r.bmp

An Original Copy of My Grandmother's Birth Certificate: Bendin (1909)

Going back to the initial core question I started with. I have come across a quote by Diderot compiled by Dr. Shlomit Shuster in her excellent 'A PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTITIONER'S NOTEBOOK OF QUOTATIONS (c) 19-9-1996.' . http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/5914/pc-quote.html. All rights reserved to Shlomit Shuster.

"The Devil take me if I really know who I am"

Appendix Three:
Examples of My Cathartic, Auto-Liberating, Blogging

First example:

From http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/self.htm

Self or no Self

Saturday: 26/07/2003:

On Monday evening March 19, 2001, in the only single room of the geriatric institute of the city of Tel-Aviv-Jaffa (the city that two decades previously has awarded him its most distinguished/honorary award for his life-long service to it and vowed to return favour and to cater for him in the best, most comfortable, loving, honorary dignified fashion possible), I told my grandfather, who was lying there glazingly looking and demonstrating that it is all over, he had enough, he is tired, ready to go, that he is free to go, that he is released. I said I can take over from him. I promised I shall manage, I shall go on, I shall be fine, I shall fight, I shall be strong, I shall empower myself, and I shall prevail and succeed. Half an hour later, he ceased to exist and I was launched to a complete gap of empty nothingness.

Twenty-eight days previously on Wednesday, the 21st of February, 2001, he had a severe stroke, was unconscious, and fought for his life. We were in the hospital of the social health services, which employed him for more than half a century and on behalf of which he was a senior doctor and in charge of the entire Jaffa and southern (Tel-Aviv and its southern outskirts) district. I was cold and mechanical and briefly told the medical staff on duty that night about our request to be dignified, strong and human right to the very end and to finish his existence in the world in a dignified manner, without doing any undignifing act, just for the sake of extending it a bit.

Then, we spent the night together and the thought that this is the end started to penetrate my consciousness. I then shared my true, authentic, most intimate fears and feelings with him as I have been doing my entire life with his enthusiastic, passionate encouragement and asked him to wait and not to cease to exist. I begged him to wait. I told him that I am completely unprepared for it, that I am lost, confused, not ready. I confessed that I do not know what to do, how to behave, that I feel weak, that I feel completely alone, anxious about existing alone in the world. I revealed that I feel my being, soul and self violently and aggressively ripped and torn apart away from me, leaving me with a great deep hole of nothingness.

Then, my grandfather opened his eyes and regained consciousness. However, his worst nightmare was realised and became true. He was paralysed in his left side of the body, dependent on others, weak, unable to speak and communicate himself coherently.

This was truly disastrous – a catastrophe, as far as his identity was concerned. His communication skills and capabilities made him and what and whom he is, enabled him to survive immense hardships in life, a/the Holocaust and labour camps, gained him his status as an exemplary doctor, with an immense recognition and status, made him loved, adored, admired and cherished. One of his many patients and admirers, a Catholic nun from the French/Catholic school, and former French hospital, of Jaffa, who called my grandfather 'the brother of Christ" said my grandfather was fluent in numerous languages (he was completely fluent in about twelve languages) and speaks (communicates) fluently and naturally the language of the heart – "La langue du Coeur".

She knew what she was talking about. He adored human beings, whoever they are, and enjoyed communicating, engaging and interrelating with them. It empowered him, constructed him, made him. You could see it clearly from the way his face softened and his eyes lit up and, shone and brightened up with a burning passion, true and sincere love, sympathy, compassion and care. You could see how the other did the same, contagiously, mesmerisingly. Everyone, without difference, with no distinguish, with no boundaries nor categorisations. The self-satisfied university presidents and deans, the old, tired and weary wards' cleaners, the ambitious deans of the faculties of medicine, the cheerful coffee-makers, the faculty professors, the young and rude taxi drivers, the heads of wards and other senior doctors, the depressed, overworked nurse-assistants, the young humanitarian and philanthropic paramedics, the cabinet ministers and the mayors, the ambassadors and diplomats, their chauffeurs and assisting staff, the un-educated and over-educated, depressed care-takers and assisting staff, of any possible nationality and ethnicity.

It is important to stress that I am not talking about the romantic, post-modern time. I am talking about life and practice, engaging, interrelating living and practicing in the late 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, right through 2001. Throughout the worst time period in the history of mankind. A period that knew universalism, communal, fascism, Stalinism, Nazism, severe racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination, concentration, death and labour camps, severe, intense and impossible hardships, people dying like flies to the complete indifference of others, the worst atrocities imaginable or unimaginable, complete and utter destruction of everything, pure, raw evil, nihilism and indifference, absurdity, objectification, mechanisation and industrialisation, reductionism into nothing, nothingness and the alienation, corruption, hardening and demolition of the self, extreme dehumanisation of the sort Viktor Frankl talks about.

With each one of those individuals my grandfather spoke her or his native tongue, accompanied by the language of the heart and being and non-verbal human gestures. He used humour, laughter, encouragement, support, personal warmth and support, friendship, strength whilst at the same time never hesitating to show his own feelings, weaknesses, fragilities, lack of knowledge, uncertainty, ignorance and humanity. I have photographs and videotapes and everyone I show them to observes and comes to this same conclusion and observation as the one I place here. My friends, my age, to whom he was mainly the grandfather of their friend, have always sincerely loved and enjoyed talking to him and listening to him, spending many

hours doing so, completely mesmerised, incredibly charmed and intrigued by him, his persona and sayings, even as adolescents, a very unusual act. The close ones to me even used and called him the same term of endearment in French used by my mother, myself and my sister, upon his specific request. In the elderly home in the shadowed eve of his non-existence, he was the most charming, warm-hearted, loving human being, attended to others, comforted, complimented, empowered and encouraged both the staff members and residents who returned those feelings to him, respecting and truly loving and adoring him.

I admired him, adored him for those qualities. I truly worshipped him. He was more than life and a human being to me. He was immortal, divine, a true God to me. Yet he was also my best friend, companioned in life, a mother, a father, an older, experienced wiser brother. I felt very comfortable, free with him. But I also wanted to gain his admiration, adoration as a human being rather than just by virtue of being a/his grandson. I therefore felt tensed, constantly in need to prove myself to him. I wanted him to be proud of me. He continuously assured me that he regards me as a 'mench' (a decent human being). Still I had complexities. I felt tested, pressured by the situation. Even he, strangely enough, wanted us to be proud of him. We were all he had, his most precious 'subjects'. Others sensed it. I constantly received patients' letters and letters from the numerous organisations he volunteers in, addressed to us and telling us about all his incredible deeds.

This was the type of relationship we had. One constantly engaging with the other, forgetting himself and totally immersing in the other who thus became him and completely consumed his own self. In short we experienced a true, authentic love of the sort that Camus wrote about, claiming it cannot exist for it is not feasible to constantly think of the other sixty seconds a minute, sixty minutes an hour, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and so on. The other penetrated, incorporated and consumed the self of the other. Yet the self of the other was reached and perceived by the self of the perceiver. So the self of the other became the self of the self through the self for consciousness is personal and can merely be conscious through the self (see James, 1890, 1912 for example).

He wrote in his biography, memoirs, and constantly told us ever since we were very young in our adolescent years that the moment he becomes needy, dependent, ceases to be beneficial and of needs and use and care to others, busy, engaging himself in the treatment of others and completely independent and of need to himself then he wishes to die. He revealed to us (my sister and myself) his greatest desire in life - to die in a plane crush or in his own car on a way to visit a patient, strong, powerful, needed and on road to somewhere hopeful and agreeable – holiday, visits to friends and family or to treating patients. He said this type of death is quick and painless and avoids the pain of getting old and watching and observing oneself deteriorating. Getting old without being old (which I heard as 'viellir sans etre vieux') was his motto translated from Yiddish.

Being young in my late adolescence, I was petrified about it and had nightmares. Could it be that this immortal being who empowered me, gave me strength, assured me so much, is in fact a mortal, finite being? Could it be that this profound love and

passionate feelings are finite and have an end? Could it be that I would be deprived of all of this? He had to say it, though, as we were his sole blood relatives, legally qualified to make decisions. He wanted to prepare us for it as well. I had protested very strongly and claimed he is selfish and egocentric. He needs to think of us as well, to give us a chance to return to him what he gives us, to make sure he is well, happy and having an agreeable existence in the world despite everything. I gave him my word and promised that if it comes to that then we will pass the hardships of his old age, of him getting, becoming and being old, together, him and me.

We disagreed then, the very experienced, rational and wise and the inexperienced, young, shocked, irrational, very subjective and naive. He was not convinced and neither was I. We were terrified. Him from being old and needy and me from losing him and being empty without him and all he symbolised and was for me. I learned to agree with him with all my might and being with age, experience and reason. I hope I will cease to exist while still being powerful, strong, mighty, dignified, self-assured, contributor, of need rather than needy, independent and completely free.

He also said that death is a part of life and implied and said indirectly that how one dies reflects upon his life and living. Something that myself, the existential thinker, the confused, spoiled and nurtured philosopher and theoretician, I have borrowed and said very directly and make very clear in my writings.   Moreover, I was engaged in practical work into the questions of ethics in medicine and human existence in the world; questions of free-will, individualism, the individum's right to decide for himself/herself, the roles and obligations of the state, the collective, the communal, and the institutional in the life, welfare and well-being of the individum. I was detached, impersonal, completely devoting myself to the welfare of the general humanity, as a whole, collective entity, using my own knowledge of the relevant literature and experience of volunteering in hospitals, Geriatric institutes, psychiatric institutes and observing and interacting and listening to my grandfather and his wise colleagues and friends.

Being with my grandfather, the paralysed and stroke-affected, I was now faced with my own personal, unique test, the most difficult one.   It became personal, individualistic and very unique, subjective, irrational, passionating and biased. There was no way out, no escape. It stroke me with all its might, cruelty and viciousness. It toyed with me, jeered and laughed at my face. I have done my best, everything I could not to give in and succumb but to gain immortal, divine strength and power (Nietzsche), to fight back very strongly, to laugh back at the sadistic, evil and wicked test and to prevail against all odd, against everything, against nature, against life, against science, the life science. My grandfather will always be strong, dignified, respectful, human, loved and adored, right to the very end. Just as he has always been. Just as he is. He will not be alone, abused, vanquished, non-human, undignified, weak and fragile and depended. He will remain him, will maintain his self and himself.

This was my mission, my most cherished one. I immersed in it completely. I prepared myself to it for many years as I knew rationally about the certainty (the

only thing certain and sure) of death and finiteness. It became me, my self, my being in the world. The relationship between us was tested. Do we truly love each other? Are we really capable of scarifying and bury and possibly destroy our self for the sake of the self of the other? The moment of truth has come. I was fortunate it did. I thank my grandfather for allowing it to happen.

Lying there on the hospital's bed, on this horrific night of the 21st to 22nd of February, 2001, completely overwhelmed by what has just happened to him, he still immersed himself in me and myself, giving himself to me completely. As always, as it has always been throughout our relationship, he listened to me, transcended himself and sacrificed himself for me, wishing to please me and make me happy. He pulled through, sensing his body collapsing, was able to hold my hand and look me in the eyes, listening to me, attempted to speak, knowing I will understand.

I was selfish, I know. I had no right, I know. It was very unethical, I know. Perhaps in complete contradiction to the mission I just described. But I am saying this reflecting about it from the present. Then and there, more than two years ago, I had some, irrational and illogical, hope, that he will manage to recover. He has gone through and taken so much in life, maybe he can pass this as well. Like the condemned man, I hoped a miracle will happen and he will return almost to his senses and physical and mental state of being. After all, our knowledge of the brain and the neurological system is the least of all scientific knowledge. I also wanted, selfishly, to have the ability to thank him for what he did to and for me and to and for humanity, without being too emotional and dramatic, for all his help and deeds, to announce, show and prove my love for the last time in the most extensive, powerful manner that I can. I wanted him to go, to permanently lose himself, knowing, being assured, to destroy all possibilities for a doubt, right through to the last second.

I wanted him to see how much he is loved, that his life's mission and project to cater for others as a doctor, to love and be there for his patients, friends, colleagues, acquainted, the ill and the needy has succeeded with flying colours. I told him that he has the benefit and the blessing, now, that he is paralysed and needy and of an inability to be of a need to any one, to truly sense and feel people's love to him and what he means to them. Indeed, his patients, acquainted, friends, staff members in the Geriatric institute and the hospital, the other inmates, colleagues, showed their profound love and care in those last days.

The miracle did not come. He deteriorated, was conscious and well-aware and suffered enormously from his condition and I focused on and devoted myself completely to my assurance to him that I would do anything I can to be there for him and for the end to be the least painful and undignified as possible. He hung up a month, increasingly weakening unable to swallow and I refused (based on my knowledge of his values) a Naso-Gastric Tube and Percutaneous Endosopic Gastrostomy (PEG), fighting infections, water in the lungs, and dehydration, using infusion and then as the veins collapsed using the sub-cutaneous fashion.

I acted like a computerised robot, using the programme I devised in advance, with my grandfather's help. I prepared this programme in advance and now became it. During this time, the programme became me, my existence in the world, my being, my self. It is most useful, this ability to programme oneself to act in a certain fashion and to lose oneself in favour of this programmed robot. This programmed robot is essentially a self of values and goals (an inner self) detached from the contextual and the tempo-spatial external world and centred around a single mission that completely consumes the self. There is simply nothing else at this specific moment of time. The self shuts itself completely from the world and is completely funnelled to a certain, single deed/objective/point. I was surprised by this fact. Human beings can really surprise themselves. Dostoyevsky, Nitzsche, Frankl, Fabry and Camus were right. They are capable of anything. They are stronger than what they think they are capable of.

I stayed for virtually the whole twenty-six days, that looked like an eternity, next to him, getting no sleep and collapsing from time to time in physical exhaustion. Family and friends found it impossibly hard to face him and the situation in which he was found. Yet I felt a need and security and assurance doing it. It was the last time I felt strong, secured, safe, happy, complete, empowered and existing truly. His presence in the same tempo-spatial world as me did this. It was all I needed. As I told him then, I accept him in any shape or form. Provided that he is, nothing else matters and is relevant to me. However, I needed to lose myself, forget myself and my existence in the world, concentrate on him, completely immerse myself in him and his existence in the world. My views, feelings were entirely irrelevant. I had to focus on what was best for him. And so I became a programmed robot completely catered for the self of my grandfather. It became my role and I learned to play it as time and events proceeded. I improved with time. I fulfilled this role, I think. It was my being and my self.

The staff and myself still tried to feed him, spending three hours on each attempt, each teaspoon, hoping and yearning. He knew and looked very overwhelmed, tired and hopeless, while still trying to communicate and remain human and himself, moving his head to the staff's gestures and kind, warm words in their native tongue and touches, closing and opening his lips in kissing gestures, holding and caressing their hands.

His friends and well-wishers told me, when it was all ended that the last month was completely unnecessary, that my grandfather would have been far better off without it, finishing his existence in the night of the stroke. They accounted that it was clear from his eyes that he had enough, that he was tired of it all. I remember how I took him on a wheelchair and he looked me in my eyes, holding my hands and repeatedly calling and uttering my name, apologising non-verbally for his condition, the state in which he was found, explaining (securing, empowering, loving as he constantly did in the course of our relationship), communicating and excusing himself. I still see the colour of his eyes constantly, greyish blue, with a bit of red and brown, warm eyes, understanding eyes, caring, compassionating and passionating eyes. It is constantly in my consciousness as a background, taking over my existence when I am free to free associate and when I go to bed. It is me. It empowered me in the

past and now shows me the incompleteness, insecurity and confusion of my present existence, while still show hope for the future.

All my life, the inevitable separation from my grandfather haunted me and terrified me, stronger than anything, stronger than my own death, somewhere in the far future. My grandfather and my research supervisor at the Hebrew University tried to prepare me. A jealous rival in boarding school used it once to hurt me. It did not help. It was my worst nightmare appearing in dreams and in rational life. I had a month to prepare it, to control it, to deal with it, to take control over it and dominate it, to make arrangements, to fight ill and bad ways of doing things. I thank him for this. It made things a lot easier for me. Perhaps it saved me from myself and permitted me to go on, to emerge in the world and not to be overwhelmed completely and to cease to emerge.

He ceased to exist and I faced a dilemma. I promised. I assured. I gave my word. He suffered dreadfully, unwillingly, a whole month for this/me/my sake. Yet I felt completely empty. It was the anti-climax, after the climax. I was very confused. I lost myself. I was me, robot, himself, the other/me who has just ceased to exist. Then I became nothing and had to start some sort of construction, formulation and reformulation. I was very angry and frustrated with him and with the world. Yet I knew he has done his very best and more. I knew I was released, that I was completely free to concentrate on me, my life, my own existence, my own being in the world, to create, define, construct, organise, formulate and enhance myself, my life, my identity, my self. But I did not like this freedom. I was afraid. I dreaded it. I was anguished, in true, authentic angst. And the person for whom I wished to create and construct the best self that I can existed no more. It was very hard to create myself for myself. I needed the intentionality, the for whom.

Guilt also plays a role. Will it be fair to have my existence in the world complete again? Won't it be a betrayal of the person who completely devoted himself to me and my existence? But this was his wish – his most cherished one – for me to be happy and to have a peace of mind and a complete existence in the world. Perhaps I owe it to him to be and have a complete existence in the world, a total, complete self? And not having one will betray him, his self, his mission and memory. Will perhaps make his own existence in the world less complete.

I am positive this is what he would have said. He acted it. He has managed to overcome a/the destruction of his entire family, community and past life during the Holocaust, the illness of my grandmother (cancer, lung and heart condition), a premature decease of his only daughter and other ordeals. Whilst he admitted to be severely affected by them, he went on and created new objectives, new meanings, new lives, new beings, new identities.

Rationally, I was too aware that this is life. People die. It was always in my conscious. My being and self has always been completely frustrated, suffering and angered as a result of my loss of my mother, to whom I was incredibly attached and who was a pure source of good, love and warmth, when I was merely four years old and the incredibly, undeservedly injustice done to me and even more so to my

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grandfather and grandmother. My mother was my grandparents' sole daughter and for my grandfather an only compensation for the complete destruction of his past. Later on, I replaced my mother and became his life (together with his life's devotion, as a community doctor in a very misfortunate part of town, to the needy and to humanity, in general, empowering them and himself [my interpretation]), with all the responsibilities it bore. And I have always been angry at this utter injustice of the need to separate, to cease to exist, to lose everything permanently, to have a complete, permanent nothingness. I dreaded it. I protested, objected to it with all my might and being.

Yet I do feel empty, what about my own authenticity and true feelings, experiences perceptions? Maybe a compromise? Not succumbing and going on searching, creating and reformulating the self anew. Just as he strived to do. Whilst at the same time be kind to the self, be authentic towards it, treating it nicely, not rushing things, taking things slowly and thoroughly, not forcing the self to do things it is yet to be ready to do. The valid, true thing to do is, perhaps, to live, emerge, engage and interrelate with the external world and to be authentic and true to oneself, to one's pain, suffering, sincere wish to be happy and fulfilled. Perhaps if one engages in/with life in this fashion then things would fall into place and arrange themselves.

I was contemplating existing just for the mere sake of existence, being for the sake of being, life for the purpose of living, fulfilling my physical part of the living self – enjoying the sun, the sea, the warmth, the birds, the beauty of the world just for their sake. Is it sufficient? I ask. How long can it last? Will I betray my grandfather if I found another intentionality, another for whom? Yet he wanted it so much. This was his biggest desire in his last years. For another source of security. But, he has not achieved it. Will it be fair to achieve it when he is no longer here? Would he have failed, had I achieved it? He who has never failed anything, who had the touch of gold, turning evil to good, pure gold.

Is the answer me, my sake, for me, myself? Is it not solipsism, narcissism, egocentrism? Can't it be the answer for humanity as a whole, general entity? Live and love, life and love (Leben und Lieben) you, for you, yourself! Take responsibility for your self! Engage with yourself! Be true and authentic with and to yourself. And do so for yourself, your sake. Love yourself.

