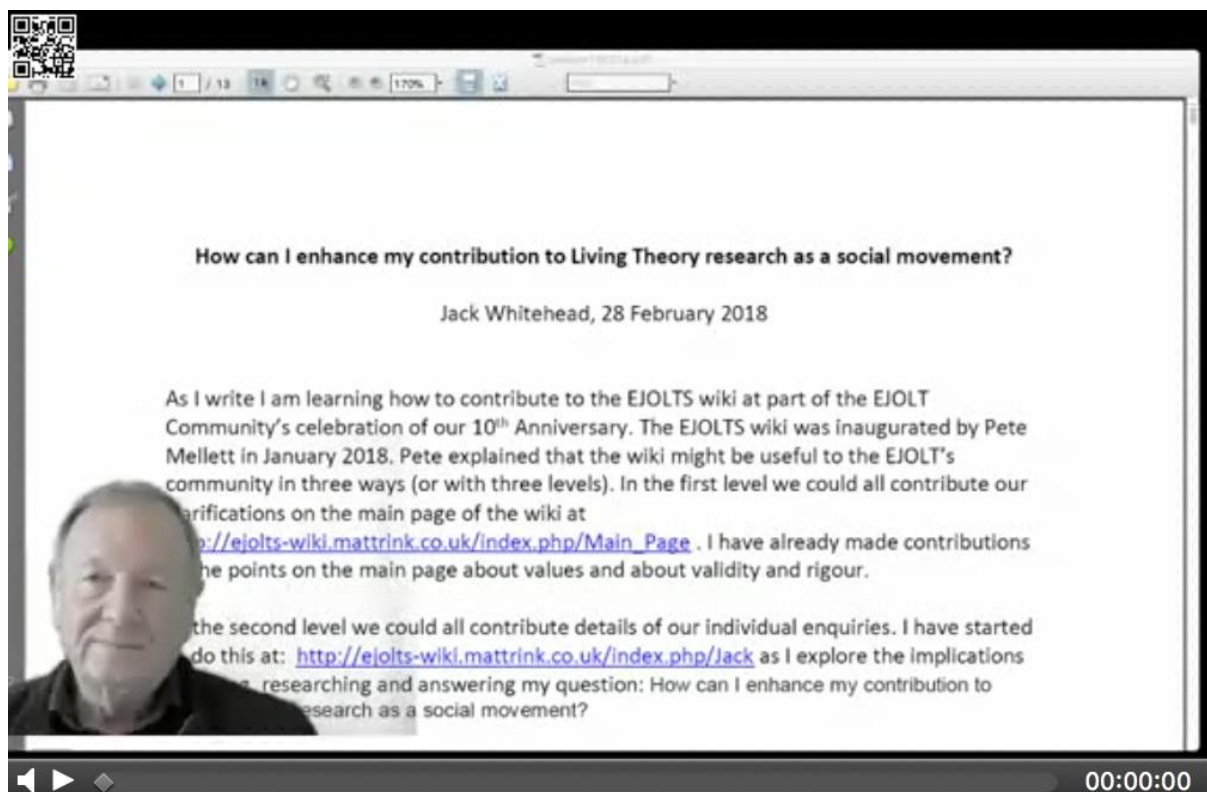


How can I enhance my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement?

Jack Whitehead, 2 March 2018

17:10 minute video of Jack using the Open Broadcasting Software (OBS) in his Living Theory wiki contribution for the 10th Anniversary Celebrations of the Educational Journal of Living Theories (EJOLTS), where he is focusing on the possibilities of generating a co-operative enquiry into contributing to Living Theory research as a social movement.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGKIwaUEACU>

As I write I am learning how to contribute to the EJOLTS wiki at part of the EJOLT Community's celebration of our 10th Anniversary. The EJOLTS wiki was inaugurated by Pete Mellett in January 2018. Pete explained that the wiki might be useful to the EJOLT's community in three ways (or with three levels). In the first level we could all contribute our clarifications on the main page of the wiki at http://ejolts-wiki.mattrink.co.uk/index.php/Main_Page. I have already made contributions to the points on the main page about values and about validity and rigour.

