

## A valid public communication of Robyn Pound's embodied expression of alongsideness?

**DRAFT** Jack Whitehead, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 – for Conversation Café on Friday 25<sup>th</sup>  
March 2016 at the Carers' Centre in Bath.

I'm hoping that we can make a start on developing a public communication of the meanings of Robyn's embodied expression of alongside at Conversation Café on the 25<sup>th</sup> March. Not to worry if you can't make it, I'd like to come back to it in our conversations.



The image above is from the 3:13 video extract from Conversation Café on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OcLmpQOpT0&feature=youtu.be>

The beginning shows Robyn sharing her reflections on humility. At 1:25 opens up a contribution from Jacqueline by saying **‘this is what you do all the time isn’t it?’**. Robyn is then silent until 3:03. I’d like you to look at Robyn’s embodied expressions between 1:25 and 3:03 and judge the validity of my claim that ‘we’ can see Robyn’s embodied expression of alongsideness. I’d like to go further than this and claim the following for Robyn’s embodied expression of alongsideness.

What I notice about Robyn’s non-verbal communications is the expression of a quality of relationship (with a flow of life-affirming energy) that the words **‘loving kindness’** seem appropriate to use as descriptors. Another word is **‘pleasure’**. Robyn communicates to me a **‘pleasurable valuing’** of the other. In an earlier part of the conversation William uses the word **‘wisdom’**. Towards the end of the full 58:56 minute video, William uses the words **vulnerability, humility and strength (all together, at the same time)**. Robyn responds that **‘It's the art of professional practice.’**

In making this initial claim about a public communication of the meanings of Robyn's embodied expression of alongsidness I'm bearing in mind Patti Lather's understanding of ironic validity when she says *The text is resituated as a representation of its 'failure to represent what it points toward but can never reach.... (Lather, 1994, p. 40-41)'.*" (Donmoyer, 1996 p.21.). Here is the context of the quotation in a paper by Robert Donmoyer when he was editor of the Journal Educational Researcher.

*First the practical problem: Today there is as much variation among qualitative researchers as there is between qualitative and quantitatively orientated scholars. Anyone doubting this claim need only compare Miles and Huberman's (1994) relatively traditional conception of validity <'The meanings emerging from the data have to be tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their 'confirmability' – that is, their validity' (p.11)> with Lather's discussion of ironic validity:*

*"Contrary to dominant validity practices where the rhetorical nature of scientific claims is masked with methodological assurances, a strategy of ironic validity proliferates forms, recognizing that they are rhetorical and without foundation, postepistemic, lacking in epistemological support. The text is resituated as a representation of its 'failure to represent what it points toward but can never reach.... (Lather, 1994, p. 40-41)'."* (Donmoyer, 1996 p.21.)

Donmoyer, R. (1996) Educational Research in an Era of Paradigm Proliferation: What's a Journal Editor to Do? *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 25, No.2, pp. 19-25