One needs an enormous strength, power (macht) and self-assurance to live this way. It is not for the weak and fainthearted. One needs to be empowered, to will to power (Nietzsche) to be able to do so. And is it feasible? Doesn't the self need to transcend him/his self in order to reach him/his self and be conscious of it (Laing; Frankl), conscious of the consciousness? Don't we need to dereflect in order to reflect (Frankl)? There is more doubt than assurance, more questions than answers. Is this human existence in the world? Questions, doubts, dilemmas, uncertainties, certainties of uncertainties, tensions, passionas and passions. Undoubtedly.

Second Example:

From

Human Existence

14/07/2003: Jour de la Bastille.

The following piece of writing is meant to show firsthand what it is to be/become a human subject, existing and emerging in the world. It is the exact opposite from being an object, namely a static, fixed, designed, defined, built, structured (Sartre, 1943a, 1947, 1952). It is a very complex, very insecure, very powerful, very confusing, very irrational, undefined thing, full of constantly changing states of being, states of mind, different selves, states of consciousness, identities, emotions, feelings, passions, severe crises and dilemmas. It is a bursting, burning, fiery lava full of paradoxes and self contradictions gushing and moving down extremely rapidly. It is an attempt to figure this out, to make sense, to understand what is going on, to define, to reconstruct the self to the best of one's ability. There is no order, reason, determinism, logic, rationalism. Most of all it is a will to better the self and to achieve a bit of peace of mind and a little more stability and security, cooling oneself up a little bit. It is an optimistic hope for the future, a better one, despite everything. Being, becoming, emerging in spite of oneself, the world (inner and external) the human condition (Malraux) and the absurd.

The process is a very tiresome, tedious, satiating, ungrateful, anguishing one that consumes the entire self in order to create and construct and reconstruct the self. Yet because it takes and deprives so much and is so very difficult is a most fulfilling one. Those are my perceptions, my views, my accounts, my reflections. I feel a need to shout my humanity to the world at the top of my voice 'I am here. This is me. This is who I am. The following is the result of self awareness, reflections, consciousness of consciousness, introspection, self therapeutic analysis, self observing and observance, coupled with the observing of others, asking them, being interested and very curious in them and their existence/being in the world, immersing myself in them, spending more than three decades reading and listening to their accounts'.

I want the reader to share those experiences, conceptions and perceptions with me. I want to make them public, for the reader to be aware of them. He can be moved, relate, engage, reflect, contemplate, feel nothing at all, remain indifferent think it is wellworn, think it is a complete nonsense, feel an inability to relate and engage, accuse me for asking the wrong question, having the wrong preoccupations. Read if you wish and think and reflect if you wish, or toss it away if you desire.

I and You (Thou) and Us

Two different worlds. Two different lives. Each human existence, being in the world, is a whole world in a universe of humanity. They are parallels. They are

independent, distinguished, distinct, unique, personal, dynamic, irrational, subjective and incomprehensive.

I am the human subject. I am and I try to reflect, dereflect (Viktor Frankl) and figure myself out and to see what is going on. I am confused, lost. What is it? Where am I going in my quest for peace of mind, happiness, more meaningful/authentic existence. You, the other, social other as some will call you, who could do no more than act as a heuristic, to try to support and be there for me as an aid in my journey, suddenly have taken life and adopted a role that you should not have, that is not merely an illusion but also silences me and destroys me.

I live. I am. This is the only thing that there is. I want to be. I want to be happy. I want to have the most meaningful, fulfilled life existence/being in the world to which I was thrown.

Universe called humanity is the we, the us. We are essentially alone in our existence. We were thrown into existence alone and alone we will be taken away from it. We have our own individualistic and personal quests, searches, struggles and journeys that belong to the I, that are unique to us and each one of us. Human existence for us is very tough, complex, complicated and extremely hard. It was imposed on all of us, who are the living, the existing. It is not for the fainthearted, the weak, the pessimists, the nihilists. It is for the fighters, the strong, the optimists who are willing to struggle and fight with all our might against all chances, against all odds, refusing to give up hope and passion.

We must fight, struggle. We have no choice. We have to be fully committed to our existence, to being in the world. We are obliged to it, for utter engagement with it. Our energies, our resources must be fully committed to it. We have to invest all our energies and resources to it. You, show me you are fully committed/engaging with your world, your existence. We cannot afford 'philanthropy', dedicating and losing our valuable resources at the expense of our emergence, our journey for the sake of another's existence. Let me be. Immerse in your own business, of emerging, becoming, be and being.

It is cheap pedagogy, preaching, mumbling, making noise that means nothing, to devote your own valuable resources to my own quest, search and journey. You deny yourself. You make me feel bad, ill-conscious, bad-faith, for doing so. It is your choice I know. But you involve me. It seems to me like you are using me for an escape, an admission that your existence and the quest for a self are too difficult for you, like the choice to do nothing and not to choose. Not only that you will be deprived from your own potential for authenticity but by doing so you will be depriving me from the possibility of establishing meaning and authenticity. How can I be authentic, realising that my will and my journey for authenticity was accompanied and led/driven by someone giving in, losing faith, who becomes weak and deprives himself from authenticity (or the will to have meaningful/authentic existence)?

You have to do your best. Show me how you fully immerse and engage with your self, your existence, your being in the world. Show me you are a tough, strong, pitiless (self-pity that is) killer. You will empower me by doing so. You will give me hope, showing me it is feasible. I want you to succeed in your journey, in your quests. Not only it makes me feel happy but it reflects and dereflects upon my own journey. If you can do so then I can do it. There is no justification for an inability to go on struggling for a better more meaningful existence, for the quest for authenticity. The only thing we can share is our will for authenticity, better existence in the world, self improvement and more peace of mind. We share the will, the quest, the journey, the will to become and be. We understand that but not the actual manner of doing so. The way we lead our lives is wholly individualistic, unique and personal, catered and tailored for us at any specific given point in our existence/journey in the world.

And it is not feasible, an illusion for you to attempt to engage directly with my existence, my world. You have tried to define me, myself and my existence, to explain, to analyse, to figure me out from your own world/ existence in the world. You had a big ego. You have no resources, no energy, no time, no patience for me for you need to immerse and completely engage in your world. You have obligation to do so as part of being launched into the world and take upon yourself the mission (project, Sartre) that is called living, being and life. You are not capable to enter my world completely for you will need to leave yourself completely and your own world and be me. You are really indifferent to me and my existence. You should be. I understand this.

I have the greatest respect for you when you admit and tell me with great embarrassment that you fail to understand me. You really wish to do so. There is nothing you wish to do more than this for it will save so much pain and suffering from your own existence by observing and learning from mine. But you cannot.

You have your own life, existence and your own agenda and objectives for your own existence in the world and you cannot fully comprehend mine. You have been so devoted to this goal, objective of striving to understand, theorise and explain me that you forgot me, you ignored me. This is not your game, not your role. You can merely know from what I communicate and transmit to you. I could try to do so, with a very limited degree of success if at all feasible, and you could and perhaps should help me figure myself out as heuristic, an outsider, in a reciprocal, unselfish, act where I share my world with you and you share your world with me.

I need to tell you, communicate to you. You cannot fully comprehend for you are not me. You have and can merely take my word for it. If I tell you that I am a chicken then I am a chicken. If one person tells another that he is Napoleon then he is Napoleon (Laing, 1959). Maybe some of the people tied up to the beds in Shalvata and Kfar Shaul (mental institutions in Israel) very confused and claiming they are the messiah are, in fact, the messiah. You are an outsider, an external, an observer, a human subject/being, living and existing. This is your strength. You can give me an external perspective, a caring, compassionate, passionate, humane and

human one. You want to help me. I understand this and I am sincerely grateful. But you must realize and understand that you are not me, not myself.

You tried to figure me out, to theorise, to categorise, to model to explicate, to analyse, to judge. You have never stopped to listen, to understand, to understand completely, to immerse yourself in my world and being in the world, to strive to fully support my existence, my struggles, my quests that you cannot fully understand. But you must accept and be tolerate, completely open, de-automatised, forget your prejudices and potential misconceptions. I want you to stop patronising me thinking you can be me and figure me out. You cannot. You are not.

Only I can be, feel, comprehend myself, engage with myself. I am very strong. I gain the strength from my life. I have hope whether it is an illusion (Becket's *En Attendant Godot*) or real (Frankl, Nietzsche, Rogers, Camus, Kierkegaard, Voltaire), it does not matter. As long as I live I will hope for the better. I will work extremely hard (Voltaire's *Candide Ou l'Optimisme*) for I have no choice. Giving up is a death sentence. I may as well lose myself physically.

You have to transcend yourself completely and be transcendent, forget your analytical, judging tools and your views in regard to the manner in which one should live and simply listen, immerse in my world/existence, put yourself in one's shoes, try to be me, to try to understand what it is like being me. The wish/will/desire to be me is far more important than the ability to be me which I already said is infeasible.

I am completely irrational, you say, too passionate, hysterical, neurotic, fiery, dynamic, controlling, self obsessed, narcissist, solipsist. Yet who are you to say that? This is my existence, my being-in-the-world, my life. What are you? My judge! The only one to critique, criticise, judge, analyse, understand, reflect, dreflect myself is me. And I can be very harsh, very rigorous about the manner I live my life, far more than you can ever be. I do so because I have obligation towards myself, to care about myself, to love myself. I owe it to myself. I must do so. I am the only one who does. You have no obligation towards myself. You owe me nothing. I do not owe you anything.

I think I can tell you about my quest to figure things out, to progress, to engage in/with the world if you wish. You can listen, engage with/in the information I make available to you. You have a choice. But I think this may be a useful exercise for you for you also exist. You also are in the world. You emerge. You become. You are. You will be. You have a world, objectives and, dare I say, obligation to be happy, of benefit to others, to have a meaningful/authentic existence and life. You can learn from my mistakes, my flaws, and my strengths.

You can also decide that I am of no use to you whatsoever. You wish to do so on your own, alone, with no help, to learn from your own mistakes and weaknesses, to benefit from your own strengths. This is fair enough. I accept that. I engage with my own existence and being in the world. I reflect. I dereflect. I want to improve myself, to become a better human being, happier, more fulfilled. As part of this need of mine, I wish to help you improve and become a better human being. There

is no coercion. I simply place my findings, my irrational, passionate, notes in the world, available for you to engage with. They are there for you. You can engage with them if you wish. You can ignore them if you desire.

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Third Example:

From http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/Meme.htm

Christmas Day, 2003 (25th of December, 2003)

Human Existence was written in July, 2003, when I was embarked full time on a new and novel academic journey of self-discovery and self-analysis, self-reflexivity, self sense-making as my answer for the conception and accommodation of the human existence and the human subject in the world. Doing so was my dream for about two decades throughout my very complex life. I left, then, empiricism and the attempt to find what I am looking for in what I do not look for, to construct productivity out of the failure by looking inward in the failure and outward in me and my solution. It was new and intriguing, scary and appealing. I made my personal objective to create a self a public, academic one as the basis for a new heuristics, structure and the niche. What I was looking and sought for myself throughout my entire life.

I moved out of the 'self' that died in March, 2001 and to the attempt to find and create a new self. This self lost its security and itself. It panicked. It was too secured and happy for a while. It was terrified and died temporarily. I am not even sure whether it was real or an illusion. Not that it matters to me. I am looking for security, happiness, pleasure, balance and gratification not reality. I do not believe in reality. This self hopes to be resurrected, to learn from its mistakes that were made by terror, past experiences and inexperiences and to emerge stronger as another, refined and more mature and wise self. This self aspires to gain gratification, happiness, energy, vitality and pleasure.

The feeling of acceptance was incredible then. I was full of energy. It was a remarkable, scary start. I was extremely young, passionate, immature, romantic, zealous and forceful, full of energy and vitality. I soon became ecstatic and lost myself so as to look for myself and to be a lot happier and marinated in pleasure, gratification, energy and happiness. I lost my guards and my cynicism in the process. I was aware of it and became increasingly terrified of it. The more I tried to calm down, the more terrified I became. I moved quite far, extremely fast. It all gushed. I outgrew myself. I waited myself to blow up. I dreaded the explosion. Yet I wanted the explosion to come up already and to take its inevitable course so that I will be able to be past it already, to get rid of it and to be after it.

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[24][4] For discussion of the social other

Within days I have managed to cover distances that I have tried to embrace and cover for two decades and was forcedly tied down and not allowed to pursue by myself and the world. Things happened. I have grew old and matured. I became very tired and exhausted. I needed to keep up with the pace I dictated to myself. I rushed and gushed and stormed and pulled everyone and everything else with me like in a powerful avalanche. This madness and extreme rush confused me and petrified me. The blood went right to my head.

As I promised to myself in 'human existence' and in 'self', I have done things for myself and only for myself. I kept up my promise. Too well, perhaps. The dilemmas appear in my autobiographical narrative 'self' that was so pure and beautiful and touching piece of writing as I am constantly told. I only wish life could be so too. I used others and tried to be of use in order to be able to use. I tried to be kind, loving, decent, saint so that I will be able to use and become happier and more secured. Am I saint? No. I am me. I tried to be saint before. I could not do it all my life. I tried to make happy and to be happy in the process. I became exhausted. I lost the energy and was drained from and of it. I panicked and became petrified.

I now finally put the title down and write. It is more poetry then autobiography as it was distinguished and told me in September by critiques.

Me, Me and Me

I talk about human existence now in December, 2003, Christmas day. And I shout my humanity in my old, tired and weary, experienced, feeble and sore voice. I shout the same stuff again in a different fashion. I now say it very directly and forcedly. I am tired. I am angry. I am not in the mood for playing games and to try to entice or to be nice and to indulge you. I just wish to say my piece and to move on.

I shout my own personalized truth, directly as I see it now. I was burnt and hurt and I say 'I do not have a culture. I do not have a race. I do not have a gender. I do not have a class. I do not have a nationality. I do not have an ethnicity. I do not have a religion. I do not have a belief. I do not have a shared public language. I do not have unconsciousness and preconsciousness. I do not have just compassion and love. I do not have an ideology. I do not have you. You do not have me. I do not have a doctrine. I do not have an idea. I do not have a clue. And I have nobody else or nothing else to escape to. I just have me. Me, Me, Me and Me.

I am just here with me for me. And I cannot escape from the me. I am sunk within me and I am drowning in me. I am marinated within the me. There is no way out from me. It is a huis clos in my life time, in my being and existence here[25][1].

Not able to escape from the me is making me lost within the me and to lose me. I have asked me (myself) to go call me and to summon me as I was lost and I have

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[25][1] Unlike the real Sartian Huis Clos that could only take place in death and non-being

lost the me who went to call me. It just disappeared and got lost as well. So I lost the me whom I sent to find me. How pathetic it is of me.

I am angry at and with myself for being lost and losing myself and even managed to lose the one who was supposed to find the lost me. I am so frustrated and hurt and disappointed from me. I go chasing for me and hunting for me. I am full of vicious revenge. I am scared and petrified. I do it with so much passion, hatred, love, destruction, construction, pain and will and desire to learn, improve and better. But I am full of fear of destructive and destruction. I try to save me from me whilst at the same time very angry and pouring all this anger, disappointment, frustration on and at me. I try to defend myself and to attack back.

You are reading this. And you may be laughing and jeering now. You may be scared of me and repulsed by me. You may be puzzled. You may understand vaguely. You may run to your alcohol cabinet and reach and grab the scotch in desperation, whilst saying I am the only one who makes you drink. I do not know. You may think that I have completely lost it, that I have finally lost the last bit of sanity, rationality and 'normality' that I have had and that has kept me from becoming pathologically ill and to still make perfect sense to you. Possibly. Originally, I said it as part of an amusing absurd anecdote to get in touch with you and to interrelate with you. It was said when I was completely scared, overwhelmed and in panic.

But this writing actually makes sense to me and makes me certain. It makes me self-assured, more powerful and confident. It makes me understand things. It permits me to go on and move on. Every joke has a serious side for/of it. I will now answer back to you. You are pathetic yourself. You tell me I am all 'me, me and me' and in an autistic, subjective search and quest of myself. My critical 'I' complained that I try to chase my own tail and do little but that.

I say. You turned to culture, to religion, to public, to language, to objectivity, to reason and rationalism to social and cultural norms and acceptances, to models, theories and explications that you do not believe a word of it. You wish for me to relate and teach and communicate. You just acted it to escape from your 'me' and your immersion with/in it. You do it to make sense and to be secured and to find yourself. But you do not. You are just scared to death and petrified and lost. I say to myself 'just write what you feel and see where you go and end up in'. Hopefully, I won't end up sedated somewhere.

I say. In fact, you are so scared of yourself, of being alone with yourself so you went to get the turkey and crack a cracker or to fast and to invent and see gurus and easy explications, answers and clues or to forget and disregard everything, yourself included. Perhaps you make yourself part of the world and go to the world. You try to make yourself believe in order to escape from yourself. You would turn everywhere and to everything and anything. You would starve yourself. You would suffer. You would cleanse and be cleansed. You would pretend to love and compassion. You would invite me. You would turn to others' sufferings.

You would come up, invent and refine theories that no one understands. You would invite others. You would pretend to be an atheist. You would pretend to be a liberal. You would pretend to be socialist or feminist. You would try to find easy answers and salvations. You would turn to ideologies, ideas, doctrines and beliefs. Everything is so easy and simple. But it is an illusion and deception. You are so scared of yourself, to face yourself and to be yourself. You would not last five minutes. I have. It is where I find most gratification and confusion and pain and frustration and non-pathological madness[26][2]. But confusion is reality and knowledge. Questions are knowledge.

You did not even go looking for you. You did not even call for yourself. You chose the easy way – out – perhaps. You were/are just lost. That's it. You gave up and looked elsewhere. You are petrified. You chose to remain lost. You were so scared of yourself that you preferred just to be lost and to forget yourself. You did not even admit to that.

So who is jeering now? Whose laughing at whom? Perhaps you and me are insane, each in his/her way. Lets call this thesis 'the search for the lost sanity/insanity' and get rid of it.

And thus I asked me to go look/ing for me. This is a sheer act of bravery I think. You may say it is an act of insanity. This is security. Sanity or insanity are irrelevant as far as this notion is concerned. I am lost. And I am aware of it. I admit it here. I shout it clearly. It is my conclusion. And I have no clue. I just have me and my allegedly being here. And all of this mess and chaos. This is my strength and my security. It is my balance. It is, in fact, my sanity. It is my ontological stability. I cause it and construct it. It is my chaos and mess.

I go out in the freezing cold and look for it. I wait to myself around the corner. I jeer at me. I insult me. I try to protect me. I am petrified of me. I assault me. I assault me back. I try to separate me from me. Stop fighting I say to the me. I do not listen to me. I fail in my peace making mission to prevent war. And a terrible, messy, vicious bloody fight commences.

I need to protect myself from the world and to be happy. I need to make sense for myself. I am scared of the answers. Yet I have so many questions and dilemmas and internal paradoxes and confusions. I want to rest and I want to find a balance and security, ontological stability and sense making. I want to fight and live. I want to fight to have the best version of me possible and feasible. I want peace and tranquility. I want to comprehend. I am terrified from and of what I will find out and comprehend. I wish to be left alone. I want to go on forward and to progress. I want me. I disagree with myself completely. I lose patience with myself. I lose my

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[26][2] I used to say unfortunately as I believed that if you want to do something do it rightly. If you want or have to go mad then do it rightly in the proper way. I used to share this view with a group of individuals who were diagnosed as having psychopathological disorders I was voluntarily co-ordinating, guiding and helping throughout the 1990's in Israel. We laughed about it a lot. They became better. And I was confused and ironic and glad I could be of help.

tolerance towards myself. I turn to me. I am the only thing that is there. And I truly care and love me. I turn against me. And I start to fight with me.