At the second level we could all contribute details of our individual enquiries. I have started to do this at: <http://ejolts-wiki.mattrink.co.uk/index.php/Jack> as I explore the implications

of asking, researching and answering my question: How can I enhance my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement?

At the third level we could all contribute to a co-operative enquiry into enhancing the influence of EJOLTS in a social movement. I am grounding my initial contribution to this co-operative enquiry within the community of learners on the 17th February 2018 from the homepage of the Living Theory wiki where you can access individual contributions to the Living Theory wiki by clicking on a name:

[Arianna](#); [Caitriona](#); [Jack](#); [Jackie](#); [Je Kan](#); [Joy](#); [Máirín](#); [Marie](#); [Moira](#); [Pete](#); [Pip](#); [Swaroop](#)

I'm beginning with some video that enables me to show myself in relationship with each of the above, individual contributors as well as other individuals I work and research with in learning communities in educational partnerships (Glenn, Roche, McDonagh & Sullivan, 2017). My purpose is to clarify, with the help of this digital visual data, embodied expressions of my meanings of my ontological and relational values of life-affirming energy and productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity within community relationships.

The digital nature of the visual data below enables me to use a method of empathetic resonance to clarify and communicate my meanings. It does this by permitting me to move the cursor backwards and forwards, frame by frame, through the visual data and to pause at the moments of the strongest expression of the embodied meanings I am seeking to clarify and communicate as 'life-affirming energy' and 'productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity within community relationships'.

To be able to move your cursor along the visual data, frame by frame, you will need to download the video from YouTube and to open the clip from your desktop in Quicktime or another application that has this facility of moving your cursor along the visual data, frame by frame.

Clarifying and Communicating my embodied expression of 'life-affirming energy' and 'productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity within community relationships'.

1) Celebrating the award of PhD to Jacqueline Delong on the 18th December 2002 at the University of Bath.

The context of this clip, in the University of Bath, is a celebration of the award of a doctoral degree to Jacqueline Delong for her thesis on How Can I Improve My Practice As A Superintendent of Schools and Create My Own Living Educational Theory? You can access the thesis from:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/delong.shtml>

45 second video clip at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxqRF2tVLB4>

i) Life-affirming energy

31 seconds into the 45 second clip, in the still below, I can see myself, bottom left in the blue shirt, in community with Jacqueline Delong on my left in black and with Pete Mellett in white on the right, expressing, what I am experiencing and meaning by a flow of life-affirming energy.

ii) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity

I am identifying the generation of a living-educational-theory with productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. In defining a living-educational-theory as an explanation of educational influences in the learning of the individual, others and the social formation within which the practice and understandings are located, I am distinguishing educational influences in relation to values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. In explaining educational influences in a living-educational-theory the individual is holding themselves to account in a public communication for living these values as fully as they can. This is what I am meaning by productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.



2) Moira Laidlaw at the end of a lesson in Guyuan Teachers College in China in 2002.

The context of this clip is the end of a lesson, being led by Moira Laidlaw, during her 6 years of Voluntary Service Overseas. I had turned the camera off, believing the lesson to be finished, but as I saw Moira move to the door I turned the camera back on.

A 1:04 minute video clip is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1jEOhxDGno>

i) Life-affirming energy

As the students move out of the classroom I experience a relational flow of life-affirming energy being expressed by Moira to her students.

ii) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity

At 51 seconds into the 1:04 minute clip Moira is congratulating a student as having the courage and confidence to question something that Moira has said. In Moira's experience in China, students tend to take what a teacher says without question. I include the encouragement of a student to be free to question, and to feel confidence in questioning, to be a productive activity that carries hope for the flourishing of humanity.



3) SKYPE Living Theory research support group on the 7th and 18th January 2018.

The contexts of these clips are SKYPE Living Theory research support conversations on the 7th and 18th January 2018 with,

- a) on the 7th January 2018 from left to right, Marie Huxtable, Paula Shore, Sonia Hutchison, Surrinder Sandham-Bains, Joy Mounter, Robyn Pound, Liz Vincent and myself,



A 10:10 minute extract from the 7th January 2018 is at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKyg-kkXMjk>

b) on the 18th January from left to right, Iris, Marie, Paula, Arianna, Robyn, Liz and Jack.



