IMPROVING THE WORLD BY RAISING THE VOICES OF ACTION RESEARCHERS THROUGH LIVING-EDUCATIONAL-THEORIES

Jack Whitehead, PhD., UK
Jacqueline Delong, PhD., Ontario, Canada
Elizabeth Campbell, PhD., Nova Scotia, Canada
1988 Referenced the importance of love in my teaching philosophy

2010 Jackie Delong, prof in one of the M.Ed courses, tells us all she loves us.

Coined the term “loved into learning” and began to explore more deeply and apply learning to practice.

2012 Completed M.Ed and starting living more fully according to my values of love and joy.

2012-2015 Co-created Bluewater Action Research

Continue to improve my practice. Complete a PhD in Educational Sustainability. Added “hope” as a core value.

Now what?
DEFINITION OF LOVE

The will to extend one’s self for one’s own or another’s spiritual growth (Peck, 1978 p. 85).

The willingness to embrace and act on the idea that everyone and everything is interconnected (Campbell, 2017)
How well do you know yourself?
THE JOURNEY
UNVEILING BELIEFS, ASSUMPTIONS AND VALUES

- Courage
- Trust
- Respect
- Vulnerability
- Resilience
- Creativity
- Collaboration
The **Living Wall** is a physical representation of the internal (my thoughts) and external (my actions) me —the inner and outer “I” unfolding in time—my living educational theory (Whitehead, 1989). It serves many purposes from the very practical to the abstract. I started the wall because I felt an urgent need to organize my thoughts and the traditional structure offered by a Major Research Project outline was not working for me; in fact, the situation was actually worse than that because the suggested (and I am very fortunate that this was not required) structure actually hindered my thinking process and stifled my creativity. I could not work within this framework and I certainly felt a conflict with the suggested outline and the living educational theory methodology (Whitehead, 1989) I was using. I am certainly not suggesting that everyone would or should sense the conflict; simply that one existed for me. The nature of the living educational theory methodology is such that a traditional five-chapter outline might be the perfect structure for an individual if that is how their research unfolds. The structured outline was far too restrictive and prescriptive for me. It made me feel like I was being intentionally self-destructive as I forced myself into the corsetry of the system. I found myself looking for material to fit within the parameters and when I made my research fit, it seemed to lose something—I felt disfigured. My voice disappeared from the page and my ideas, which seemed to flow previously, now seemed stagnant and dull—the internal rhythm was hijacked.” p. 102
1. Who am I?
2. How do I know?
3. So what?
4. Now what?
The 4 Guiding Questions

1. Who am I? (Values, worldview, passions, vulnerabilities, etc.)
2. How do I know? (What evidence do I have?)
3. So what? (Why is this information important / significant?)
4. Now what? (Now that I know this, what, if anything, will I do differently?)
UNVEILING EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE
VALUES

Love: The willingness to embrace and act on the idea that everyone and everything is interconnected

Hope: The courage to act when facing fear, doubt, and despair.

Joy: The understanding that love and hope are enough.
ONTIOLOGICAL  EPISTEMOLOGICAL  METHODOLOGICAL

BEING  KNOWING  DOING
THE SUSTAINABILITY OF LET

Bluewater Action Research Network
2015 Sharing Our Knowledge Symposium

May 15th 9 AM – 3:30 PM
Bluewater District School Board, Chatham, Ontario

TVO Interview
Bluewater Action Research Network: Who Are We?

The facilitators for BARN 2018:

- Kelly McDougall
- Krystal Damm
- Penny Phillips

The participants for BARN 2018:

- Jennifer Kozak: My Best Self
- Elizabeth Burrows: School Morale
- Peggy Pratt, Allison St. Martin and Nadine Osborne: Documenting Outdoor Learning
- Cindy Hodgins: Self-Esteem
- Laurel Sander: My Spark
- Kimberly Hall: Compassion
- Lisa Kaminski: Inquiry
- Joanna Fry: Reggio in Gr. 1
- Dana Roy and Tracy McNally: Physical Space
- Jennifer Clement and Paige McDonald: Calm in Chaos
- Colleen Wolski and Jess Elkins: Behaviour Resource
- Amanda Ruthven and Margaret Jack: Relationships
- Leanne Stredwick and Kathy Bauman: Community
- M. Cunningham: Metacognition
- Leslie Turcotte: The Arts
GLOBAL REACH

- North America, Asia, Africa, Europe
- 15 Different Countries
THANK YOU

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Jack Whitehead
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Questions or Comments?
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
THE TRANSITION