I am aware of the destruction destructive power of it. I am also aware of the utility and benefits of it and the progress it/I can make for me. You observe and you are puzzled and confused and scared and you confuse me. I do not want you but I know I may or will need you in this war with myself. I say 'I just have a me. Me, me and me. And I am dreading it. And I am petrified of the me. I turn to you to save me of/from the me that chases me, follows me around and offends and offenses me. I hurt me. I went looking for me and was assaulted by me whilst looking for me. So I run away and go to you.

You are puzzled and need a security for yourself. So you make demands. I am defined by you and given conditions and ultimatums by you. I turn to the me and yell at me. Why did I go to you [for]? I really wish to be secured, to feel good and balanced. But not at all costs. I will never make compromises in some things and elements. I refuse to lose myself and to alienate myself from myself for you. I do not have a clue. Not having a clue is the only thing I know and feel secured and sure of. If I'll go to you I'll lose me. I do not know whether to accept or reject. I do not know who I am. I do not know if it is a good thing or a bad thing. I confuse and puzzle me.

And you are not going to tell me. Your role is to give me a pause, a moment or two to rest and to recharge my energy and force in the internal struggle with and in the me. It is best not to know. It is the answer perhaps.

I become even more petrified. I have to move quickly, to emerge, to be, to become and to be a being. I cannot stop. I do not have time or the ability and/or the volition to do so. I need to calm myself down. I need to find. But I am so scared of the findings. I go out of the me and I go to you again. I cannot define myself as you insist. I just wish to be with you without talking, explaining, analyzing, defining. Just to rest, calm down, cool myself down a bit, forget and gain and regain forces and amass the energy again. I wish to make sense to you without explaining or defining just by being confused and puzzled and in chaos.

When I am attacked by myself in a tremendous deal of ferocity, hatred and severity and passion and aggression. And begin losing the battle and risking losing the war I swallow my pride and dignity. Then, I wish to take a pause in you in order to reorganize and recruit myself, pull myself together against myself. It is part of a calculative maneuver to attack me back and to win against me. It is a desire to win and recuperate some lost grounds and to attack and conquer grounds of my own. I see myself bringing a powerful artillery and more modern and destructive firearms against me. I see how I am so much stronger than me. I see how I amass a massive fire capacity, destructive capacity against me. I am scared to death. I am petrified. So I raise a flag and shout to myself, cease fire, time-out, whatever, and go to you.

I yell at myself that I cheat. I yell at you to accept me and to just let and permit me to rest for a while. You yell at me to make compromises. You demand conditions.

You want me to tell you who I am and to define and explicate myself. I try but I have no clue. I am so weak and exhausted. We hesitate and struggle – so many dilemmas, paradoxes and confusions. In frustration and desperation, I decide to play a game with you in order to survive the me within me. I need to entice you in order to find a refuge from me in the fight against me. I play such a nice guy that I manage to play with you and to deceive you. You have your own issues, obligations, ontological security and necessities for yourself and of your own. You are distracted and off guards and I use it.

You are easy to deceive. I play it so well. I am an expert in this game. I invented this game. It is my game. I am so good in it that I even managed to deceive me. I enjoy you. You give me pleasure. I give you my energy, my wit, my persona, my charm, my inner beauty as a poet and a human being as a me; I give you my weeping and pain and sorrow that I wisely turn to a clever sense of humour. You enjoy me. I stimulate you. I energise you. I make you laugh. I make you stronger. You love my wit, my cleverness, my intelligence and my experience in life. I make you ontological secure. I also confuse you. You wonder. You ask yourself. You are, perhaps, just as masochistic as I am, as me, just as 'insane; non-pathologically speaking. I confuse you and you love it. Perhaps, you call it stimulation. It is all a game. The question is whether this is a game in life and existence or if life and human existence are all a game and it is a/the serious part of this game. It is possible that we are divided on this question. Anyhow, you enjoy me so much that you turn a blind eye to the confusion and focus on the pleasure, stimulation and security I give you.

You help me. You shout at the me who stands there waiting to finish me off and arrange and rearrange all the massive firearms that I amassed against me. I jeer at me. I call myself names. I say I am nothing but a yellow coward, that I hide under your skirt, that I chose the easy way out.

You nourish me. You feed me. You strengthen me. You supply me. You help me reorganize. You give me massive firearms. And I go back to the battle stronger and far more revived and powerful. I am now able to punch, shoot and launches a massive contra-attack against the surprised me. I yell at you and me 'suckers' and punch me with all my regained/revived force and supply that you gave me. And the battle recommences.

This time, the course of battle changes around. The losing side becomes the winning one. I am losing this one. So I go back to you to find a shelter and refuge for a bit. You accept me again. Do you know that it is not the same me whom you were so kind to help regain force and energy, gave shelter to, gave supplies and helped reorganize?

You soon find out and demand explanations and explications. "Why do you need this war, all this viciousness, all of this violence, all this pain and anger, negativity and aggression? What do you need this for? Can't you just be kind to yourself and with yourself? Can't you give yourself a break? You can be so lovely and kind, compassionate and loving. You have been a true best friend to me. A wonderful

human being. You helped me so much when I needed it most. Can't you make peace with you? Can't you love yourself and be compassionate? Why do you need all of this for?" You are really angry at me. I touched you. I touched your soul. You want to help me. I am too much for you. You want and wish to know and find out to you and for yourself.

I owe you a response. So I reply that I need those war, pain, self-hatred, suffering, masochism and violence to progress and emerge stronger and better. It is the only way I know how to live and be and to emerge and to become. I know no other way. I need those things to be and live, to create a better version of me/myself for me/myself. I do not know anything else. I have done this all my life. I succeeded. I suffered. I was gratified. I loved. I hated. I was frustrated. I was empty. I was full. I was drained. And I was energized. And I was able to survive and to go on.

I remind you of the play out and alteration of the famous proverb that is used a lot in Israel and elsewhere by the angry liberals and socialist left who angrily and viciously protest against wars and occupation and human rights violation and injustice. We amend and change around the proverb and say instead of the famous proverb the following one of our own 'When the heavy guns [canons] thunder [blow] the muses are not silent – they weep, engage and protest and commit themselves'. Sartre said that they have never been as free as during the nazi occupation. He, himself, has managed to have his play *'Les mouches' 'The flies'* performed in Paris during the occupation. And he wrote *'Les Mains Sales'* around this time.

I tell you the realistic joke of neutral Switzerland not accomplishing much outside of clocks and chocolate as it 'enjoyed' seven centuries of peace, whilst the rest of Europe knew an intellectual prosperity thanks to all the wars. The teller of this joke asked us to find an important, major philosophical, scientific, artistic and literary achievement by a Swiss to be compared with and in comparison with French, German, the Netherlands, Austrian, Russian, Scandinavian and British (all knew vicious, bloody wars, attacks, bloodsheds and occupations) for instance. I remind you that the biggest progress and intellectual achievement was made in time of war. Moderna (Descartes, Leibnitz and Spinoza) was launched during the Thirty Years War. Post-Moderna and humanism were launched with the Bismarckian era and his wars and the two world wars. Space discovery and achievements were fueled by the cold war.

The best philosophical, artistic and literary works were constructed during wars. We need this rush to progress and prosper. We are masochistic and refine and improve ourselves whilst suffering and weeping. We enjoy it perhaps. We do nothing whilst off the guards and static in some sort of romantic and peaceful 'La La land', all romantic and compassionate and loving. We are little more than the teletabies when we are in peace and all loving and compassionate. We need fire and passion and emotions, love and hatred and pain and sorrow and weeping and condolences and sympathy. And there is no better than a survival war for life or death to accomplish it. There is no better than the rush and gush and fiery ferocity and the short period of tranquility and recuperation and exhaustion between wars that makes us

appreciate, understand and comprehend and find out and learn. I am in such a period right now. And I try to use it to make sense and understand and prepare myself for the next attack and contra-attack in life, against it and against me. I wish to learn for the next attack and contra attack and emerge stronger and wiser and better.

Fourth Example:

From http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/wai2.htm

Who am I – Who I am

Friday 17/10/2003

I am a very confused thinker of human existence in the world. I am some sort of a version of Humanism and Living-Action-Research. I am an anti-philosopher philosopher of human existence who just happens to think, contemplate and meditate a lot. I deautomatise or at least do and try my best to. I reflect and dereflect.

I am. I am conscious. I am conscious of my consciousness. I am conscious of my consciousness of my consciousness. I continuously go out, back and forth, of/from one state of consciousness and being of myself to another. I constantly introspect phenomenologically. I continuously analyse myself, my inner world, my states of being and being in the world, my interrelationships with the external world, particularly with the social others (see for example Shanon, 1993). I strive to do so firsthand, phenomenologically, clinically and holistically.

I keep introspective, self-reflexive, self-analytical, personal, autobiographical and clinical journals. I write both verse and prose. I admire Kierkegaard and Nietzsche and the way they wrote, especially Kierkegaard. I also write down my thoughts, findings and conclusions as for my being in the world, my conceptions of it and thoughts of it and the manner to study it. I share and converse with others, asking questions and sharing my embedded knowledge (Schon, 1983, 1987; Whitehead, 1989, 1993; Elliot 1987, 2004) with them.

Unlike these two giants of philosophy of existence, I also place my emphasise on my personal dynamism, change and becoming, as well as on my dialectical interrelationship with the other and the influence the social other and myself are having on each other. I constantly have 'discussions' and 'arguments' with myself. I sometimes share my thoughts and conclusions with others, the social others so as to both benefit from them in/for my own quests and journeys of becoming and being in the world and to enable them to benefit from mine.

I do not wish to simply critique and criticise (Serper, 1999). I try to create, construct and reconstruct. I try to rely on, reinforce and enhance what I believe are the strengths and the positive and to learn from, modify and alter what I believe are weaknesses and flaws.

I try to create a true discipline and domain of knowledge and study for human existence. This domain will be completely devoted and dedicated to both the human subject and human existence as a whole, unique, dynamic totality in the world. This domain will constitute an alternative to the disciplines of religion, natural sciences, social sciences, metaphysics and philosophy for example in the domain of the human existence that reduce the human subject to abstractions, an object, objects, concepts, ideas, physiological, chemical, biochemical, cognitive and spiritual processes, etc, etc, etc (see Serper, 1999).

I claim I cannot be reduced. I simply am. I am me. I am here in the world as a me in the world. Nothing more. Nothing less. Nothing else. I am everything. I am the only thing there is. Each unique, whole individual being in the world is. When I am taken from myself I become a complete nothing (see for example Laing, 1959; 1967).

I am an undefined blur, constantly defining, creating, constructing and reconstructing myself anew in light of my journeys, my searches and quests in the world, both inner and outer. I live. I progress. I interrelate with the world. (Gibson, 1969, 1982; Gibson, 1950, 1966, 1979; Gibson and Spelke, 1983; Gibson et al., 1978; Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Shanon, 1993). I feel and sense my being in the world. I receive it. I transmit it. I emerge in the world. I continuously and constantly become who I am and change and refine myself. I define myself in the world by living and acting in it. That's all there is to it.

I cherish and value both this confusion of mine and my claim to have it and be confused. I cherish the unknown. This is what has kept me going. I have no clue what/whom I'll become next. I act. I am very active. This is all I can do. I constantly interrelate and act with/to the world and do my utmost to seize the best and most appropriate opportunities and potentialities this interrelation proposes to me for that particular moment and point of my existence, journey and being in the world. I do so in accordance with both my immediate goals, objectives, meanings and values at that point of my being in the word and existence and my overall objectives for what I consider to be the best, most fulfilling and rewarding life and existence in the world for me. I am open minded and free. I believe those are my strengths. I think chaos and admittance to chaos and confusion are the best form of knowledge and order.

I am by no means a mystical. I prescribe to a very cold, detached, positivistic, 'scientific' and academic way of doing so, as opposed to an abstractive, metaphysical and mystical manner. I am the product of continental philosophy (e.g., Jaspers, Heidegger, Tillich, Bubber, Boss, Binswanger). My burning, living, gushing 'romantic' 'lava' and passion in regard to human existence are cooled and chilled by very rational, continental, 'academic' (17th – 18th centuries), interdisciplinary/'adisciplinary' philosophy/ideas, as well as by reason and common sense.

I sincerely and truly believe the only manner to propose a post-positivistic alternative to the reductionism and mechanism of the human subject and human

existence in the world is by using a positivistic, 'scientific', valid, reliable and standardised framework, structure and terminology.

My role here is to deautomatise you, to make you reflect and dereflect, to go out of your normal, everyday monotonous, life and consciousness and to think very hard. If you wish, that is. It is completely up to you. The choice to do so is yours.

I should like to entice you into reflecting and dereflecting about your own existence in the world, your own values, your personal objectives, what makes you truly fulfilled, truly satisfied, authentic, the fashion in which you define, construct and reconstruct yourself. I should like to allure you completely into life and living in the world in accordance with your will to be happy, satisfied and actualised, to create yourself accordingly. I shake you very firmly and ask you to act and constantly take initiatives and actions. I beg of you not to give up and in and be passive. Like Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, I ask you not to be swallowed in the crowd but to stamp out and emerge from it as a unique and original individum. People constantly assure me I am very much original and unique myself.

As for me, the thinker of human existence by vocation, I keep wondering what is going on. We are launched, thrown into existence. We are launched into this world. We are. We exist. Then, we die and are not, namely cease to exist. I dare say we because we are all existing human beings. If you can read this then you exist and are in the world.

In between being launched into the world and being withdrawn and taken from it, we have to live, exist and be in the world. We have to assume that we are and to go on with this incredibly difficult, complex and confusing task of being here, in the world. We are becoming. We constantly are becoming whom and what we are. When pointed out to the fact that life is very difficult and complex, Voltaire answered 'what is the alternative?'

As a human being I live, act and become who I am in the world. I simply pursue with this task and objective. As an academic inquirer and the proud owner of those web pages, I seek a method, epistemology and heuristics that will be able to accommodate both the human subject and the human existence in the world in an entirely holistic and phenomenological/ontological manner. This method must account for the unique, holistic, individualistic, dynamic and constantly changing and self-modifying, self-constructing characteristics of both the human subject and the human existence in the world.

I wish to show you what it is, firsthand, to be and become a human/individual being in the world, continuously becoming and being whom/what he/she is. I wish to put forward a holistic, phenomenological and gestaltian manner of doing so that transcend and is more than mere empiricism, philosophising, conceiving, metaphysics, spirituality, ethics, poetry, literature etc. Still, I insist on rigour, validity, reliability and standardisation.

Since consciousness is "personal", "in constant change" and "continuous" (James' ninth chapter "stream of thought", of the *Principles of Psychology* (1890), individualistic and unique I can merely do so using my own consciousness and account of what it is to become and be me. I can merely study consciousness and being in the world through my own consciousness and being in the world. I can merely do so phenomenologically since interfering and subjecting my consciousness to other forms of scrutiny will lose a lot of its authenticity, truth, immediacy and living and urgent power and drown it in other non-relevant elements and requirements (see Serper, 1999, especially chapter 2).

I truly and sincerely feel the human subject, the unique, whole, individual being in the world, can do so himself/herself, on his/her own, individually, holistically and phenomenologically. I claim he/she does not need any intermediary. I shout to the world that throughout history, the intermediary between the human subject and studying him/her reduced, mechanised, automatised and even destroyed the whole and unique individual being in the world. I give the examples of how paradigms, ambiances and movements such as religion, metaphysical abstractions (see Comte, 1830 and Serper, 1999), radical positivism (materialism, empiricism and rationalism) and radical social constructionism (e.g Serper, 1999, 2003) have reduced and mechanised both the human subject and the human existence. I claim and shout at the top of my voice that the human subject is a unique, whole, complete totality/entity in the world of the Gestaltian whole is greater than the sums of its parts (see Serper, 1999). Thus I regard and criticise very severely and rigorously any attempt to interfere with and damage these uniqueness, individuality and totality of the human subject as the reduction and destruction of the entire human subject in the world.

I shall give and provide you with a firsthand, holistic, phenomenological, auto-bibliographical self-reflected, self-dereflected account, already analysed and examined for you to accept, tolerate and engage and interrelate with. You will very kindly give me your perspectives to the issues I raise from your own, similar account. You will not judge me and my account using your own restrictions, beliefs and thoughts in regard to the manner I should conceive and study my own self and existence in the world, thereby reducing me to it. In addition, you will, certainly, not subject and conveniently tailor me to any already-made theories, models and versions of whom/what I should be. You will simply let me become and be me, myself, in accordance with my own choices, values and meanings.

You will engage, relate and comment on my journeys, choice making, decisions as a fellow whole and unique individual being in the external world that we share from your own journeys, quests and being in the world. You will allow me to be me and you will share and interrelate (Gibson, 1969, 1982; Gibson, 1950, 1966, 1979; Gibson and Spelke, 1983; Gibson et al., 1978) with me and all the others who are interested in that to create an us. The us will be the human subject in the world. Each whole, unique and individualistic account will be its own world in the universe called humanity, its own island in the ocean called humanity.

I am very interested in getting to know both your inner world and your interrelationships with your external world (including and especially with me and my inner world). So, please tell me and engage and interrelate with me.

I insist on this heuristics into the study and conception of the human subject and human existence in the world. I believe it is the right one for me. It is my life's doctrine, my life's work, my religion, my way of life. I am very passionate about it, completely zealous. I am extremely rigour and serious about it. I have been for many years. Others would find other methodologies to be right and suitable for them and they should engage with them. I strongly believe and advocate tolerance and despise coercion and forceful. I regard the two latter to be forms of violence and aggression.

I regard progress to be everything. Coercion is the enemy of progress. It is a setback on progress. Tolerance and open-mindedness are progress and 'knowledge's' 'best friend'. I believe each individum should engage in both whatever makes him/she happy and in whatever can give him/her the best meaning ('logos', see Frankl, 1959, 1969, 1973, 1978, 1985; Fabry, 1968; Lukas, 1988, 1995), and permit him/she to fulfil and actualise himself/herself in the best possible way, allowing him/him to become and be the best version of herself/herself possible for him/her.

I am, therefore, completely tolerable of others' beliefs, thoughts and values. I simply put my inner beliefs/ideas/values in the external world for the social others, who happen to share the external world with me, to engage with them. I do no more than that. I truly dislike preaching very much. The social others can either accept them, reject them or ask for additional time and information to think about them and engage with. I ask no more than this.

I do ask the following question. What is going here in human existence in the world? I have no answers whatsoever. I know nothing. I do not claim to have anything but my existence in the world. I can sincerely vow for my sincere desire and ambition to live and learn so as to improve my journeys, quests and choice making, making them more meaningful, beneficiary and agreeable. I am very happy to share my findings and conclusions with you so as to try to assist you with your own journeys, quests and choice making.

I can say I simply live, act, think, reflect, dereflect and share. I am not a guru, nor am I a pedagogue (see Whitehead, 1999) who wishes to attack and throw chunks of 'information' and 'wisdom' onto people as the true and only sources of wisdom and light and aura. What gives me the right? Who am I to do so? I regard such attempts as ludicrous.

I can offer you no more than very difficult, complex, painful, questions, paradoxes, and dilemmas for you to contemplate on, reflect and dereflect very hard. I am just certain in one thing. If I was chosen by two individuals (my biological parents) to be here and choose myself, on my own, to continue and be, being here, in the world (Camus, 1942a, 1942b, 1971), then I have to do my very best to do it rightly, right

for me and my needs that is. I need to give it my best shot, to give everything I got, to spend all my limited energy and resources on it, to immerse completely in it, to have the best existence in the world possible for me, my self. I have obligation towards myself to do so. I owe to myself to do so as part of my commitment to life and my desire to go on with/in it. If I do not do so, then I do not really live and exist in the world. If I do not do this then my life is not as meaningful and worthwhile as it ought to be.