A 2:22 minute extract from the 18th January 2018 is at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogpyyz1jINg>

I have included the stills and urls for extracts from conversations on the 7th and 18th February 2018 to show that individuals participating in the conversations change within living and dynamic relationships.

i) Life-affirming energy

At 10:03:32 minutes from the still a) above and at 26:45 minutes from the still b) above (from the full video), I am experiencing and expressing a flow of life-affirming energy.

ii) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

My relational dynamic with each individual in the Living Theory research support conversations includes their productive activities that for me carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. In seeing myself as existing within this community I am living and relating with what Bateson describes as an ecology of mind. My relationally dynamic awareness includes my awareness of myself in the conversational space and within the living boundaries between everyone in the conversations. The living boundaries are co-creative. They are connective and I am exercising my reflexivity as I enhance my comprehension of the living-theories of each participant in the conversation. This comprehension includes the contributions the individuals are making to the 10th Anniversary celebrations of EJOLTS through the Living Theory wiki.

4) SKYPE Editorial Board Meeting of the Educational Journal of Living Theories (EJOLTS) on 30th June 2017.

The context of this clip is a SKYPE conversation with members of the Editorial Board of the Educational Journal of Living Theories with, from left to right, Marie Huxtable, Jacqueline Delong, Caitriona McDonagh, Moira Laidlaw, myself, Pete Mellett and Swaroop Rawal. We are discussing the 10th Anniversary review and celebration of EJOLTS for June 2018.

A 9:25 minute extract is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZRCrAt8-Pk>

i) Life-affirming energy

At 2:08 minutes, see the still below, I am experiencing and expressing a flow of life-affirming energy.



ii) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

The commitment and scope of EJOLTS can be seen in the homepage at <http://eiolts.net>

The Educational Journal of Living Theories (EJOLTS) is committed to publishing [living-educational-theory](#) (often shortened to living-theory) accounts of practitioner-researchers from a wide range of global, social, cultural and professional contexts. We welcome submissions from all Living Educational Theory (often shortened to Living Theory) researchers who wish to contribute rigorous and valid accounts of their [living-theories](#) to improving educational knowledge.

The journal focuses on the living-theories of practitioner-researchers. Researchers generate their living-theories as their values-based 'explanations for their educational influences in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations' ([Whitehead, 1989](#)) in the process of researching questions such as, 'How do I improve what I am doing'. The values at the heart of [Living Educational Theory research](#) (often shortened to Living Theory research) are the life-enhancing values that are relational and ontological, in the sense that they give meaning and purpose to the lives of individuals and groups. They are values that carry hope for the future of humanity, such as love, freedom, justice, compassion, courage, care and democracy.

At the heart of my commitment to EJOLTS is the belief, stated above that generating and sharing living-educational-theories are productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

5) Conversation Café on the 12th January 2018

The context is a Friday morning Conversation Café at the Carers' Centre in Bath.

A 3.11 minutes extract is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UB6j7HwD6oY>

The participants, from left to right, are myself, Andrew Henon, Deborah Jane, William House, Sonia Hutchison, Chris Jones. Marie Huxtable is out of shot and Rachael Burgess and Robyn Pound often participate in the conversations.



i) Life-affirming energy

I always leave the Breakfast Café Conversations with a flow of life-affirming energy.

ii) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

This 3.11 minute extract above is illustrative of the conversations in which participants share their experiences, writings and ideas that matter to them. In this extract Chris Jones is listening and responding to how her ideas for her doctoral thesis on distinguishing inclusive and inclusional, in living inclusive and inclusional empowerment, have been received and understood. I understand this activity as productive in that it carries, for me, hope for the flourishing of humanity.