- Teachers: Self-directed professional development that aligns with standards of practice and other policy documents.
- Students: A transition tool to self-directed learning or a framework for self-directed learning in or out of public school. A theoretical framework and methodology for formal research for accreditation and publication purposes.
- Parents: a tool to take charge of your life, to get to know yourself.
- All: to live more fully according to YOUR values.
LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jf1kFHLdiPY

- Link to book, You and Your Action Research Project:
JOINING LOCAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES OF LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY RESEARCHERS BY PRODUCING AND SHARING YOUR LIVING-POSTER

- See the 2020 homepage of living posters at https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage2020.pdf

With guidelines for producing and sharing your own living-poster as a contribution to a global network of practitioner-researchers who are working to improve the educational influences of their teaching, learning and assessment and to extend the influence of a Living Theory approach to professional development with values of human flourishing.
LIVING POSTERS

Living Theory researchers and networks developing educational knowledge, theory, practice and opportunities that contribute to the flourishing of humanity.
I agree with Holt who claims, “learning is living”. I experienced being loved into learning (living) and I am committed to do all I can to live more fully according to my values of love, hope, and joy, and to contribute to the healing and flourishing of humanity. Trust, respect, compassion, creativity, equity, freedom, justice, and other values are central to me as I live with love, hope, and joy.

I incorporate self-determined education (SDE) in every course I offer and I share Living Educational Theory (LET) as a process for exploring, discovering, and articulating the values that give life meaning and purpose. Together, these approaches to learning challenge status-quo thinking, create and hold a space for learner autonomy, and reveal intuitive knowledge, honouring the lived experiences of individuals who wish to improve what they are doing.
How does this research contribute to a professional global knowledge-base? How does it contribute to transforming academia and other fields of practice?
VULNERABILITY
THE POWER OF VULNERABILITY
by Brené Brown

WE LIVE IN A VULNERABLE WORLD!

I DON'T LIKE HAVING TO ASK FOR HELP WHEN I'M SICK OR BEING TURNED DOWN IF I ASK SOMEONE OUT SO I DECIDED TO WEAR AN EMOTIONAL ANCHOR ALL THE TIME.

IF WE WANT CONNECTIONS TO HAPPEN WE NEED OURSELVES TO BE SEEN!

WE NEED TO LEARN TO LIVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY

YOU CANNOT SELECTIVELY NUMB EMOTIONS.

I OFTEN STRUGGLE AND FEEL ASHAMED...

BUT DEEP DOWN I HAVE THIS STRONG SENSE OF LOVE AND BELONGING THAT HELPS ME TO TELL THE STORY OF WHO I AM WITH MY WHOLE HEART

DO SOMETHING WHERE THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES

INVEST IN A RELATIONSHIP THAT MAY OR MAY NOT WORK

BE THE FIRST TO SAY: "I LOVE YOU!"

STOP CONTROLLING AND PREDICTING

LIVE WITH VULNERABILITY

YES INSTEAD OF LEANING INTO THE MESSY SIDE OF LIFE

I REALLY DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT THIS I'M GOING TO MAKE EVERYTHING UNCERTAIN CERTAIN

BUT WE FORGET THAT VULNERABILITY IS ALSO THE BIRTHPLACE FOR JOY, GRATITUDE AND HAPPINESS

JOY

GRATITUDE

SHAME
Our values reflect what is important to us. They are a shorthand way of describing our individual motivations. Together with our beliefs, they are the causal factors that drive our decision-making.

Barrett Seven Levels of Consciousness Model

**Service**
Selfless service

**Making a Difference**
Making a positive difference in the world

**Internal Cohesion**
Finding meaning in existence

**Transformation**
Letting go of fears. The courage to develop and grow

**Self Esteem**
Feeling a sense of self-worth
*Fear: I am not enough*

**Relationship**
Feeling protected and loved
*Fear: I am not loved enough*

**Survival**
Satisfying our physical and survival needs
*Fear: I do not have enough*

Values can be positive or fear-based (limiting). For example, honesty, trust and accountability are positive values, whereas blame, revenge and manipulation are potentially limiting, or fear-based, values.

Personal mastery involves overcoming or eliminating our fear-based beliefs. When our beliefs or behaviours are out of alignment with what is really important to us - our values, we lack authenticity.

Every human being on the planet grows and develops within seven well defined areas. These areas are defined in the Barrett Seven Levels of Consciousness Model. Each area focuses on a particular need that is common to all people. The level of growth and development of an individual depends on their ability to satisfy these needs.