I just claim to be here in the world, that's all. I wish to be as satisfied as I can from my life. To die, satisfied and with an assurance that I have done my very best to become the best version of me that I could have constructed to/for myself. With this objective in mind, I go on and fight life, fight the human condition, fight the world, both the inner and outer, fight me, myself, sometimes. I want to have true and authentic, constantly growing happiness for myself. I want to have more peace of mind for myself. I believe I deserve it. I believe we all do. I wish to fulfill and actualise myself and my existence in the world to the best of my capability.

As I regard myself as a nice, good person, I am willing to make public, put forward and share my 'inner world', my personal 'I', my self, my quests and journeys in the world for meanings, happiness, peace of mind, self-fulfillment and self-actualisation, in becoming and being the best version of me possible with the social others with whom I share my external world, making it our mutual/common world. I do believe we do share the universal objective of wishing and willing to become and be self-fulfilled, authentic and happy and improve ourselves and our journeys in the world. Surely, our meanings, values and objectives are unique and individualistic but the desire to have them is universal.

In return, I expect all social others who are up to it to share theirs (their inner world) with me. I expect to have a very authentic, beneficial and meaningful interaction (engagement), a positive, true and authentic interrelationship/s. I expect the dialogue to be passionate, fiery, moving and wholly human. I expect it to be difficult, painful, challenging and rewarding. The objective is to become acquainted, 'use' and internalise each others' learning from our experiences (learning from our mistakes, weaknesses, faults, from our strengths) in order to draw on them and become and be a continuous improved version of ourselves, constantly emerging and more fulfilled, satisfied and happy human beings.

I am very optimistic. I truly believe in cultivating our garden (Voltaire, 1958). I believe that if I (and I dare say we) work very hard, struggle, endure the struggles and hardships, try to survive the strong turbulences and severe hurricanes, then the sun will shine and the birds will sing, beautiful flowers will blossom in the garden and strong, tenable and resistant trees (Alon means oak tree in Hebrew) will grow. I am utterly convinced and have evidence to show it.

Sometimes, rarely, luckily, I am pessimistic. I am not a solipsist, nor a narcissist. I am aware too well of what is going on in the external world. I engage with all the hardships and misery in the world. I am aware of my personal fortune. I see poverty, true evil, a lot of bloodshed, most horrific injustice, truly misery, suicides,

crime, horrific abuse, wars, utter indifference, death, intoxication, individuals giving in completely. I weep. I am miserable. I am profoundly affected. I see the very gloomy sky. I feel the freezing cold. I feel the drizzles, sometimes the storms, sometimes the hurricanes, and I think the sun is an illusion. I say to myself and to others how wonderful the world could have been. I hope to help alleviate those hardships and to do my best to bring the sun. I know I can make the sun shine on my life through my actions in the world and it will. I recommend and call upon you to do the same if you wish. I/We have to struggle very hard. I/We must not give in. I/we must fight truly believing I/we will prevail and emerge (a) smiling winner/s.

In those Web pages of mine, that are both autonomous and part of the Action Research Network (http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw). I shall share with you how I do it in both the 'academic', that some will declare it as the 'Ivory Tower', world and the 'real 'gloomy' world'. I shall show you examples of how I engage with very practical human rights work, practical work within the fields of Ethics and morality, volunteer work, clinical work etc, etc, etc. I shall share my thoughts, reflections, dereflections, self-reflections, introspection, self-analysis, self-critique, self-study and conversations and interactions and interrelationships with you. I shall show you how I interrelate and engage with my social other in the world. I shall do so because I sincerely and truly wish to improve and fulfill/actualise myself and my existence in the world and because I wish to share my mistakes, strengths and achievements with you for you to engage with, in the hope you will do the same with me. I dislike self-indulgence very much. I do not need others' indulgence of me and my work. I do so for me, my sake, not for anyone else('s). I really wish to be the most decent human/individual being in the world that I can be. I wish to improve myself and to constantly create, construct and reconstruct a better/improved version of my being here, in the world, of me and myself.

I place my 'heart', my soul, my being, my being in the world, my inner world, my emotions, my consciousness, my interrelationships with the external world and with myself in the open for you to be exposed to. I am very direct. I am very authentic. I am sincere and true. I am very honest. I try and do my best to be. It is not at all easy for me. It is sometimes very painful. Yet I find it very beneficial for my journey and quest. I also find it relieving, healing and soothing as well. I sincerely hope to make it meaningful and of benefit for you and your quests, searches and journeys as well.

This is my intension. I keep a private journal for many years. It could have been sufficient. But I wish to involve you for all the reasons I have already stated here.

Engage if you wish. Or don't if you don't.

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Appendix Four

THE *LAPIDUS* ETHICAL CODE

From: http://lapidus.org.uk/ethical.doc
 and
 http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/lapidus.html

Members of LAPIDUS work in a wide range of health care and educational contexts. In order to safeguard members and their clients, LAPIDUS has developed the following ethical guidelines to aid/help/support/facilitate members working in those settings.

LAPIDUS members are expected to:

1. Provide good standards of practice and care delivered with professional competence, appropriate support and accountability; maintain good relationships with clients and colleagues; and demonstrate a commitment to and observance of professional ethics.

2. Acknowledge and respect human rights and dignity and to conduct themselves in such a way that they promote equal opportunities for all.

3. Appreciate and acknowledge the variety of human experience and culture.

4. Take responsibility for providing the best possible services to their clients in order to promote well-being and to act in such a way as to cause no harm to any clients.

5. Make contracts with clients which are explicit about the nature (e.g. therapeutic, training, supervisory, personal growth) and costs of the work and the qualifications and experience of the practitioner. Ensure the rights and responsibilities of both parties are agreed.

6. Take responsibility for being aware of the context in which they are employed to work and follow the ethical guidelines and demonstrate good practice accordingly.

7. Provide and operate services to clients in compliance with the laws of the country in which they reside.

8. To speak or write (in their public statements) with respect and with the intention of demonstrating their own professional integrity and the professional standing of the organisation.

9. Take responsibility for their own health and well-being and ongoing training and continuing professional development in order to practise safely. This includes regularly monitoring and reflecting on their work.

10. To behave in a way which does not exploit a client in any manner, including, but not limited to financial and sexual matters.

My Webpages At the Arts & Health South West
Organisation "For People Who Believe In the Value Of
Creativity In Enhancing People's Health and Well-being"

From

http://ahsw.co.uk/member_webpage.cfm?page_id=2253

and http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/AHSW.htm

Directory Search - Member Details

Alon Serper - Cathartic Self-Dialectical Creative Writing, Logging, Blogging & Enquiring-Within-B/logging

I have developed an ontological self-therapeutic, self-help, and educational, mentoring and training, tool in which the participant is self-dialectically enquiring-within-b/logging into his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world through the question, how do I lead a more meaningful, securing and self-fulfilling existence in the world for myself? Struggling individuals are being supported and helped and practitioners are being supported, mentored, helped and trained.

The tool is based on the therapeutic, cathartic, power of three elements,

i. the movement between the self-reflective, auto-dialogical, power of logging one's life - emotions, feelings, experiences, behaviours, relationships, activities and personal developments - for oneself and the dialogical power of blogs and the engagement and social and human interaction between a blogger and his/her readers within an embodied safe space that belongs to the blogger and that he/she can control,

ii. the empowering and transforming feature of the dialectics and in turn a self-dialectical and auto-poietic cathartic b/logging in which the tension between the negative experiences of angst, insecurity, void, self-dissatisfaction, frustration, solitude and alienation and the positive experiences of self-fulfilment, meaning, security and engagement is to be transformed into cathartic healing and qualitative transformation and empowerment,

iii. the analytical power of a phenomenological self-analysis of lived, embodied and living experiences and living specific situations in the real world,

The enquier-within-b/logging is identifying situations in his/her life that provides him/her with experiences and situations of existential angst, frustration and solitude and ontological void and insecurity.

He/she is then delving inside and into these experiences and situations and producing an authentic phenomenological account as for what these negative and counterproductive experiences and situations mean to him/her and his/her existence in, with and towards the world.

He/she is also logging to himself/herself and blogging for others his/her suggested and planned ways for him/her to work out ways of overcoming and reversing these disagreeable, negative and counterproductive, situations and experiences into the more positive, constructive and pleasant life and situations, feelings and experiences of greater self-fulfilment, ontological security, empowerment and healing and more productive and fulfilling relationships and interrelationships with both self and others for him/her and his/her existence in, with and towards the world.

Individuals share and comment on each others' b/logging accounts.

I am now working on applying this tool on and for others after working it out in theory and testing it out on myself.

Appendix Six

Working On Constructing and Piloting Practical Workshops and Exercises for the Suggested Heuristic Cathartic and Self-Dialectical Blogging Tool and Methodology

As blogged on the 3rd of April, 2010, in my University Website at http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/workshops.htm as part of my original intended doctoral submission of self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological and cathartic educational action research cycles of enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into the question: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?, that is now accessible from my WebPages at the URL, http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/bloggingthesis.html. It was also placed in the appendix of that dialectical b/logging thesis then as an illustration of the practical possibility of the wholly theoretical ideas and my attempt to move from the wholly theoretical and abstract to the practical.

Saturday, 3rd of April, 2010, 15:36

Here is a first attempt at the application of my theoretical heuristic tool in practice as therapeutic/cathartic creative writing workshops. I would like to get initial feedbacks before developing this piece further.

PRACTICAL CREATIVE, CATHARTIC AND SELF-DIALECTICAL WRITING, LOGGING AND BLOGGING, WORKSHOPS, EXPERIMENTIONS AND EXERCISES

ABSTRACT

Four practical exercises for cathartic and empowering creative writing are suggested and displayed, as well as discussed in details, explained and rationalised. The intention of offering this work is to eventually work out practically and empirically and attain a legitimate, valid and reliable, methodology for cathartic, self-dialectical, creative writing and logging individuals' lives and personal and community development, growth, empowerment and healing within specifically designated and purposely built electronic World Wide Web platform. The theoretical background for offering the exercises and the theory behind the development of the exercises have been worked out and are discussed. The four suggested self-dialectical and cathartic creative writing exercises are produced in order to eventually provide the field of therapeutic creative writing with an empirically tested methodology by which the engager can carry out my worked out theoretical idea and suggestion of self-dialectical, empowering, and cathartic, healing and liberating, creative logging and blogging in practice as a therapeutic tool. The exercises are thus displayed with the intention of unifying theory and practice and having each feature illuminate the other. The suggested plan for the methodological way (the how and the logos, meaning, of the how) of carrying out the exercises and testing and piloting this way is displayed and discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The present suggestion for a practical, cathartic and self-dialectical, creative writing workshop is divided into three sections:

The first section explains the intention, namely what I wish to do and accomplish in and through doing this work.

The second section provides a bit of background and theory for the workshop. It defines and explains the terms used. It gives both the classic meanings and the ways the terms are used and interpreted by myself in this work.

The third section presents the practical exercises. It provides and explains them and suggests the way they are to be carried out.

All the sections include my personal suggestions and guidelines as for the way the entire workshop is to be carried out. These are personal suggestions from my own experience as a practitioner and an academic who has tried it before and experimented with it on myself and others.

I. INTENTION OF WORKSHOP PRACTICES

The following suggestion is for a bit of experimentation and testing of a therapeutic creative writing methodology to see whether it can contribute to the field of therapeutic, cathartic, creative writing.

The intention is at first to work out a pilot for an experiment. And then to get data which could be utilised for valid empirical analysis using qualitative or/and quantitative means of analysis to test out a very specific hypothesis.

I am talking about an hypothesis that is presently theoretical and based on theoretical ideas and suggestions that have already been tested out on myself and my life and personal ontological, educational and epistemological developments in the world. And which have equally been drawn from the clinical and psychiatric literature on the cathartic, healing and empowering effect of creatively writing up, logging and enquiring-within-logging into one's life and one's working to improve its aesthetic, ethical and authentic quality (Lapidus, 2009).

I have indeed been testing out these ideas and hypothesis on myself over and within time, space, enquiry, practice and praxis, namely reflection on practice and also made use of my engagement, as a clinician, academic and practitioner, with the clinical and psychiatric literature on the cathartic and empowering powers of I am talking about

Hence the experimentation is aimed at validating my rather abstract personal assumptions.

The Hypothesis:

The hypothesis to be tested out in this experimentation is in regards to the cathartic and qualitatively transforming power and competence of the following creative writing practices. The three practices are linear with the second one succeeding the first one and the third one following the second one.

    i.   The practice of individuals' logging and blogging harsh, anguishing and frustrating, insecure, counterproductive and negative experiences, thoughts, emotions and situations in their lives

    ii.   The practice of working at identifying, processing, reversing, redirecting and shifting them into more positive, securing and self-fulfilling experiences, situations, emotions, feelings and lives. I am meaning planning out in theory and carrying out in practice within a methodological, rigorous and pragmatic fashion.

    iii.   Discussing and actively dialoguing about the practices and exercises with fellow participants in the exercise and also reflecting in and on action on the fulfilment of the practices and exercises.

I want for us to work out together conclusive and hard evidence, in real life practice in real world situations, for the validity of my suggestion.

I also want for us to be advised by the participants, as a social group of individuals, based on the experimentation and their experiences of conducting it and participating in it the following thoughts and reflections on:

1. whether my theoretical assumption is in fact valid, practical and workable, in the field of therapeutic creative writing.
and
2. whether my suggestion here has a real possibility of becoming a legitimate methodology, creative writing method and theory for the field of therapeutic creative writing.

More specifically, I should like for us to test out my hypothetical supposition (hypothesis) that the following methodological practices could in fact lead to experiences and lives of cathartic relief, empowerment, qualitative positive change and transformation and self-actualisation. This is in the lives, relationships (with both oneself and other people) and professional practices of those of attempt the experiments on themselves.

I am meaning an hypothesis which is currently based on my own experimentation on myself, reading the literature and dialogue with peers and colleagues.

After the four cathartic creative writing exercises that are displayed below, we could have a vote whether a positive (qualitative) empowering and cathartic (healing and liberating) change and transformation has taken place in the participants' lives.

The methodological practices that I am talking about are those of,

Individuals creatively, directly, self-dialectically, phenomenologically, cathartically and textually logging and blogging out for themselves and others means of identifying, processing, reversing, shifting and redirecting experiences and situations of angst, frustration, anxiety, void, insecurity, complexity and lack of self-dissatisfaction, despair and unfulfilling and counterproductive relationships with both oneself and other people. The intended shift and redirection is into experiences and situations of greater hope, self-satisfaction, security, self-fulfilment and meaning and more fulfilling and productive relationship with both oneself and other people.

I am talking about means which are first planned out in theory as an intention and then carried out in practice in real world situations as the implementation of the intention and theory.

I should like to test out whether there is anything real and significant, outside pure chance, in my prediction and belief that the methodology that I am offering to the field of therapeutic, healing and empowering, creative writing could be of real use, significance, reliability and validity, to the field and have an unquestionable scientific extent and merit in the community of clinicians, theorists and empiricists.

The hypotheses that I should like to test out are as followed:

1). Such logging and blogging can lead to catharsis, well-being, healing, personal and community development, growth, healing and empowerment?

2). Such logging and blogging cannot lead to catharsis, well-being, healing, personal and community development, growth, healing and empowerment?

The experiment is to be engaged with either online or in a classroom or clinical support group session.

The online use and engagement is to be performed in a specially designated electronic platform. I am referring to an electronic platform that is currently under construction by a professional web-designer and technology expert.

The classroom and support group session will follow the action research premises of an active and equal participation on the part of all the participants.

What I am implying is that my group of participants is to be perceived as a group of individuals who work together and who share a common interest in improving the shared work and practice and solve specific problems that are of concern to them all. I am assuming the shared concern here is how to increase the cathartic, healing and empowering power of the creative writing of one's life and logging ones' life over time, space, enquiry, practice and praxis – namely reflection on practice.

All the participants are viewed as both co-researchers and co-participants.

By co-researchers I am meaning experts whose thinking and decision-making contributes to generating ideas, designing and managing the project, and drawing conclusions from the experience. For this particular work, I am perceiving all human beings as experts.

By co-participants I am meaning participants who are participating in the activity which is being researched. In this case, the activity of therapeutic creative writing of one's life and logging one's life over time, space, enquiry, practice and praxis (reflection on practice).

The point is that the advancement of and contribution to knowledge and learning would take place by co-experimentation, interactive, equal, creative and active, dialogue and dialogue on personal reflections and having a welcoming, stimulating, safe and secured space for such advancement, epistemological contribution and learning to take place productively. Working out the space and atmosphere is most crucial.

II. A BIT OF BACKGROUND AND THEORY:

Instructions for Carrying Out this Engagement With this Bit of Background:

In the case of an illustrating and piloting workshop for professionals when time is pressured, this bit of theory and background is to be electronically handed out, circulated and distributed among and presented to the participants a week or two in advance of the workshop.

This can be done in the form of an electronic mail message, with an enclosed attachment that has this piece of writing in it. The electronic message is to be sent to the list of intended participants twice. Once, two weeks in advance of the workshop and then, another time, a couple of days before the workshop. This piece of writing up of the theoretical background can also be placed in a website for the participants to read and study and redirected to in a reminder electronic mail message.

During the workshop this bit of theoretical background is to be skimmed through aloud very quickly by the presenter within 2 minutes or so in the classroom.

In the case of an online or a clinical support group engagement, please feel free to ask me for clarifications online in the dialogue box, or in person if I am present, or email me to my personal electronic mail address for details or further explanation on what you read below.

You can read the suggested reading list below and the usual creative writing lists and ask me for a more limited and shorter reading list of what I see as the crucial works to the understanding of what I am saying here.

In the case of a clinical support group, please match the explanation with the participants' educational background and cognitive abilities and speak to them at this level and discuss the theory accordingly.

Please take a great care not to talk or look down on your participants and also not to use jargon that you know they would not fully understand. **Jargon should be explained in terms of traditional definition and the way it is used in the context of carrying out the exercises and creative logging tool.**

Always take a special care to treat your participants with utter dignity and respect whilst doing it naturally, authentically and effortlessly. If you make an effort, this will be transparent. Talk to them about your reservations. **There are always ways to talk through and put relational and inter-relational difficulties in a caring and engaging language and manner and with no alienation. This is an art that is worthwhile to master.**

Furthermore, please take a special care not to assume **anything about your participants.** Please involve them. **It is always better to ask them when not certain about something and about your interactions or relationship. Dialogue and active involvement and participant is the best way to go about it. Do not be afraid to ask. It will save you a lot of troubles.**

What I am trying to practically achieve in theory

I have worked out a theoretical idea and an abstraction of a practical therapeutic tool in which individuals are logging, blogging and reflecting and enquiring into their lives through direct enquiring into the question, how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?.

They do so with the intention of improving the quality of their lives, well-being, empowerment and qualitative transformation in what they are doing and seeking to achieve for themselves.

By a more meaningful existence, I am meaning an existence of greater self-fulfilment, self-satisfaction, [ontological] security within oneself and whom one is, empowerment, energy and more productive, securing and fulfilling, relationships and interrelationships with oneself and one's social others, namely other human beings.

This idea and concept of self-working at auto-changing and self-improving fits with the Action Research orientation to inquiry. In action research, the practitioners or activists become the researchers of their own practice in order to improve what they are doing in the midst of action, rather than long afterwards.

I am basing my suggested exercise and therapeutic, cathartic, self-help tool on the cathartic and transforming power of the dialectics and the analytical and methodological power of phenomenology to self-empower and improve the quality of life for the dialectician.

I am using catharsis as the practice of working at transforming unpleasant situations, experiences and feelings of tension, angst, frustration, anger and self-disappointment in a person's life and unsuccessful relationships with oneself and one's social others

(other people) into the more pleasant experiences, situations and feelings of satisfaction, empowerment, energy and life affirming energy and relief and more fulfilling and productive relationships with both oneself and one's social others.

For instance, as a quick example, I am presently feeling tension, dissatisfaction and frustration and experience myself being stuck, anguished and unfulfilled.