6) Network Educational Action Research Ireland from the 12th September 2015

The context is a SKYPE conversation where I am in Bath and, from left to right, Mary Roche, Caitriona McDonagh, Pip Bruce Ferguson, Mairin Glenn, Bernie Sullivan and Jane O'Connell are in Ireland.

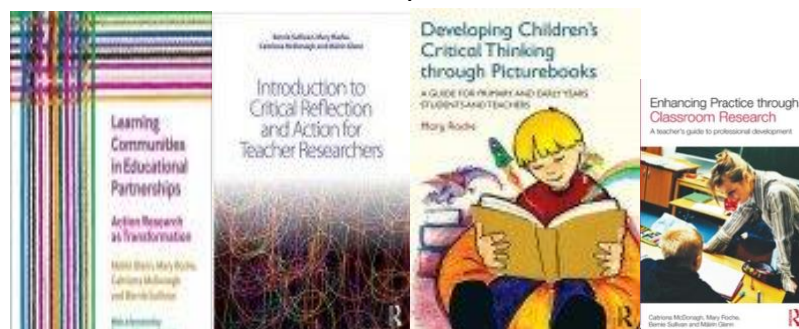


i) Life-affirming energy

At the moment this still was taken I experienced a flow of life-affirming energy that I have always experienced since celebrating with Mary, Caitriona, Mairin and Bernie on the award of their Living Theory doctorates from the University of Limerick between 2006-2007. Mary, Caitriona, Mairin, Bernie and Pip formed the NEARI network from the EARI group whilst Pip was on a three year contract with Dublin City University and Pip's presence also evokes in me this flow of energy. Pip has now (2018) returned to New Zealand.

ii) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity

Mary, Caitriona, Mairin and Bernie have a history of productive activities that continue to inspire me because they carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. Since completing their Living Theory doctorates they have formed and helped to sustain the Network Educational Action Research Ireland. They have also published their insights and understandings from their research in:



- 1) 2017 [Learning Communities in Educational Partnerships: Action Research as Transformation](#) by [Máirín Glenn](#), [Mary Roche](#), [Caitriona McDonagh](#), [Bernie Sullivan](#) published by Bloomsbury Publishing
- 2) 2016 [Introduction to Critical Reflection and Action for Teacher Researchers](#) by [Bernie Sullivan](#), [Máirín Glenn](#), [Mary Roche](#) and [Caitriona McDonagh](#) published by Routledge
- 3) 2015 [Developing Children's Critical Thinking through Picturebooks: A guide for primary and early years students and teachers](#) by [Mary Roche](#) published by Routledge.
- 4) 2012 [Enhancing Practice through Classroom Research](#) by [Caitriona McDonagh](#), [Mary Roche](#), [Bernie Sullivan](#), [Mairin Glenn](#) published by Routledge.

7) The Living Theory Post-doctoral research group.

The context is the Living Theory post-doctoral conversation on the 18th February 2018

A 17:48 minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbIyo3dQ20c>

The participants left to right are Eleanor Lohr, Marie Huxtable, Judy McBride and Jack Whitehead. Swaroop Rawal is present at the beginning and Moira Laidlaw and Jacqueline Delong also participate in the Living Theory post-doctoral conversation.



- i) Life-affirming energy.

At this moment at 17:33 minutes I am experiencing a flow of life-affirming energy with Eleanor, Marie and Judy. Swaroop Rawal, Moira Laidlaw and Jacqueline Delong also participate in these Living Theory post-doctoral conversations and I have provided video clips above with Moira, Jacqueline and Swaroop that also evoke a flow of life-affirming energy.

- ii) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity

All the participants in the Living Theory post-doctoral research conversations have been awarded their doctorates for their living-theories. I have explained above why I believe that the generation and sharing of a living-theory are productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. The participants in the Living Theory post-doctoral conversations are continuing to evolve and share their living-educational-theories.

8) The Adlerian, Living Theory research group

The context of the still image below is an Adlerian, Living Theory research group conversation on the 7th March 2017 with, clockwise from left to right, Rosemarie White, Margaret Wadsley, Jack Whitehead, Robyn Pound, Marie Huxtable, Carmen Tamas.

Still from 07/03/17



- i) Life-affirming energy.

The group evokes my expression of life-affirming energy and I experience Margaret expressing this energy (top right).

- ii) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity

The context of the 3:04 minute clip at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWZrsJn0WRg> is an Adlerian, Living Theory research conversation on the 30/01/18, from left to right, Robyn Pound, Carmen Tamas, Margaret Wadsley, Marie Huxtable, Rosemarie White and myself, Jack Whitehead.



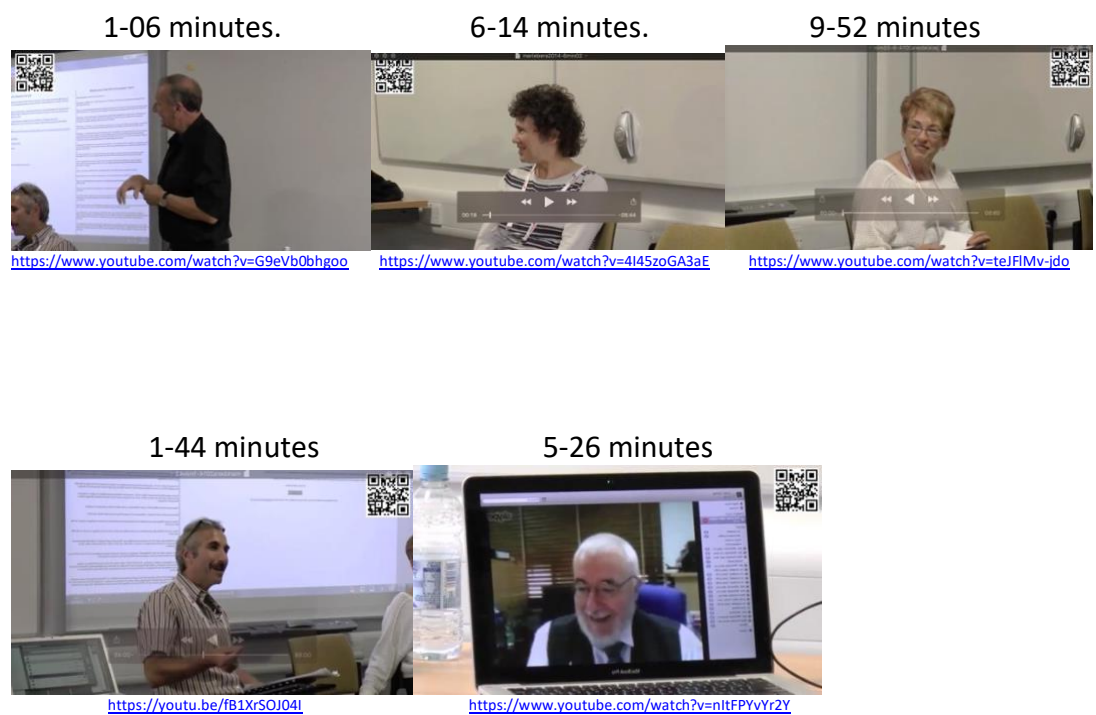
The productive activities I am engaged in with the Adlerian, Living Theory research group include those that are enhancing the flow of ‘community feeling’, ‘social interest’ and ‘recognition reflex’ as values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

9) BERA Symposium 2014

The context is the symposium on 'Creating an Educational Epistemology with living-educational-theories' with Jacqueline Delong, Marie Huxtable, Mark Potts, JeKan Adler-Collins and Jack Whitehead, at the 2014 Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association on the 24th September 2014 at the Institute of Education of the University of London.