I reflect on this situation. I identify the reasons, roots and reasoning for this situation and experiences and feelings of mine to be the following one. My working on offering a way to convey my idea for a dialectical form of a cathartic and therapeutic creative writing tool for individuals to feel better in their lives and about their lives and relationships with both self and others and construct more fulfilling, securing and productive relationship with both themselves and other people is not going well.

By not going well I am meaning in the way that I want to and which I believe would fulfil and empower me in the way that I want to be fulfilled and empowered. In practice, my efforts are still perceived by others to fail to meet the essential need of being both practical and experiential and my work is considered to be too theoretical for an illustrative presentation where the intention is to be both practical and experiential.

Rather than lament on my failures and present position that annoys me and increase my despair and feel self-pity, I am deciding to work on constructing practical means for myself to reverse, shift and redirect these unpleasant feelings and experiences into the more pleasant ones of peace of mind, satisfaction and contentment and experience myself hopeful and progressing, empowered, self-assured and fulfilled.

I am asking myself and my friends and peers what is the most appropriate way to go about it in practice.

I decide to work out and experiment with practical exercises with a view to apply my theoretical and abstractive idea into a practical and experiential use.

I am writing up this piece of practical plans and experimentation.

I am feeling relieved as I am dealing with the situation rationally, applicably and pragmatically.

The next stage is to offer this work and writing to others, work out practical workshops, lectures, demonstrations and papers, carry them through and see and re-evaluate how it goes.

I am logging down my reflections (namely my conversations and dialogues with myself) and my self-reevaluation in action, practice and praxis (namely reflection in and on practice) on how I am working it all out, my actions and practices and my feeling, thoughts, emotions and experiences in the course of doing it.

I am writing up a creative writing reflective and reflexive account and a logging post out of this reflection.

I am making this logging post public in my World Wide Web Internet blogging website where the log is dated and there is a space on the bottom for readers of my logging – which is now blogging - to interact with what I wrote and write a comment of their own to it for all participants in the blog to see and comment on in public and for me to respond to if I wish to.

I used to have an experimental website for my ideas, writings and blogging that was technically supported by the University Bath Computer Service or BUCS. I have just entered into a business partnership with a physicist and technology expert friend who is to be in charged on the technical design and support for a specifically designated therapeutic electronic platform and an authors' cooperative publishing house for creative writers and therapists. From now on my cathartic self-dialectical blogging and publications will be presented there.

Catharsis is a Greek word which means "cleansing" or "purging". The ancient Greeek infinitive verb *kathairein* means "to purify or purge," and the anciet Greek adjective *katharos* means "pure, clear or clean.

Originally catharsis was a purely medical term meaning 'purging. However, this use was adapted to Literature and drama by the ancient Greeks and in that new context has now implied an extreme change in emotion resulting from strong feelings of sorrow, angst, dread, fear, pity, or laughter which has been described as a purification or a purging of such emotions.

In this context, catharsis refers to the sensation, or literary effect, of a release of pent-up emotion or energy that would ideally overcome either the characters in a play, or an audience upon finishing watching a tragedy.

Plato viewed catharsis as a pleasurable ecstatic release and explained that it is pleasurable because audiences of tragedies experience ecstatic relief from watching characters who suffer a worse fate than themselves. However, in his work *Poetics*, Aristotle maintains that poetry and tragedy make audience feel less, not more, emotional, by giving a periodic and healthy outlet to their feelings, emotions and situations and in turn has taken catharsis to mean a release of emotional tension, as after an overwhelming experience, that restores or refreshes the spirit and restores a good emotional balance.

Furthermore, later on in the 18th century, Gotthold Epharaim Lessing applied *catharsis* to mean a purification, an experience that brings pity and fear into their proper balance. He noted that tragedy could be employed as a corrective means for through watching tragedy the audience learns how to feel, experience and undergo powerful emotions, experiences and situations in the like of angst and fear at the proper levels and reverse an unhealthy excess of them back into greater happiness, well-being, ontological security, self-fulfilment, stability and virtousness than previously.

Psychologists and psychotherapists drew on that idea and used catharsis as a technique to relieve tension and anxiety by bringing repressed and intensified feelings of angst, insecurity, void, dread, dissatisfaction and fears to consciousness and then into a healthy balance of greater satisfaction, health, healing, well-being, personal development growth and empowerment in one's life.

Freudian psychoanalysis uses the idea of catharsis to describe the act of expressing and experiencing the deep emotions of angst, dread, unease and terror and unhealthy and counterproductive unpleasantness which are often associated with disagreeable, anguishing and unhealthy situations in the individual's past, childhood especially. They are meaning unhealthy, unproductive and unpleasant situations and experiences which had originally been repressed into unconsciousnress or preconsciousness or ignored and never been adequately addressed or experienced and in turn have emerged and been formed and presented as neurosis or psychosis.

I am drawing in my own cathartic tool on the dialectics in order to qualitatively transform situations, experiences, feelings and lives of frustration, self-dissastifaction, angst, insecurity and void into those feelings, experiences and lives of empowerment and qualitative transformation in ones life, well-being, healing and more securing and productive lives and relationships with both self and others for the enquirer. I am using phenomenological analysis and the humanistic approach and school of psychology and psychotherapy. The humanistic school of psychology is consisted of phenomenology and phenomenological techniques and philosophies of Existence.

Dialectics implies a qualitative and empowering transformation and self-improvement through a disciplined enquiry and formulating and answering appropriate questions and fusing contradictions and ideas within a creative dialogue that is aimed at a qualitative transformation of ideas.

I am basing the dialectics in this approach on dialectical approaches to therapy and psychology. I am talking about dialectical approaches in the like of:

1). Greenberg et al's (1993) suggestion that "In therapy a dialectical constructivist process involves constructing meaning from immediate experience and conceptually held views of how one expects that experience to be";
2). Cox and Theilgaard's (1987) idea of the poietic Aeolian mode of "the process whereby inner, emptiness, initially experienced as insecurity, fragility and hollowness, is gradually transmuted into affirmative depth; a phrase coined by Halliburton (1981) when he said 'we do not, after all, fall into void but into a kind of affirmative depth'- a cadence in which every connotation counts. Poiesis is inherent in creativity";
3). Linehan's (1993a; 1993b; et al, 1991, 1999) Dialectical Behaviour Therapy form of a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.
4). Riegel's (1973, 1975, 1976a, 1976b, 1979) creation of a dialectical psychology that focuses on the relationships between developing organisms and their changing environment.

I am also basing my suggested exercise on the unique power of a publicised (public) and dialogical form of private, personal, embodied vulnerable and reflective, or auto-dialogical, and self-dialectical, transforming and empowering, logging or blogging.

A log, as we all know, is a personal, reflective, or auto-dialogical, and reflexive, entry in a journal or accounts. A blog, on the other hand, is by definition a log that is made public online in a World Wide Web electronic site or platform for others to read, follow, engage with and interact and dialogue with.

Let me give you a very brief explanation of blogging from the academic literature on its theory, practice, application and implication.

The term "Web Log" was coined in 1997 by John Barger and was shortened to "blog" by Peter Merholz in 1999.

Notaro (2006) indeed describes blogs as an "Accessible and easy to use low-cost approach to Web publishing and reaching mass populations conveyance".

Vaisman (2006) explains that a blog "blends personal narrative with performance narrative (Scheidt, 2006)" and that a blogging space has an "exchange relationship character (Langellier and Peterson, 2004)". She also adds that "a webblog is a non-synchronous multimedia format with a "pulse" consisting of constant updating and crystallizing norms such as personal and informal journal-type writing".

Boyd (2006), on her part, perceives blogs and blogging as a medium, or channel, "through which people can communicate and document their lives and extend their expressions to others". She contends that it creates a dynamic that is "synchronous and asynchronous, performative and voyeuristic" and through which communication occurs. She emphasises the embodied nature of blogs and blogging and the sense of protective ownership that a blogger has towards his/her blogs.

Here is my own reasoning for therapeutic, self-dialectical cathartic blogging and for adapting blogging for cathartic, dialectical and self-dialectical creative writing, logging and blogging.

Within my suggested cathartic creative self-dialectical writing tool, a person is having a very authentic and honest reflective, auto-dialogical, auto-critical and self-analytical conversation, dialogue and discussion with himself/herself as he/she sits by himself/herself alone in front of a personal computer or a laptop.

This can take place in his/her private home, his/her study, a coffeehouse, the local public house, a travelling train on the way to work or pleasure.

The participant is typing and logging things down in a reflective or dereflective free association or [Gestaltian] freefall mode.

In the practice of "dereflection" (Frankl, 1978), the dereflector looks at and re-examines himself/herself and his/her life and position in, with and towards the world as a detached, uninvolved and disembodied third-person. He/She is carrying out the self-reflection as a detached, uninvolved and disembodied third-person who is looking on his/her life from distance as if the events in it unfold and are happening to another person who is there.

In any case, the reflection or dereflection is a very private liberating conversation, self-analysis and auto-dialogue which is meant to be cathartic, healing, emotionally releasing, cleansing and purging, and auto-liberating, one, where the participant lets off steam, frustration, self-dissatisfaction and anger, reverses them and achieves a cathartic balance, empowerment and qualitative transformation.

In the course of this free association, cathartic and auto-liberating auto-dialogue and self-conversation and dereflection, the participant reflects in action and practice on, exposes, reviews, recreates and re-evaluates his/her true, authentic and honest self, his/her vulnerabilities, insecurities, emotions, feeling, reflections, fears, concerns and criticisms of himself/herself and those on the part of his/her social others, situations and his/her world and types it all down.

He/She is also thinking, contemplating and planning and working out creative ways to self-empower by constructively shifting and redirecting disagreeable and weak experiences and situations into more productive and empowering ones and achieving I this manner the experience and situation of a catharsis.

Once this is contemplated and planned out, the plan is being activated and executed.

Once the plan is executed, the execution of the plan is reflected on in action as it is activated and lived in real life situations.

Once the execution of the plan is reflected on, ways are sought and planned as for the improvement of its execution in a way that leads to greater experiences, situations and life of well-being, ontological security, self-satisfaction, empowerment and more productive relationships with oneself and others.

This is implemented in action in real life situation in the real world. This is reflected on and the cycle is repeated.

This is all logged over and within time and the emergence and unfolding of time, space, both the places where the action research cycles and exercises are being activated and carried out and the reflective space and place, enquiry, namely how do I lead a more productive, securing, hopeful and self-fulfilling existence in the world for myself and relationships with both myself and my social others?

The logger is then publicising the logging and making them public in his/her blogging websites for the co-participating and dialoguing individuals who he/she has designated as his/her support group to read, comment on and interact, dialogue and engage with.

In my thesis and publications I have explained what I mean by constructive, creative, empowering and authentic dialogue of equals. I have based this idea of dialogue on the ideas and works of Buber, Freire, Rogers and a superb article by Heath et al., (2006) on dialogue.

The hope is that a constructive auto-learning, self-comprehending, self-improving, auto-empowerment and cathartic auto-liberation will be achieved by attaining and working out in authentic, creative, engaging and critical dialogue the feedbacks of other human beings and the practice of dereflecting on and thinking and illuminating them later on in a different time and situation.

I am meaning a creative, constructive and critical dialogue with other human beings.

By other human beings, I am meaning professionals, with the practical and theoretical knowledge, know how and expertise as for how to help others in their lives, and, not less importantly, fellow human being who have gone through similar situations and experiences to the ones logged and blogged about in their lives. These are my suggested target population of validation and selected sample to be generalised into the targeted population.

At the same time, by the practice of dereflecting on the logging, I am meaning a self-critical, creative and productive auto-dialogical dereflection on the logging of one's own actions, experimentations, struggles, works, achievements and failures and reflections and reading the logging and reflections later on as dereflections.

In any case, I am talking about self-accountability and difficult questions in the like of: Where have I gone wrong?
What should have I done differently?
What would I do differently next time in similar situations?

According to my personal experience of doing it myself, answering these questions in a satisfactory manner will lead to empowerment, better auto-comprehension and cathartic auto-liberation and a qualitative change and auto-transformation in what one is doing, one's well-being and one's relationships with both self and others.

The theory of how this is to be applied into practice

I am offering below four practical experimental exercises for a dialectical cathartic empowerment and qualitative transformation, healing, self-fulfilment and well-being.

If you are doing the exercises online then I strongly suggest doing it as a blog and benefiting from a constructive and supportive interaction on the part of sympathetic and supporting individuals to whom you allow access to your blogging.

If you are doing it in class, we may wish to create a blogging platform for the participants here. One that is either limited accessed – namely, accessible via entering a secret code of access to access the platform

As part of my suggested therapeutic, empowering and cathartic, self-dialectical creative writing blogging tool, individuals are self-dialectically integrating the question, how do I lead a more self-fulfilling, ontologically securing and empowering existence in the world for myself? with the question, how do I avoid leading an existence of [greater] existential angst, frustration and solitude and ontological void and insecurity?. They answer the second question in order to properly answer and transform and execute in a rigorous fashion the first and primary one.

They produce daily posts of the way they delve inside, make sense of and illuminate to both themselves and others the meanings and implications of their experiences, lives and situations of angst, void, anxiety, frustration, anger, disappointment and self-disappointment and they way the work to contradict, reverse, shift and redirect these experiences, lives and situations in order to construct and lead an existence of a greater ontological security, self-fulfilment, empowerment and more productive relationships with both themselves and their social others.

They then make their daily posts publicised online in a designated website or online platform of several blogs, a blog per person for their support group to engage and interact with. We, the supporting group, engage with it and support them in their action and self-empowerment.

The analysis of the lived experiences and situation is done phenomenologically.

Phenomenology describes how a person orients to a lived, living, embodied and situated experience in the world over time, space and action and reflection of a concept of a phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990; Moustakas, 1981, 1990, 1994).

It aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of individuals' everyday experiences of everyday phenomena (ibid.,).

In my UK empirical PhD work last decade I have explained in great details the theoretical and abstract meanings and implications of my suggested and worked out alternative heuristic tool, solution and approach to the re-evaluation, theorisation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in the world.

It was a most annoying PhD that came after my wholly theoretical and philosophical critical psychology research programme at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in the 1990s, where I studied continental philosophy and Phenomenology and Philosophies of Existence.

The main problem in the present work is that everything is explained and elaborated in way too much detail. I have been feeling so excited by it that I am continuously failing in the course of the entire decade to get it all in 90,000 words manuscript. By all I am meaning the theory and philosophy behind this rather abstractive, theoretical and philosophical idea and its practicalities and practical uses, implications, meanings and applications.

Another problem is that because I have written the account and thesis as an autobiographical and autoethnographical self-reevaluation of my life and developments as a human being, a practitioner and an academic over the years, it is lacking in experimental evidence for its validity as a methodology that is to be applied on other individuals as a creative writing therapeutic methodology.

I am now having to contemplate and carefully plan what to do with my massive account and textual manuscript that is there staring back at me in the face from within my computer screen. I am meaning a textual account and manuscript that follows the created method of creatively, dialectically, cathartically, phenomenologically and textually logging my own life and personal, living and embodied, developments, growth, empowerment, struggles, healing, empowerment and learning over the years and at a number of physical locations.

I am talking about my developments, struggles, learning and achievements from 1993 to the present. This is as I am seeking to work out in theory and practice a way of directly re-evaluating, describing and explaining and accounting for and re-evaluating a person's being, living and developing in, with and towards the world.

This is as he is (I am) directly seeking and working to construct, reconstruct and lead a more securing, hopeful, self-fulfilling and empowering life in the world for himself (myself) and productive, securing and fulfilling relationship with both himself (myself) and others. And also without needing to reduce, mechanise and objectify the conveyed and worked out explanations, descriptions and accounts into traditional wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated, generalising, predicting and profiling, social, human and educational sciences and clinical and empirical psychology theories, linguistic statements, models and methodological tools. This is for the theorisation, re-evaluation and conceptualisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world (the field of ontology and dasein, being-in-the-world, and daseinanalysis - Heidegger, 1962; Binswanger, 1958, 1963; Boss, 1963, 1977; May et al., 1958),).

I have fulfilled the task of working out my suggested heuristic tool, solution and approach, in theory and am now wishing to put it into the practice of practical self-dialectical, creative and cathartic writing exercises for well-being, health, healing and personal and community development, empowerment and growth.

I have produced an abundance of writings, explanations and descriptions of my intentions, reasoning and practices in theory.

I have also created four practical exercises for the first time in my life. Here they are:

III. PRACTICAL EXERCISES:

This ranges from twenty-three minutes in a time-pressured classroom workshop to as much time needed online and a series of clinical support

group's sessions in which a group meets for a weekly session of two hours that are run and moderated by the council, health trust or the city.

Why do I do that? Why do I offer practical exercises?
Let us try out putting my theoretic tool into practice.

My friend, the philosopher and sociologist of science, Karl Rogers of Argentina, Bath University and Columbia University, has advised me recently - when discussing and electronically dialoguing on my difficulties and ways for me to auto-empower and auto-liberate in what I do - that "practice without theory is mindless, while theory without practice is speculation" and that my cathartic blogging tool "should unify theory and practice, thereby allowing each aspect to illuminate the other" and provide a basis by which the engager can put the suggested cathartic blogging into practice as a therapeutic tool.

Karl has also advised me to conduct practical experiments in which I recruit a social group and provide them with some exercises to see for myself practically and scientifically and be advised by the participants whether or not my ideas could really help them and other individuals, taking the exercises in the future, attain empowerment, healing and a qualitative transformation in their lives and in turn make up a valid and reliable method and theory for creative therapeutic writing. This has been something I wanted to do for years but has been unable to do it properly because I was busy with an ontological and psychological, creative writing, self-study work that has led me to my present thoughts.

After serious reflection and dereflection on my despair, frustration, angst and insecurity as I am starring at my writings and accounts and wondering where to go and what to do next, I have decided to start experimenting with practical therapeutic exercises that I hope would illuminate the above theory that is seen by many as too abstract and conceptual and lacking practicality and experientialism. Something that given my desire to liberate ontology and the psychology of the human subject and human existence from wholly propositional abstractions and conceptualisations makes up a frustrating and upsetting irony for me.

It is a pilot that I am offering below and that I should like to test out with peers and colleagues and volunteer participants.

Exercise One

Instructions

In the next eight minutes or so - in the context of a timed classroom workshop exercise **- please write down for us what provides you with feelings, experiences, a life and situations of anxiety, angst, tension, frustration, self-disappointment, insecurity, sadness, grief, anger, feeling that others do not get you in the way you wish to be understood or related with and misery and despair.**

Please think of situations that give you or have given you the experiences of anxiety, angst, unhealthy tension and nervousness, frustration, self-disappointment, insecurity, sadness, grief, anger, feeling that others do not get you in the way you wish to be understood or related with and misery and despair.

Write down those situations, experiences and feeling.
Answer the following questions
What did and do these specific situations mean for you?

Why do you think and believe have these situations caused and led to these negative feelings and experiences of yours?

Why do you think you are feeling angst, frustrated and dissatisfied within these situations?

Why do you thing you are experiencing anxiety, tension lack of self-fulfilment, ontological void and insecurity.

You do not need to share this writing. However, you may wish to talk about it or read it aloud.

If this is done in a clinical support group, the participants may be asked to read it allowed and discuss it. If you are doing it in a clinical support group then we can do both. You can share it with us and also place and publicise it in your blog.

If you are doing the exercise online then you can take all the time you need. It is preferable to have this writing exercise publicised online in the form of the internet blog that I explained above. A blog that could be read, dialogued and engaged with online by social and dialogical others.

You can have a limited accessed blogging internet website which is only accessible by code and only give the code to people with whom you feel comfortable and whose comments and participation you are interested in.

The clinical support group can have its own blogging platform –Where each member/participant has its own World Wide Web blogging space.