The full 1:53:54 hour video is at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bd8_SCc4AGw
 I am not expecting you to watch the whole video, but it provides me with a documentary record of the BERA Symposium with Jacqueline Delong, Marie Huxtable, Mark Potts and Je Kan Adler-Collins providing the evidence of our productive activities that for me carry hope for the flourishing of humanity

i) Life affirming energy



The stills and the video-clip communicate to me the life-affirming energy that each individual is expressing and sharing in the space of the Symposium and evokes my own life-affirming energy.

i) Productive activities that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity

My present focus on researching my practice to enhance my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement is grounded in the belief that this activity carries hope for the flourishing of humanity. I have spent much of my productive life contributing to the academic legitimization of living-educational-theories with values that carry this hope. At the heart of this legitimization has been the generation of an educational epistemology with living-educational-theories. Hence the Symposium at the 2014 Conference of the British Educational Research Association on 'Creating an Educational Epistemology with living-educational-theories'. The video of the Symposium, which shows each individual making their unique contribution provides me with the evidence that communicates the productive activities of each individual in relation to the theme of the Symposium.

I am also connecting with Joy Mounter's doctoral enquiry, *How can I (do I) contribute to the creation and enhancement of the educational influences of a community of learners, supporting each other and their own development?*

I have been aware for many years that my experience of living contradictions in the sense of experiencing the negation of my values, whilst seeking to live them as fully as I can in my educational practices, has been influenced by the local, regional, national and global pressures of neo-liberal economics. One of my problems in responding to this contradiction is that I have not been able to clarify for myself an alternative to neo-liberal economics. The idea of co-operative economics is giving me the opportunities to support the alternative economics in living and researching my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement.

I presented my learning how to contribute to a Co-operative Economy at a meeting of the Bath Co-operative Alliance on the 25th January 2018 at the Oriel Hall, Larkhall, Bath. You can access my notes at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwcoopeconomy250118.pdf>

in which I draw on the ideas of Joseph Stiglitz in responding to a neo-liberal financial sector and to the ideas of Birley on developing a co-operative economy. I focused some of the discussion at the meeting on contributing to the creation of Bath as a Co-operative City.

I intend to continue my enquiries in a keynote to the 2018 ALARA World Congress, June 17-20, Norwich University, Vermont, USA. You can access the details of all the keynotes at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/alara2018/alara2018keynotes.pdf>

together with the following description of my keynote:

The **WC Keynote Speaker for the Stream/Track Two on the AL/AR Experiences of Professionals, is Jack Whitehead**, a Living Educational Theorist based in the UK. Previously at the University of Bath, he is now a Visiting Professor at the University of Cumbria, UK and Ningxia Teachers University in Ningxia, China. ***He originated the idea that individuals could create their own explanations of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which their inquiries are located, as their living-educational-theories.*** He pioneered the use of digital, multi-media narratives for clarifying and evolving the meanings of the expression of embodied values in explanations of educational influence, in research degrees. The resources on his website <http://www.actionresearch.net> are an international resource for action researchers who are generating their own living-theories with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. These theories are generated from inquiries of the kind, "How do I improve what I am doing? In which 'I' exists as a living contradiction."

I have also submitted a workshop proposal with Jacqueline Delong and Marie Huxtable to the World Congress on 'Where do we go from here in contributing to 'The Action Learning and Action Research Legacy for Transforming Social Change?'

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jjdjwmhalara240118workprop.pdf>

In addition to these activities I have:

- 1) together with others in the EJOLTS community submitted proposals for an individual presentation and workshop the conference of the European Association of Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) on Dialogue between ontology and epistemology: New perspectives on theory and methodology in research on learning and education, 27-28 August 2018.

- i) An individual proposal on 'Epistemicide and Emancipation: Two approaches to professing higher education research.'

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwcambridge240118.pdf>

- ii) A workshop proposal with Marie Huxtable on A Living Theory perspective in educational research on learning and education

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/mhjwcambridgework240118.pdf>

- 2) Submitted a paper with Lesley Wood and Mary McAteer on How are action researchers contributing to knowledge democracy? A global perspective, for consideration for publication in the Educational Action Research Journal.

The above response of the 19th February 2019 to my question, 'How can I enhance my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement?' has an epistemological focus. I mean this in the sense that I responding to my question from within my relationally dynamic awareness of the living boundaries of the above Living Theory research communities.

References

- 1) Glenn, M., Roche, M., McDonagh, C. & Sullivan, B. (2017) *Learning Communities in Educational Partnerships: Action Research as Transformation*. London; Bloomsbury Publishing.