If you are doing this exercise in a very limited classroom exercise as an illustration for you and a pilot for me and my suggested tool and the designated, eight minutes have gone by then please stop writing

Exercise Two

Instructions

Now,

Think of ways to amend these disagreeable feelings, experiences, life and situations and shift, reverse and redirect them into situations, experiences, life and feelings of a more self-fulfilling, securing, happier and self-pleasing existence in the world of more constructive relationships with both self and social others for yourself.

In the next eight minutes – in the case of a limited and illustrative class exercise - **please write down your proposed plan of how to reverse the above negative experiences, situations and feelings into more positive ones where you would feel and experience yourself to be happier, less anxious, less tense and less frustrated**.

Write down what do you propose to do so as to reverse those unpleasant situations and experiences into the more positive ones and have a transforming and empowering change and improvement in your life and relationships with both yourself and your social others.

Imagine what this will mean for you and your life. Imagine your life after applying this suggested change, shift and redirection.

What and how would you feel?

How would you go about doing so and achieving this in practice?

You do not need to share this writing. You may wish to talk about it and read it aloud.

If you are doing the exercise in a clinical support group, could you share it and discuss it with us.

If you are doing the exercise online then you can take all the time you need.

It is preferable to have this writing exercise publicised online in the form of an internet blog that could be read and engaged with by others.

You can have a limited accessed blogging internet website which is only accessible by code and give the code only to people whose comments and participation you are interested in.

If you are doing it in a clinical support group then we can do both. You can share it with us and also place and publicise it in your blog in our blogging platform in your designated blogging space that is part of our blogging platform.

Eight minutes are up for the limited workshop trial: Please stop writing:

Exercise Three

Instructions

  Now:

Write down what you are feeling now upon doing this exercise:
Do you feel a cathartic release, relief and auto-liberation?
Do you feel tension?
Do you feel more tensed than before?

If you are doing this in a limited classroom exercise then spend five minutes doing so. Please if you can and wish to then please share your experiences with the group.

How did it make you feel?

Was following the exercise a positive, auto-liberating experience or annoying and counterproductive one?

Please let us have a dialogue where you tell me and us what you think of this exercise. If you are doing the exercise in a clinical support group, let us go around the room and discuss this.

Exercise Four

Group Discussion and dialogue

Instructions

Group discussion: To be used also as an emotional debriefing.

What I mean by debriefing **is that I want myself and my professional colleagues to** identify **any emotional difficulties and struggles amongst the participants that has been erupted by a difficult self-reflection on and talking auto-accountability for one's hardships, angst, ontological insecurity and personal failures. This identification is to take place before the participants leave our company.   By our company I am meaning either physical presence in the actual space or virtual presence in the virtual electronic space.**

I want to see a clear thought, reasoning and interaction and no unusual anxieties that are demonstrated by the usual clinical symptoms of acute an anxiety.

In the case of doubt, I consult with clinicians and keep close observation and talk discussion and keep *Diazepam* tablets with me just in case.

I dialectically ask:

What do you make of this exercise in general not just the experience of following it?

Let us have, indulge, engage, share and co-participate in an honest free association discussion of its applications and implications to the field of creative writing for well-being, personal and community development, healing and empowerment both in practice and theory and based on personal experiences and reflections in and on practice.

What do you make of it?

Do you see a future within it?

Do I waste my time doing it?

Please tell me.

What can I do so as to be able to leave the academy and academic career and concentrate on this work of acting out this tool in practice, teaching it and passing it on?

Is it worth it to do so?

Have I wasted my time, the last decade of my life? your time, today?

In the case of a clinical support group, please relate today's session to our other, previous, sessions.

Have you felt better today?

Have you felt worse than in the other sessions?

What and why are those differences?

What could we do to have more constructive sessions?

What have you done differently today?

One of my clinical techniques when I worked as a practitioner has been to blur the roles and treat the clients as if they are the therapists. I love having them participate in their own therapy and even to ask their opinion on clinical situations with other clients: Obviously in general and without exposing identities.

I also love to ask their personal opinion on my personal life, subject to the usual ethical consideration in therapy.

I am feeling secure enough to make fun of that, read them a passage from Frankl about psychiatrists and philosophers (Heidegger) taken to be patients and one of the chronic patients taken to be the leading psychiatrist/therapist.

I therefore like to have the participants in a clinical implementation of the exercise share their view with me, us, the city and governmental agency and the professional organisation, of the exercise as a clinical tool. It is crucial for me to have them fully active and responsible in and for the exercises.

If you are doing this exercise online as a log or blog, then please write down for us what you are feeling and your thoughts, experiences and emotions upon doing these exercises.

Please tell us - Is there a cathartic relief and auto-liberation, empowerment, growth and personal development and qualitative transformation in your cognition and ontology – your existence and feelings and experiences?

Take all the time you need if your doing it online.

If you do this engagement as a blog then I shall reply. You can then reply back to my responses and we shall have a discussion of it. Or not.

I hope that you can express your opinion of the exercise outside the therapeutic blog in a more general blog. If you are doing it as a clinical support group then let us do both. Let us have the group discussion both in class and online in the common room/space of our blogging platform.

You could write up these exercises as self-help blogging posts. You can spend time doing them as often as you wish.

You can engage with the dialogical others of your blog – namely the supporting engagers who read and comment to and interact with your blogging posts.

I predict that you will be surprised how much steam comes out as you do the logging and interact with others on the logging turned blogging. This is what I should like to test out and validate here.

IV. Suggested Reading

I do not include here the *Lapidus*' publications as these are known. I am offering a way to complement these references.

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Alon Serper,
Somerset, England,
April, 2010

Appendix Seven

Working On A Proposal For An Online
Therapeutic, Ontological, Self-Help, and
Educational Training and Mentoring Platform

As blogged on the 6th of April, 2010, at http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/platform.htm in my University Homepages as part of my original self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological and cathartic educational action research cycles of enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into the question: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?, doctoral thesis submission that is still accessible from my WebPages at the URL, http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/bloggingthesis.html. Beside placing it in my webpages in order to get feedbacks, I also placed this piece of proposal in the appendix of my original dialectical b/logging thesis with a view to show my present concrete and practical intentions for my heuristic tool and my desire to move from the wholly theoretical abstract to the practical.

Tuesday, the 6th of April, 2010, 15:32

I should very much like to get your feedback on my attempt to develop an electronic platform for my suggested cathartic tool

A Summary of the Suggested Electronic Platform[27]

The Idea

This proposal is intended for the construction of a virtual community of a clinical and ontological support group and the educational training and continuing professional development of practitioners. The suggested electronic platform is designed for individuals to practice human relationships and social interactions within a supportive environment which provides immediate and ongoing constructive feedbacks and criticisms. It is also designed for professional practitioners to reflect on, re-evaluate and improve their professional practices and performances by taking on an active and equal role in the life of the community and to form an integrated and equal part of it.

The aim here, in the suggested electronic platform, is to support struggling individuals within a caring and supportive virtual electronic community. It is also to enable individuals to creatively and systematically learn to engage and interrelate more constructively with both themselves and other people and improve, in doing so, the quality of their own lives, as individuals, and the quality of their relationships and personal, human and social interactions with both themselves and other people as a community. All this, within the controlled, caring and supportive settings of a virtual World Wide Web community and environment of practitioners, clients and ordinary individuals that can and is there to provide

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[27] A detailed account of what is proposed is also available

immediate and ongoing constructive critiques, comments and feedbacks and that is continuously monitored by clinicians and self-monitored and evaluated by itself and its members.

The participants in the suggested electronic platform will be able to study and observe online (as it takes place and unfolds) the real ontological progress or regression of a person who is logging, blogging and enquiring-within-b/logging (on very regular basis, usually daily) into his/her life and the way he/she is working on self-dialectically transforming and empowering his/her quality of life and professional practices and the quality of his/her relationships with both himself/herself and other people. Furthermore, the participants will be able to actively and continuously interact, follow and engage with these individuals, express their opinion and provide their feedbacks and constructive comments, critiques and criticisms.

Each participant will be able to construct his/her own ontological and self-therapeutic explanations of the way he/she is struggling with his/her life and the way he/she is working on his/her own personal and community developments, healing, empowerment and growth. He/She will also be able to observe and engage and dialogue with the ongoing ontological and self-therapeutic explanations of other individuals and to learn from this practice. He/She will be encouraged to comment on the ontological accounts of other members, include the comments and dialogues in his/her own ontological and self-therapeutic explanations and have his/her comments and the dialogues with them included in the ontological explanations of others. The underlying assumption is that every individual can learn from and teach another individual about life and living it well.

The suggested electronic platform is also intended for educational purposes. It is designed for the intentions of training clinicians to support and engage with struggling individuals in real world situations from distance, continuously and over time, online, without face-to-face interaction and as the personal and mental health and ontological crises take place and unfold in real life action and real-world situations. By a virtual community I am in fact meaning a community and communal interactions that take place online, in World Wide Web electronic spaces and which therefore do not require face-to-face meetings. Thereby saving costly travel, physical accommodation and working hours in physical outpatient community treatment and enabling the transcendence of regions and cultures and the thinking, instead, in terms of worldwide human interactions. The scheme is also designed to stress and illustrate the crucial importance of humbleness among practitioners by showing them how much they can learn from their clients and students and among the general populations by showing how much they can learn from other people, cultures and ethnicities.

The Suggested Electronic Platform

The virtual electronic platform is composed of
    i.   designated private, embodied and idiosyncratic blogging spaces for individuals to carry out their self-dialectical and cathartic blogging,
    ii.   designated communal spaces for the community to interact with as a community,
    iii.   designated clinical training, teaching and professional development and supervision spaces that are intended for professional consultation, peer support and training of professionals.

i. The Designated Private Blogging Spaces

These private spaces are designated for the participants to work out, log, blog and enquire-within-b/logging into their embodied lives and their distinctive ways of helping themselves by working at constructing and developing more positive and constructive feelings, situations and experiences of greater well-being, ontological security, self-fulfilment, meaning, empowerment and healing for themselves. Each participant is to identify, reveal and share in his/her embodied safe space his/her embodied and living situations and experiences of angst, frustration, alienation, grief, self-disappointment, vulnerabilities, difficulties and insecurities and counterproductive and dissatisfying relationships and interrelationships with both himself/herself and other people. He/she is to delve inside and into these experiences and situations and produce an authentic phenomenological account as for what these negative and counterproductive experiences and situations mean to him/her and his/her existence in, with and towards the world. He/she is also to log for himself/herself and blog for others his/her suggested and planned ways for him/her to work out ways of overcoming and reversing these disagreeable, negative and counterproductive, situations and experiences into the more positive, constructive and pleasant life and situations, feelings and experiences of greater self-fulfilment, ontological security, empowerment and healing and more productive and fulfilling relationships and interrelationships with both self and others for him/her and his/her existence in, with and towards the world. The participants are expected to dialogue with other members on their blogging in their private blogging space and to have the dialogue publicly available to those with the access code. The platform owners will make sure all dialogue is supportive, constructive and caring.

ii. The Communal Spaces

The communal spaces are to be used for the purpose of mastering and learning to form a productive relationship and dialogues of equality and equal and mutual respect, humbleness and human dignity and participation among the participants. These spaces are designed for the members to interact among themselves within a communal space that belongs to the community rather than to the embodied individual members. The spaces are also designed to raise concerns, advertise events, socialise, network and discuss matters of community importance and lay out ground rules and codes of etiquette.

iii. The Training and Professional Peer-Support and Professional Development Spaces

These spaces are designated for the professionals to consult and discuss the progress of the clients and their own professional practices and performances, as well as for them to reflect on their own practices and performances and to dialogue with peers, mentors and mentored on their reflection. The professionals are to evaluate each other's performances and developments within a more personal and caring settings. These spaces are also to be utilised for professional publications. Practitioners, from various locations, organisations and institutes, will be able to plan and work on co-publications, discuss their work and plans and read and comment on each other's writings and drafts. Practitioners, who are not academics, will be given the opportunity of being trained by academics how to publish in academic peer-reviewed journals. Academics will be able to engage with real life professional practices and to be informed by the practitioners about what is happening in their professional practices. These spaces are also designed for virtual lectures, conferences, workshops, ongoing supervision and professional dialogues, mentoring and continuing professional development days.

My details and the details of the self-therapeutic, ontological and educational tool I developed and which forms the basis of the suggested electronic platform are published at the *Arts & Health South West* Organisation "for people who believe in the value of creativity in enhancing people's health and well-being"at,
http://ahsw.co.uk/member_detail.cfm?user_id=739&key=serper
http://ahsw.co.uk/member_webpage.cfm?page_id=2253

Monday, 5th of April, 2010, 19:32

Initial Proposal for A Therapeutic and Educational Electronic Platform

In this proposal I shall provide a brief theoretical highlight and introduction and explanation of my vision for a therapeutic, ontological and educational electronic platform and then describe in more details the ways I am proposing for the technological implementation of my vision. I shall elaborate on the originality of the suggested electronic platform and the ways I am suggesting to make this vision work both of a significant and valuable contribution to humanity, and human welfare, and a financially viable and profitable business.

The aim here is to fulfil an initial request for me to highlight and summarise my vision for a therapeutic, ontological and educational electronic platform and then in the case of doubts or a great interest to have the reader of the vision engage with a second component that was made available for his/her immediate scrutiny and in which more details and practicalities are provided.

Part One:

Introduction: What Is Being Offered Here

The Vision for the Suggested Therapeutic and Educational Electronic Platform

The present proposal is for the construction of a virtual World Wide Web ontological, therapeutic and educational electronic platform. The electronic platform is intended for a virtual community of a clinical and ontological support group and the educational training and continuing professional development of practitioners.

By a virtual community I am meaning a community of members that rather than meet each other face-to-face in a physical room, are meeting and interacting with each other online, within the World Wide Web, using the available technological advancements and physically located at the convenience of their own homes, offices, surgeries or even their personal laptop computers on moving trains, busses or planes at any time convenient to them.

These practitioners include practicing or retired clinicians in the like of social workers, counsellors, psychiatrists, clinical and occupational psychologists, nurses, health visitors, chaplains and General Practitioners.

They also include academics, social and human science theorists (in the like of sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists and economists), biochemists and pharmacists, artists, writers, poets and educators and anyone from the general public who is interested in learning and engaging more with the ontological phenomenon of what it means, takes and implies to be a human subject in the world.

This educational learning about ontological phenomena and questions includes learning more about what it means and implies for human beings to struggle to self-improve, auto-educate, empower and heal in what they are doing and the way a person is relating, interacting and interrelating with both himself/herself and other people and is working to improve the quality of his/her life and of his/her relationships with both himself/herself and other people.

The Virtual Clinical Support Community

What I am meaning by such a community of clinical support to its members is a virtual community in which the participant members utilise an ontological, educational and therapeutic tool which I have already worked out in great details in theory and tested empirically over the last ten years on myself and others.

The therapeutic, ontological and educational tool that I am talking here, in this proposal, about is designed for a shared and communal self-help self-dialectical and cathartic therapy. This type of therapy has been invented and developed by the author of this proposal and is explained in some details in the second part of this proposal. It is continuously tested and examined empirically and in theory.

The object, in acute mental health cases, is to complement the very costly and exhausted and stretched out (in terms of resources) face-to-face talk therapy and provide immediate and continuous, around the clock, clinical support, observation and care and responses to mental health crises at a very low cost for individuals in distress.

It is presently taking months for a client to receive a clinical face-to-face talk therapy and even assessment and the process is tedious, strenuous, taxing and extremely complex and complicated. There are planned budget cuts for mental health trusts across the world and the already limited and stretched out positions are cut further. The recent economic crises around the globe has placed countries in financial ruining and forced to cut expenses.

Resources are exhausted and staff are worn out, with their performance affected. The object of the suggested electronic platform is to back up the exhausted system, provide more facilities and opportunities at less financial costs and to spread the now more limited budget more wisely. It is there to support the exhausted and unappreciated staff.

The object, in less acute mental health cases, is to continuously observe, help and support - as a strongly connected, caring and supporting community - struggling individuals with their day-to-day life and their struggles to lead the most fulfilling, ontologically secure and productive life they are capable of under the circumstances and to self-fulfil and empower themselves within their professional practices, community, loved ones and society. This day-to-day life that I am talking about includes ongoing, continuous, relationships with both self and others and ongoing interactions with the social world.

The type of individuals that I am talking about here is the type of ordinary individuals who are not diagnosed as mentally ill, are not of any danger to themselves or others and are not diagnosed by the system as clinically depressed or psychotic in any way. Such individuals do not have, at this present time, a safe, secure, confidential, professional and non-judgmental space to discuss ontological struggles. They are left fending for themselves with friends and families not equipped with the ability or know-how to help them with their ontological questions.

I am talking about ontological questions in the like of what it means to be a person in the world, in general, and to be me, in particular, who am I, what is life all about and how do I construct a lead a more meaningful, secure and self-fulfilling existence in the world for myself and improve the quality of my life and of my relationships with both myself and other people. I perceive these ontological questions to be human-all-too-human and to be shared and recognised by most if not all human beings in common.

The system, already too exhausted to take care of diagnosed mentally health clients, cannot even begin to consider providing resources to dealing with such ontological issues that are nevertheless vital for a healthy and productive society and community and a good economy of ontologically secure, energised and self-fulfilled workforces. It is likely that an ontologically insecure and unfulfilled person and worker would miss more days of work, call sick more often, experience greater mental and physical fatigue and exhaustion and not fulfil his/her true potential in his/her workplace. His/her relationships with his/her co-workers and supervisors are likely to be poor, leading to hostility, frustration and alienation in the workplace and affect the entire working environment.

Whilst these issues are not new and have been documented in the literature for centuries, the recent advancement of technology can provide answers and practical solutions that have simply not been feasible before and to do so at a relatively very low cost that is thought to be an important investment for society, humanity, the economy and the community.

The aim here, in the suggested electronic platform, is to support those struggling individuals within a caring and supportive virtual electronic community and to enable them to continuously experiment with the task of relating to the world and to themselves and to learn to improve and develop the quality of their relationships with both themselves and others.

The virtual electronic platform enables them to receive constructive critiques, criticisms and feedbacks from other people and from professional clinicians and in turn to work at their empowerment, development, self-fulfilment, healing and personal growth and their improvement of their relationships with both themselves and other people. It also enables them to comment on the efforts of other people to engage with similar ontological endeavours and to learn and self-develop from looking at the ontological struggles of other people and from advising and dialoguing with them.

The dialogue is to be supervised by professional clinicians and is to be continuously monitored by the platform owners for counterproductive and abusive interactions among members. Such counterproductive and abusive interactions will not be tolerated and permitted, with the abusive parties warned and if necessary expelled from the community.

The intention is to enable individuals to creatively and systematically learn to interrelate more constructively with both themselves and other people and improve, in doing so, the quality of a person's life and the quality of his/her relationships with both himself/herself and other people. All this, within a controlled, caring and supportive virtual World Wide Web community and environment that can and is there to provide constructive critiques, comments and feedback and that is continuously monitored by clinicians and self-monitored and evaluated by itself and its members.

The Treatment and tackling of Anti-Social Behaviour and Offences, Including Hate and Racist Crimes

The suggested electronic platform is also to be used in the treatment of anti-social behaviour and offences. Anti-Social behaviour and offences is presently an acute local problem in the United Kingdom, that is at the very centre of the present national election campaign, as well as a global, worldwide problem. It affects the quality of life of real life communities, victims and oppressors alike. It costs the economy a lot of money and diverts and consumes important resources that would be better far more constructively elsewhere. It divides and damages whole communities. For the purposes of the present proposal, I associate racist attacks and abuses, both physical and verbal, and hate crimes with anti-social offences and view intolerance and disrespect of cultural differences as anti-social offences.

The offenders will be taught to improve their social skills and to relate to and interrelate with other people and themselves more constructively. They will be taught to learn to identify and process situations in the real world that provide them with the experiences of angst, frustration, anger, self-disappointment and solitude and ontological void and insecurity in their lives and unfulfilling and counterproductive relationships with other people and themselves. Then, they will be taught to reverse these negative situations into more positive situations that could provide them with the experiences of greater ontological meaning and security, self-fulfilment and self-dissatisfaction and more constructive relationships

with both themselves and others. They will also follow the ontological and self-therapeutic blogging of their targeted victims.

The offenders could be ordered by the courts to take part in the community. Their participation can be carried out from within the real-life community, house arrests and prisons. Their dialoguing critical friends will initially be professional therapists and clinicians and anyone that they trust and have a productive relationship with and then gradually community members from the general populations. Their progress will be continuously assessed and re-evaluated by the community, both the professional members and the general members. The aim will be to keep their membership on as preventative measures and to make it a pleasurable, enjoyable and constructive activity for them to take part in. I am meaning an activity that is cathartically auto-liberating and empowering, refreshing and enriching for them to engage with, rather than a coerced chore that they are obliged to do. They will be treated as learners rather than offenders and as their commitment and interest grows, they will increasingly be treated, trusted and respected as both learners and teachers with interesting things to contribute to and teach others.

Ideally, as the therapeutic process advances, there will be a dialogical blogging relationship between victims and their oppressors. I am talking about blogging relationships in which both parties will share their ontological being, living and developing in the world as individuals with each other. This includes an account of their heuristic way of identifying and processing their situations and experiences of angst, frustration, anger, self-disappointment and solitude and ontological void and insecurity in their lives and unfulfilling and counterproductive relationships with other people and themselves. And then overcoming and reversing these situations and experiences into those of greater ontological meaning and security, self-fulfilment and self-dissatisfaction and more constructive relationships with both themselves and others.

Teaching Tolerance and Challenging Xenophobia and Stereotyping

The Suggested electronic platform is also aiming at increasing tolerance and respect towards other cultures and among various ethnicities. The last economic crises have increased xenophobia, stereotyping and the erroneous assumptions that immigration leads to an increase unemployment on the part of those who were born in the country in question when in fact they create jobs that would not be there otherwise. This is exploited for easy political gains through fear, accusing weak, defenceless populations intolerance, xenophobia and stereotypes.

The suggested electronic platform is designed to introduce individuals to other cultures and ethnicities by looking at the way those who come from these cultures and ethnicities struggle with their everyday life and their human-all-too-human practices and acts of working at identifying, re-evaluating and overcoming and reversing the human-all-too-human experiences and situations of angst, solitude, alienation, frustration, ontological insecurity and self-dissatisfaction. I am

meaning a self-dialectical reversal and qualitative transformation into those situations and experiences of a more empowering, securing and self-fulfilling existence in the world for oneself and in turn cathartic healing, personal and community development and empowerment.

I am convinced that once sharing and discussing such ontological and self-therapeutic accounts, the distinction between 'them' and 'us' will be significantly loosened. Humanity and the human subject will be perceived as individuals working at constructing, developing and establishing a more meaningful, ontologically securing, self-fulfilling and engaging existence in the world for themselves and overcoming and reversing situations that provide them with the experiences and feeling existential angst, frustration, alienation and solitude and ontological void and insecurity. What these situations mean in real life situations in the real world differs among individuals yet could be understood by most if not all human beings when explained, rationalised and described and enquired into over time, space, practice and praxis and enquiries, in the like of how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?

The fact that individuals could b/log and enquire-within-b/logging into their being, living and developing in, with and towards the world within global World Wide Web is enabling the transcendence of regions and cultures and the thinking, instead, in terms of worldwide human interactions. A participant from California can read and engage with the b/logging and enquiring-within-writing&blogging of a participant from Anglo-speaking Africa and vice versa. A participant from Quebec can engage with the b/logging and enquiring-within-writing&b/logging of a participant from French speaking Africa. The issues of immigration colonialism and post-colonialism could be better understood, engaged with and related to by other cultures and different people.

The Virtual Training of Clinicians, Theorists and Academics

The suggested electronic platform is also intended for educational purposes. It is designed for the purposes of training clinicians to support and engage with struggling individuals in real world situations from distance, continuously and over time, online, without face-to-face interaction and as the personal and mental health and ontological crises take place and unfold in real life action and real-world situations.

By ontology I am meaning being, living and developing in, with and towards the world and the meanings and implications of the phenomenon of being in, with and towards the world and how to self-fulfil, secure and empower in one's life. By ontological crises I am talking here about existential angst, frustration and alienation from oneself and the world and solitude and ontological void and insecurity in and with one's life.

Furthermore, the suggested electronic platform is also designed for the purpose of learning about and teaching in theory, whilst observing the real-life phenomenon

unfolded online in real world situations, the ontological, epistemological and therapeutic phenomenon of being a struggling and interrelating person.

I am meaning a real life person in real world situations who is working at constructing and leading a more fulfilling and productive life for himself/herself and more meaningful and constructive relationships with both himself/herself and other people. I am talking here about relationships in the world and practical real life situations, outside wholly propositional academic theories in psychology and the human and social sciences.

The Philosophical Grounding of the Teaching and Training

What I meaning here is that the suggested electronic platform offers a heuristic alternative to the tradition of approaching and examining the human subject and the phenomenon of being a person in the world from within propositional, abstract, disembodied, fixated, generalising, predicting and profiling, theories of the meanings of human existence and the phenomenon of being a person in the world. I am talking about propositional theories that theorists and academics construct, test and validate or invalidate in their academic practices and practitioners apply in their professional clinical practices and lives.

This distinction between theorists and academics' constructing and experimenting with theories (validating or invalidating them) and practitioners and clinicians' applying these theories in real life clinical situations in the real world does not exist here.

Instead, the participants in the suggested electronic platform will be able to study and observe online (as it takes place and unfolds the life) the real ontological progress or regression of a person who is logging, blogging and enquiring-within-b/logging (on very regular basis, usually daily, into his/her life and the way he/she is working on self-dialectically transforming and empowering his/her quality of life and the quality of his/her relationships with both himself/herself and others. Furthermore, the participants will be able to actively interact and engage with these individuals, express their opinion and provide their feedback and constructive comments, critiques and criticisms. This will be discussed in details in the second part of this proposal.

Each participant will be able to construct his/her own explanation of the way he/she is struggling with his/her life and the way he/she is working on his/her own personal and community developments, healing, empowerment and growth. He/she will also be able to observe and engage and dialogue with the ontological ongoing explanations of other individuals, comment, include the comments in his/her own explanation and have his/her comments and the dialogues with them included in the ontological explanations of others. Hence, all the participating members will explain their ontological struggles and dilemmas and engage with and comment on the ontological struggles and dilemmas of other participants.

What I am saying here is that rather than generalise, mechanise, dehumanise and abstract individuals into propositional theories of the phenomenon of being a human subject, the meanings of human existence and what it means to be a human subject in the world and test, validate or invalidate, and apply these propositional theories, this phenomenon and ontological and educational questions could be heuristically approached and answered in the aggregates of individuals' self-dialectical blogging accounts of their own progress or regression. The accounts can be compared, shared and dialogued among the participants of the electronic platform. This will be explained in details in the next part.

It needs to be emphasised here, as a footnote, that I am by no means devaluing in any way the extent and merit of the propositional theories and the tradition of validating or invalidating them. I subscribe to many propositional theories in my field and have engaged in empirical validation of propositional theories throughout my academic career. I believe the traditional propositional theories and the insights they bear, construct and embody can be incorporated into the self-dialectical cathartic blogging accounts and be complemented, examined and added to by the ontological and therapeutic self-dialectical blogging accounts.

Conclusion of the Introduction of Vision

This concludes my introduction of my vision for a therapeutic and educational electronic platform. I shall now describe the platform and my suggestions for its practical implementation, its originality and rationale in the next part. The reader can either leave after establishing his/her initial impression of the vision or go on reading if in doubts or interested in finding out more.

Requests for further information on the vision

Details, publications and further information and elaborations on this vision are to be supplied by request to the following contacts,

Alon.serper@btinternet.com
a.serper@bath.ac.uk

Part of the proposal here is to have electronic spaces for the platform's owners in which all information about what is suggested here will be accessible.

These spaces will include theoretical information, information and details about the different packages and deals offered in the platform and suggestions for improvement, feedbacks and dialogue.

What this Proposal Includes in Practice and the Practical Implementation of the Vision

Introduction

In the present proposal I shall highlight and describe my reasons for pursuing with this suggested business. These reasons are based on my desire to do something that I perceive to be of real value and meaning to humanity, society and the community whilst also able for me to establish financial independence for myself doing things that I regard important, meaningful, productive and of real social and human value.

I shall also describe and rationalise my suggestions for the actual construction of the electronic platform in terms of technical, financial, clinical, educational and epistemological viability. I am meaning here the ability to produce earnings, the ability to clinically support individuals in improving their quality of life and of their relationships with both themselves and other people and the ability to teach, train and learn about human beings and how to support their ontological struggles, empowerment, healing, developments and growth in what they do and the way they live their lives.

I shall also briefly describe the theoretical idea behind the suggested electronic platform and explain, rationalise and describe its purpose, reasoning and bases.

I shall also provide and discuss my suggested sources of revenues and in doing so express my personal confidence that the suggested electronic platform can be profitable and cost-effective with very little risks of losing a significant amount of investment or attaining financial debts, yet with an enormous sense of achievement for the owners of the electronic platform.

The Clinical Logic and Rationale

The suggested electronic platform is designated for individuals in need with a view for them to stop being passive in treating and changing their life circumstances and situations and experiences of grief, angst, frustration, alienation, existential void and insecurity and poor relationships with both self and others. It is designated for individuals to stop relying on the help of others and feel self-pity for their lives and themselves and instead to take a full and active accountability of their own life and their own self-development, self-fulfilment, empowerment and healing.

The aim is for the participating members of the community to work on their own cathartic healing and auto-liberating, self-dialectical empowerment and personal and professional developments, growth and self-fulfilment as individuals, society members and members of the economic workforces. This self-help practice is to take place within the support of caring and experienced community that is virtual, takes place online, in World Wide Web electronic spaces and not require face-to-

face meetings, thereby saving costly travel, physical accommodation and working hours in physical outpatient community treatment.

It has been well documented that talking about and bringing regressed traumas to the open is helpful and that regressing traumas over a long time tends to increase the pain, angst, trauma and insecurity and frustration and alienation of the traumatised individual and worsen his/her quality of life, well-being, self-fulfilment and empowerment. The suggested electronic platform provides a supportive space to talk about and bring the traumas back to the open in a careful, secure and controlled manner and environment at any time in the day the participant wishes to. Given the global time difference, the participant can share his/her pain and traumas with a trusted 'friend' in the middle of the night his/her time, when suffering from insomnia, that will be more convenient time to his/her dialogical trusted 'friend' on the other side of the world.

As part of this undertaking of a full accountability of their own life, the participants are expected to contemplate, plan, work out and carry through explicit ways to increase the quality of their lives and the quality of their relationships with both themselves and other people and produce blogging accounts and posts as for the way they have carried out this exercise in practice. In return for amassing the courage of doing this exercise they can expect the full support, care and engagement of their fellow participants and professional clinicians in their self-therapeutic activities within a strong and supportive community that exists to protect and support its members.

I theorised the suggested electronic platform and virtual support community fifteen years ago when I began to engage and work with real clinical support groups. With the recent technological advancements in virtual online interactions among individuals and the lowering of the costs of technology, I can now put what I theorised then into practice at a very low cost. All the technology and the technological apparatus are now available in any standard electronic and computer shop. They are powerful and reliable and relatively inexpensive.

The Suggested Electronic Platform

The virtual electronic platform is composed of,
i. designated private, embodied and idiosyncratic blogging spaces for individuals to carry out their self-dialectical and cathartic blogging,
ii. designated communal spaces for the community to interact with as a community and teaching,
iii. designated clinical training, professional development and supervision spaces that are intended for professional consultation, peer support and training of professionals.

i. The Embodied B/logging Spaces

Practicality: How it Works

Each participant is given his/her own embodied therapy blogging space in the suggested electronic platform. The embodied blogging is protected by the platform owner as the participant's designated safe, secure and embodied space, for reflective logging and blogging. All the individual embodied spaces are supplied with Skype facilities for face-to-face online interactions, help manuals and handbooks.

The private blogging spaces are embodied by the participants as their own safe, protected and private space for reflection and auto-dialogues on events in his/her life, experiences, feelings, behaviours, actions and relationships with oneself and other people.

The participants have total control over their blogging space. It is respected by all as their own embodied space where they are free to say or do whatever they wish with and in it.

The participants are given a code of access which they, and only they, can choose whom to give and enable an access to. They can change their code at any time, thereby withdrawing the access of previous engagers with whom they no longer feel as comfortable and relaxed as they once did or found out they have mistakenly thought they could have comfortable and relaxed relationship with.

The purpose of this feature is to have a continuous open, supportive and therapeutic relationship at all times between the logger, turned blogger, and his/her engaging readers and audience and to immediately act upon the experiences of tension in the relationship between blogger and his/her audience and readers. It is suggested that when withdrawing a participant of his/her access to the blogging space, the participant will post a blogging post where he/she rationalises and explain his/her action and invites comments and dialogue.

Rationale and Intention

The purpose of the designated embodied space is to provide the embodying participant with the ongoing facility to reflect upon and auto-dialogue and express and share and dialogue with the community his/her ongoing and lived life and his/her worked out ways of identifying, processing, making sense of and doing constructive things about occurring events in their lives and relationships in the world and the feelings, experiences, behaviour and relationships and interactions that they elicit and in turn empowering and healing himself/herself and qualitatively transforming his/her quality of life.

These private spaces are designated for the participants to work out, log, blog and enquire-within-b/logging into their embodied lives and their distinctive ways of helping themselves by working at constructing and developing greater feelings, situations and experiences of well-being, ontological security, self-fulfilment,

meaning, empowerment and healing for themselves. This implies actively working at achieving for themselves a qualitative transformation of their quality of life. They are also designated for expressing themselves and alerting others who they completely trust to their states of being at a secure, confidential safe space.

How the Personal, Embodied, B/logging Works

Within my suggested cathartic creative self-dialectical writing tool, the participant is having a very authentic and honest reflective, auto-dialogical, auto-critical and self-analytical conversation, dialogue and discussion with himself/herself as he/she sits by himself/herself alone in front of a personal computer or a laptop. This can take place in his/her private home, his/her study, a coffeehouse, the local public house, a travelling train on the way to work or pleasure.

I am talking here about the designated task of therapeutic creative logging of individuals of their personal reflections and reflective enquiries into their lives. This includes enquiries into how to empower, heal and qualitative transform their well-being and personal development and relationships with themselves and other people and sharing their creative logging as blogging and dialoguing with their readers of their choice on the logging. The technique of engaging with this self-help therapy has been worked out and available in manuals and academic and professional publications.

The participant is typing and logging things down in a reflective or dereflective free association or [Gestaltian] freefall mode. Dereflection means self-reflecting as a detached, uninvolved and disembodied third-person who is looking on his/her life from distance as if the events in it unfold and are happening to another person. Gestaltian freefall invokes the courage to fall without a parachute, into the words as they come, into the thoughts before they have fully formed in the mind, into the unplanned structures that take shape, without prompting, to contain them. Free association means writing whatever comes to mind with no moulding and processing.

More specifically, the participant reveals and shares in his/her embodied safe space his/her situations and experiences of angst, frustration, alienation, grief, self-disappointment, vulnerabilities, difficulties and insecurities and counterproductive and dissatisfying relationships and interrelationships with both himself/herself and other people. He/she logs for himself/herself and blogs for others his/her suggested and planned ways for him/her to work out ways of reversing these disagreeable situations into the more positive and pleasant life and situations and experiences of greater self-fulfilment, ontological security and more productive and fulfilling relationships and interrelationships with both self and others.

The b/logs are chronologically dated, spontaneous and unedited and enable the participants to look back at their b/logging and also to re-evaluate their dialogue with other participants on the blogging.

This exercise implies seeing for themselves and re-evaluating where they were at any given time of their developing lives and whether or not they were able to improve over time and self-enquiry their situations, experiences and feelings and the quality of their lives and of their relationships with both themselves and other people. They can compare and contrast their various posts and their dialogue with others on their posts in terms of their feelings, situations and relationships in, with and towards the world, where they were in the course of their blogging their experiences then upon leading these experiences and situations and reflecting and enquiring upon them in action and praxis (reflecting on practice) as they were taking place and where they are now in the course of looking at the blogging re-evaluating the blogging within the here and now.

This self-reevaluation can take place either by themselves as personal initiative, together with their clinician in a face-to-face session or a virtual session which is made available to them in the electronic platform, or as designated homework assignment on the part of their clinician which is then re-evaluated by both the clinician and the client. The participants can be assigned mentors from within the community in which case as much as possible all the participants will be mentors and have mentors. If the community mentors are different from the real-world clinical therapists, the two shall collaborate under the usual ethics.

Dialogue

As all the participants in the electronic platform are both bloggers and selected readers of other blogs, the suggested blogging platform allows individual clients to participate, help and support others in the others' active attempts at self-empowering, auto-developing, constructing greater self-fulfilment, ontological security, well-being and more productive and meaningful relationships with both selves and other people. There is an emphasis on collective mutual relationships among the participants in which all the participants convey their personal and ongoing working at improving their quality of life and relationship between themselves and other people and comment and interrelate with the efforts of fellow practitioners in doing the same thing for themselves.

The community is based on active and mutual participation of all the members. There is a clear give and take relationship among all the participants. All the participantsare expected to offer their own input to the blogging of other participants as well as receive the others' inputs for their own blogging. No participant is just giving his/her input to others or just getting the inputs of others. This feature is designed to give the participant the rightly earned feeling that he/she is contributing to the community as well as contributed to by the community. It is also design for individuals' to practice human relationships and social interactions within a supportive environment which provides constructive feedbacks and criticisms.

The participants are expected to carry out their b/logging on regular basis. They can work on and decide the amount of time per day or week most suitable for them together with their regular clinicians and/or designated community mentors and

establish together how many days per week it is most suitable and recommended for them to do their blogging and interactions and dialogues with others.

Thus in addition to reflective logging, the participants are also expected to share the content of their private, reflective and reflexive, logging as blogging with other participants that they feel comfortable with and wish to dialogue with on their private logging. Once made public for other individuals to comment on and interact with, the private reflective logging for oneself and critical auto-dialogical conversation with oneself becomes blogging that are to be dialogued with others on their meanings and implications.

The participants are expected to dialogue with others on their blogging in their private blogging space and to have the dialogue publicly available to those with the access code. They are expected to get the opinion and support of trusted 'critical friends' on the logging and the opinion of third party observers on the way they interact with others on their b/logging, namely whether they are aggressive, over-protective, engaging and doing the most of the opportunity of such dialogue.

The object of the dialogue is to make the logging helpful for them in improving their quality of life and their relationships with both themselves and other individuals and to complement the reflection with insights from trusted individuals whose opinion they value.

I am stressing here a critical, educational, honest, supportive and caring dialogue that takes place in the knowledge that this is the blogger's private and protected safe space and that the aim of the dialogue is to enable the blogger to empower, heal and construct a more fulfilling and secured life and greater quality of life and well-being for himself/herself. I have spent a lot of time over the ten years working out and clarifying to myself and others what I mean by such dialogue.

The platform owners will make sure all dialogue is supportive, constructive and caring. In the event where the interaction is not constructive and even offensive, with members failing to feel at ease and secure within the interaction, the offender will be approached, asked for clarification, warned, placed under probation and even having his/her membership suspended or terminated.

Hence, for their subscription, the members get a guarantee from the platform owners of dignifying, caring, constructive and supportive, relationship and dialogue with other individuals. Something that cannot be done in the real world. In the case of breaching this guarantee and a dissatisfaction on the part of the members as for the implementation of this guarantee, all the money paid by the affected, dissatisfied, member, will be returned to him/her and the incident will be reviewed by the platform owner so as learn from it.

In order to be admitted to the community, all the participating members will be required to sign an agreement in which they express the commitment to treat all the other members with dignity and respect and to only offer constructive comments, interactions and insights. They are also asked to stick to the subject of the blogging

and the declarations of intention of the electronic platform and to be concise and to the point at all times. Every member is to be equipped with an SOS facility and an emergency push button which alerts the platform owners and if needed an emergency mental health organisation in the like of *the Samaritans* or the local emergency care. He/She is encouraged to use this button when feeling abused by a member or experiencing themselves particularly anxious, vulnerable and unwell.

ii. The Communal Spaces

The ownership of the virtual communal space belongs to the community and is equally shared and embodied by the community. It is designed to raise concerns, advertise events, socialise, network and discuss matters of community importance and lay out ground rules and etiquette. It is also designed to interact within a communal space that belongs to the community rather than the embodied individual members.

It is also a place for commercial advertisement that will be scrutinised by the owners of the electronic platform and which purpose is to increase the revenues and decrease the subscription fees of the individual members and the members organisations.

The communal space is also used for the purpose of mastering and learning to form a productive relationship and dialogues of equality and equal respect, humbleness and human dignity among the participants.

It is designed to achieve a community in which all individual members are perceived as important members who have something significant and valuable to contribute, learn from and teach others. Practitioners and clinicians learn from their clients and are supported by them, in addition to support and help their clients empower and overcome crises and improve their quality of life and relationships with self and others. Teachers and mentors learn from their students as well as teach them.

iii. The Training and Professional Peer-Support and Professional Development Spaces

The ownership of these spaces belongs to the professionals, trainees, supervisors to consult and discuss the progress of the clients and their own professional practices, as well as to reflect on their own practices and dialogue with peers and supervisors on their reflection. The access of these spaces will cost extra and usually paid by health trust, institutes and practicing professionals. There will be an extra, additional, ethical code for the use of these spaces that combine a professional ethical code with one that is specially designed for the suggested platform.

There will also be an additional professional package intended for professional practitioners and academics members at higher subscription rate. In exchange for this higher subscription fees, the practitioners will be encouraged to publish their experiences and learning whilst participating in the electronic platform, subject to the

usual ethics. The writing can be refereed by the professional members with extensive comments .

This space will be used for publications. I am talking about publication that were successfully double-blinded refereed. The successful attempts will be available upon subscription and constitute an additional source of revenue. The platform's owners will have no say in the referee process.

In addition, practitioners, from various locations can plan and work on co-publications, discuss their work and plans and read and comment each others' drafts. Practitioners can be trained by academics how to publish in academic peer-reviewed journals.

The space can also be designed for virtual lectures, conferences, workshops, supervision and professional dialogues, mentoring and continuing professional development days. This can increase the revenues. Those participants who pay for the higher professional subscription charge will benefit from reduced entry fees for the conferences, lectures and workshops.

The Idea and Theory Behind the Suggested Therapy

The suggested theory is that individuals' privately logging for themselves and eventually others their cathartic and dialectical ways of enquiring into their own lives and working out ways of empowering and healing themselves in their lives and in what they do professionally and value as a meaningful and self-fulfilling life and professional practice and then publicly sharing, discussing and supporting these logging as an electronic platform of blogs and idiosyncratic blogging within a purposely constructed blogging platform constitutes a most productive therapeutic, ontological and educational practice.

Catharsis – the Greek word for "cleansing" or "purging" implies a release of emotional tension, as after an overwhelming experience, that restores or refreshes the spirit and restores a good emotional balance. Catharsis is used in psychotherapy to relieve tension and anxiety by bringing repressed and intensified feelings of angst, insecurity, void, dread, dissatisfaction and fears to consciousness and then into a healthy balance of greater satisfaction, health, healing, well-being, personal development growth and empowerment in one's life.

I am drawing in my own cathartic tool on the dialectics in order to qualitatively transform situations, experiences, feelings and lives of frustration, self-dissastifaction, angst, insecurity and void into those feelings, experiences and lives of empowerment and qualitative transformation in ones life, well-being, healing and more securing and productive lives and relationships with both self and others for the enquirer. I am using phenomenological analysis and the humanistic approach and school of psychology and psychotherapy. The humanistic school of psychology is consisted of phenomenology and phenomenological techniques and philosophies of Existence.

Dialectics implies here a qualitative and empowering transformation and self-improvement through a disciplined enquiry and formulating and answering appropriate questions and fusing contradictions and ideas within a creative dialogue that is aimed at a qualitative transformation of ideas. My suggestion for a self-dialectical blogging cathartic tool is for a tool in which individuals are enquiring-within-b/logging into the question, how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself? By a more meaningful existence, I am meaning an existence of greater self-fulfilment, self-satisfaction, [ontological] security within oneself and whom one is, empowerment, energy and more productive, securing and fulfilling, relationships and interrelationships with oneself and one's social others, namely other human beings.

Phenomenology describes how a person orients to a lived, living, embodied and situated experience in the world over time, space and action and reflection of a concept of a phenomenon. I use the term to describe the way a person delves into and processes and re-evaluates his/her experiences over time, space, enquiry, practice and praxis, namely reflection on practice.

As part of their self-dialectical logging and blogging enquiry, the bloggers produce blogging accounts in which they identify, delve inside and process situations in their lives that they believe provide them with situations of grief, despair, angst, frustration, solitude, insecurity and void, or emptiness, and counterproductive and unfulfilling relations and interrelationships with both themselves and other people. They then work out, log and blog their suggested ways of reversing these negative and disagreeable situations into the more positive and agreeable situations that they believe can provide them with the experiences of self-fulfilment, security, hope and more fulfilling and productive relationships with both themselves and others. They then share their accounts with the readers of their blogs and dialogue with them.

The Purpose

The purpose of the virtual platform is as follows

The first purpose is to support individuals in their ontological and therapeutic self-enquiries into both their ongoing, past, present and future lives and their ways of empowering and qualitatively transforming and improving their quality of lives and the quality of their interrelationships with both themselves and other people. The object is subsequently to help the individual participants empower, heal, grow, self-develop and qualitatively transform their quality of life, their well-being and their relationships with both self and others. This help is carried out through supporting and dialoguing with their personal logging of their personal reflection and dereflection in and on their ontological and therapeutic practice of working on leading their lives in an intention to improve its quality.

The second purpose is to allow the participants practice social relationships and interrelationships and interaction in a caring and protective environment which provides constructive and caring criticisms and help the individual participants to continuously re-evaluate and work on mistakes that the individuals participants are

perceived by the other participants to have committed and improve social interaction.

The third purpose to complement costly and scarce face-to-face session with virtual sessions in which a person can express his/her angst and difficulties and think of ways to overcome and reverse difficulties into a better quality of life and relationships with both self and others in a supporting safe space. He/she can get immediate feedbacks and inputs to his/her accounts, socially interact with others and reverse, overcome and do something concrete about feelings of solitude and social isolation. He/she can discuss problems and difficulties with the regular readers of his/her blogs who know him/her through such intimate blogging of his/her life. There is no need to wait for an appointment with the already exhausted mental health services just to be heard and to verbalise newly occurred difficulties, angst, frustrations and self-disappointments and insecurities and regression of self-esteem and relationships with self and others.

The fourth purpose is for education, in general, and the training of clinicians and the relevant practitioners, in particular. These practitioners include social workers, clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses, General Practitioners, health visitors counsellors and the like. The trainee would work with his/her supervisor on supporting the bloggers. There will be sessions in which the trainees and supervisors would work online on the bloggings and work out ways to help the blogger improve the quality of his/her life and the quality of his/her relationships with both himself/herself and other people. The practitioners would also able to consult each others on the meanings of the blogging and the state of being of the bloggers without meeting face to face.

The performance of the trainees and practitioners would be evaluated and peer-evaluated with the aim of improving their professional practices and interactions with the clients. A virtual space is designated for such training and peer evaluation with the aim for the training to take place without the need for a face-to-face interaction. All the trainees, supervisors and practitioners will be asked to take part in the exercise. No one will be able to take part in the exercise without producing blogging posts of their own. The actual blogging of the practitioners will not be performance assessed and re-evaluated. It takes place for the clinicians to experience and experiment with the media and platform firsthand and to identify and share concerns and hardships that may arise as a result of reading the difficult logging and act upon them as they take place.

The fifth purpose is for theorists of human existence and those who are interested in improving their understanding of the phenomenon of being a person in the world and what means to be a person in the world to share each others' experiences, ideas, embodied knowledge, values and struggles to lead a more fulfilling and securing existence for themselves with more productive relationships with themselves and other people. This target population include writers, poets, artists, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists, biologists, historians, academics and anyone interested in doing so.

The Bases of the tool

The tool is based on the therapeutic, cathartic, power of three elements

i. the movement between the self-reflective, auto-dialogical, power of logging one's life - emotions, feelings, experiences, behaviours, relationships, activities and personal developments - for oneself and the dialogical power of blogs and the engagement and social and human interaction between a blogger and his/her readers within an embodied safe space that belongs to the blogger and that he/she can control,

ii. the empowering and transforming feature of a self-dialectical and auto-poietic cathartic b/logging in which the tension between the negative experiences of existential angst, ontological void and insecurity and self-dissatisfaction, frustration, solitude and alienation and the positive experiences of self-fulfilment, ontological security and engagement is transformed into a cathartic healing, qualitative transformation and empowerment,

iii. the analytical power of a phenomenological self-analysis of lived, embodied and living experiences and living specific situations in the real world,

Suggested Revenues and Financial Plans for Profit-Making

1). The basic subscription will include the embodied b/logging space, the communal space, technical facilities and SOS emergency push buttons.

The higher subscription rates include the two basic spaces and professional spaces that themselves include the following, spaces for training, mentoring and further professional development, spaces for publications and discussing publications and reading groups and for peer-review spaces for unlimited access of peer-reviewed publications of members.

Organisations in the like of the health trusts, academic institutes will be charged a yearly flat subscription per individual members in accordance with subscription and spaces wishing to participate in.

Different rates will be charged to independent participants, based on their year earning.

2). Commercial advertisement will be limited and scrutinised to follow the spirit of the electronic platform.

3). Commercial businesses will be allowed to participate in the basic two spaces, namely have their staff become members of the community in an intention to empower, grow and self-fulfil in their lives and what they do. This participation would only be permitted under the strict condition of no intervention on the part of managers from the commercial businesses in the therapy and clinical, educational and ontological processes. The commercial businesses may have additional deals of

more intensive intervention courses and packages available for them. Wealthier commercial businesses and organisations will be charged more than smaller ones. The participating commercial businesses will not be allowed to advertise in any way.

4). The double-blinded peer review publications of the members' experiences and learning whilst participating in the electronic platform will be placed in the electronic platform and the reading and downloading of these publications will be charged. The authors could pay yearly subscription for the use of the space and keep the revenues or get percentage of the revenues. Access to this space of peer-reviewed publication could be sold independently of the basic two levels and at different rates to institutes and individuals and subject to financial ability.

5). Virtual conferences, workshops, Professional Development Days and lectures. These will also be available to the general public and non-members. The professional and ordinary members will have special rates. As much as possible the rates will be tailored to the different registered attendants, with scholarships and financial aid deals offered.

Alon Serper,
Somerset, England,
April, 2010

Appendix Eight

Present-to-Future
Practical Future Plans Based on
Readers' Comments and Engagement So Far

As blogged on the 12th of May, 2010, in my University Homepages at http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/Future.html. This has been the last piece of my original self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological and cathartic educational action research enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into the question, how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself? As usual I tried to reflect on present and unfolding events in my life and to illuminate and make sense for myself as I reflect on them in, while and as I write my thoughts down on these events as they come to me and as I try to make up the meanings and they mean for myself and my life and future. The post is now still found in both my University Homepage at the URL address above and my original self-dialectical, auto-phenomenological and cathartic educational action research cycles of enquiring-within-writing&b/logging into the question: how do I lead a more meaningful existence in the world for myself?, thesis submission that is accessible from my WebPages at the URL, http://people.bath.ac.uk/pspas/bloggingthesis.html. I placed it in the very end of the manuscript as a sort of postscript.

Wednesday the 12th of May, 2010, 22:59

I am beginning now to receive comments, constructive criticisms and critiques on my suggested tool and its application from practitioners for whom and whose practice I have the greatest respect and admiration and for which engagement I am truly grateful. I am learning a lot from these comments. This complements the dialectical engagement and comments that I have been receiving from theorists and philosophers and theoretical and critical psychologists on my suggested self-dialectical, concrete, living, embodied, auto-phenomenological, auto-poietic, auto-dialogical and dialogical alternative heuristic tool, solution and approach to the traditional wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated, generalising, predicting and profiling means of re-evaluating, theorising and conceptualising the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world.

Most of the present comments are along the line that I expect too much, all at once and that the exercises are too difficult and tense and even overwhelming and daunting to swallow, digest and follow and carry out and that I really need to soften the exercises and split it more and make it more engaging, enjoyable, pleasing and 'fun' for individuals who are undergoing and recovering from a very traumatic and difficult life. I am therefore, in line with these comments, presently working on

making my tool friendlier, easier, more accessible and more comfortable, relaxed and engaging to carry out and engage with.

As I worked out my tool and its various components and their application in total isolation and on myself, as my life work and project, I simply did not realise it is so overwhelming, tense and alienating for others to follow and carry out. I thought, rather naively, that amassing tension and angst and then working at releasing it in a powerful manner in controlled and supportive conditions and that moving from angst, pain, tension, shock confusion and being overwhelmed and daunted to clarity and realisations can induce a catharsis and cathartic liberation and release of tension and pain, the greater the tension and pain are the greater cathartic release of tension and pain is. From the present comments that I am beginning to receive, I can see that I was mistaken in this thought and assumption.

I originally focused on the theory and on my suggested tool being an alternative to the traditional wholly propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated, generalising, predicting and profiling and the contemporary non-textual heuristic means, tools, solutions and approaches to the re-evaluation, conceptualisation and theorisation of the human subject and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world in the social, human and educational sciences, empirical, critical and clinical psychology and action, reflective and practitioner research. This was my original Doctor of Philosophy work, thesis and programme. It became a tool to be practiced only recently upon the completion of my writing up my alternative in theory and as a possible theoretical and abstractive alternative solution.

I have worked out a concrete, applied, living, embodied, auto-phenomenological, dialectical, auto-dialogical and dialogical alternative but in my attempts at achieving this aim of constructing a satisfying alternative to the traditional heuristic means of re-evaluating, theorising, conceptualising in psychology and social, human and educational sciences what I had in mind has been my academic peers and colleagues. I am meaning my peers and colleagues from the academy who have been arguing that a theory and heuristic theorisation and conceptualisation of human existence and practices and the human subject is and has to be propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated and generalising and predicting and profiling in order for it to be perceived as valid, empirical, reliable and legitimated. I already brought Schön's and Popper's arguments for this point.

I was dead serious and heavy about doing and achieving this ambition. It is my life work and project and professional career, as well as my life commitment after all. It is not a hobby or a day job to be forgotten about in the late afternoon. All my present dreams, aspirations and intentions for my self-fulfilment and my leading a productive and meaningful existence for myself in, with and towards the world depend on my suggested tool and its success. In turn, I created something heavy, tense, overwhelming and daunting to its intended target, struggling and traumatised individuals that is even alienating and shocking to them as it descends on them with all its might all at once and all the sudden. It is and has been very clear to me as I spent two decades doing that and am now realising how in the process I have lost the contact with the person who is faced with my tool and work for the first time. I was

so pressured into working out my suggested tool and alternative heuristic tool in theory and testing it on myself that I did not test it out on others.

I have indeed been carrying out the suggested dialectical, auto-phenomenological and cathartic self-help exercises on myself on daily basis. The idea was that I would test out my theoretical ideas on myself and that I should not offer to others something (a therapeutic and self-education, ontological tool) that I have not fully tested out and tried on myself first.

Every day, I reflected on my present life and professional and personal practices and activities. I identified what currently anguishes, frustrates and apprehends me and makes me feel empty and insecure at this time in the here and now. I logged what the experience of existential angst, frustration and insecurity and ontological void and insecurity means for me from within my present life. Then, I thought of and planned ways of reversing, redirecting, shifting and transforming these negative and counterproductive experiences into what would be a life of greater meaning, self-fulfilment, ontological security and more constructive relationships with myself and other people.

I logged what these constructive and productive situations and experiences presently are and mean for me. Then, I logged how I would summoned them up and written a logging account of how I am actively working at summoning up, where I am within threes plans and how I am getting on and about with this practice. I felt and experienced myself energised, more secure, comfortable and hopeful and less anguished, frustrated and emotionally and physically exhausted, empty and drained out with my life and what I am planning for it and doing as a result of doing these exercises. After that, I went on with my life, living, reflecting and continuously taking and logging reflective and analytic notes and leading it to my best of my ability.

I thought it is all rather simple and straightforward and can be done by all individuals and that everyone would feel and experience the same cathartic release of tension and auto-liberation and pleasure and energy and empowerment (catharsis). Apparently, I was mistaken and I received the above comments about the logging exercises being overwhelming and too tense and daunting to carry out when I thought they actually lead to a cathartic release of tension after the initial overwhelming tension that the participants will be eased up to by their therapists and support group. I tend to forget that I have a particularly strong stomach that can take and bear the sickness-unto-death and that I adopted enough cynicism and a rather black and twisted sense of humour to handle pain. The comments of and my dialectical engagement and dialogue with others (in the course of which I am mainly listening and reflecting on what others have to tell me) have indeed complemented and made my self-dialectical auto-dialogue more full and complete and myself a more full and complete researcher and human being. Freire, Buber, Rogers, Laing and Heath et al., (2006) are absolutely in the right.

I am now having the struggling individuals in mind. What I am planning and beginning to test out now with others is a way of really engaging with my intended

target in a supportive, more pleasant and less heavy, tense, overwhelming and daunting others. My intended target is the struggling individual seeking to work out a more fulfilling, meaning and secure existence in the world for himself/herself and more constructive relationships with himself/herself and other people.

I completed devising an alternative to the traditional wholly propositional, abstractive disembodied, fixated, generalising, predicting and profiling heuristic means of re-evaluating, theorising and conceptualising the person and his/her being, living and developing in, with and towards the world. I am meaning an alternative that is still textual and involving creative, cathartic and therapeutic writing. I am now beginning to work on using it as a really supportive tool for others and softening and easing it out and making it far more pleasurable to carry out.

This does not mean simplifying and oversimplifying it and looking down on people and their level of education and educational background or intelligence, something that I was always frightened of giving the impression of. It means working with experienced practitioners, therapists and therapeutic creative writing tutors and my target population groups of struggling and suffering individuals on the matter of finding a way to make this work more accessible, easier, more engaging and supportive and less dense and heavy and daunting and overwhelming and to build my way into the therapy rather than having descend it on them in one go all at once and all the sudden.

A lot of work is still there for me to do. But then I am not going anywhere. The Voltairean garden needs cultivation. I am happy and delighted that I have something solid to show to and discuss and dialogue with others and get their attention and feedbacks on. What occupies me now is to have something to support individuals in their ontological struggles and their work at improving their quality of life and relationships with both themselves and other people.

I moved a long way from the twenty years old undergraduate who told wholly propositional theorists in the disciplines of ontology, psychology and the human, social and educational sciences that the emperor has no clothes on and that the meanings of the phenomena of being human and leading a meaningful existence in the world for oneself cannot be approached and researched exclusively in the traditional propositional, abstractive, disembodied, fixated, generalising, predicting and profiling manner. I am older, more mature, less frustrated, anguished, insecure and angry and highly committed to my suggested tool and its success as a therapeutic and cathartic ontological and self-educational tool for others. I feel mature and clear enough to really work and engage with others on the making of suggested tool something really supporting of and empowering others.

Alon Serper,
Somerset, England,
May, 2010