At different times you may find that you focus more on some levels and less on others, in response to changing life conditions. It is important to understand that in terms of the seven areas higher is not better; for example it will be difficult for you to focus on helping others if you are having health and money problems.

The seven areas in the development and growth of personal awareness are summarised in this diagram and are described in more detail on page 3.
Personal Values and Awareness

Personal Mastery
Individuals who focus exclusively on the personal self-interest areas may be influenced by the fears they hold about satisfying their individual needs. They look for approval or reassurance from others.

Individuals who focus exclusively on the satisfaction of the upper common good needs may lack the skills necessary to remain grounded. They can be ineffective and impractical when it comes to taking care of their basic needs. The most successful individuals are those who balance all of the areas. They are trusting of others, are able to manage complexity, and can respond or adapt to all situations.

In reality, people do not operate from any one single area of awareness. They tend to be clustered around three or four areas. Individuals are usually focused at areas 1 through 5, typically with a specific emphasis on Internal Cohesion, the fifth area, in which we seek meaning in our lives.

Your Results
On the next page we will show you how the values you chose map against these seven areas. Positive values will be identified with a blue dot and potentially limiting or fear based values will be shown as a white dot.

Self Interest
The first three areas of awareness – Survival, Relationship and Self-Esteem focus on our personal self-interest – satisfying our need for security and safety, our need for love and belonging, and our need to feel good about ourselves through the development of a sense of pride in who we are. We feel no sense of lasting satisfaction from being able to meet these needs, but we feel a sense of anxiety if these needs are not met.

Transformation
The focus of the fourth area of awareness, Transformation, is on letting go of fears. During this stage in our development, we establish a sense of our own personal authority, and our own voice. Within the area of Transformation, we choose to live by the values and beliefs that resonate deeply with who we are.

Common Good
The upper three areas of awareness – Internal Cohesion, Making a Difference and Service - focus on our need to find meaning and purpose in our lives. We express that meaning by striving to make our world a better place and by leading a life of selfless service. When these needs are fulfilled they engender deeper levels of motivation and commitment. Within these areas, we learn how to develop an inner compass that guides us into making life-affirming decisions.
Which concept best describes your worldview?

Table 1.1 Four Worldviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postpositivism</th>
<th>Constructivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determination</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reductionism</td>
<td>Multiple participant meanings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical observation and measurement</td>
<td>Social and historical construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory verification</td>
<td>Theory generation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformative</td>
<td>Pragmatism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Consequences of actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power and justice oriented</td>
<td>Problem-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Pluralistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change-oriented</td>
<td>Real-world practice oriented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Living Your Values Fully
• Think of some examples of when you have been able to live more fully according to your values.

Values are Denied
• Think of some examples of when you have NOT been able to live according to your values.

Can you identify a living contradiction?
SIR KEN ROBINSON
THE CALL TO UNITE

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU4Q17t4muY
WHAT IS SELF-DIRECTED EDUCATION?

WHAT IS SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING?
HOW CREATIVE ARE YOU?


- Age 4/5  98%
- Age 10   30%
- Age 15   12%
- Adults   2%

We are born creative geniuses and the education system dumbs us down, according to NASA scientists
THE DIVIDED BRAIN

GRASPABLE MY ARSE!

WHY DID THE CHICKEN CROSS THE HEMISPHERES?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFs9WO2B8uI

THE DIVIDED BRAIN

TO IMPLICIT, INCARNATE, LIVING OF THE LIVED WORLD

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFe9YvQ260s
THE TRANSITION

Teachers: Self-directed professional development that aligns with standards of practice and other policy documents.

Students: A transition tool to self-directed learning or a framework for self-directed learning in or out of public school. A theoretical framework and methodology for formal research for accreditation and publication purposes.

Parents: a tool to take charge of your life, to get to know yourself.

All: to live more fully according to YOUR values.
The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession:

- Students demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills such as teamwork, advocacy, leadership and global citizenship.
- Students are partners in dialogue and discussions to inform programs and activities in the classroom and school.
- Students' stated priorities that reflect the diversity, needs and interests of the student population are embedded in School Improvement Plans (SIPs).

The Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession:

- The teaching and learning environment is inclusive, promotes the intellectual engagement of all students and student well-being for students.
- Assessment is connected to the curriculum, collaboratively developed by, and serves as a basis for decision-making that guides the formative nature of student learning.
- Students, parents, and school community promote and sustain ongoing communication about learning.
- Students are explicitly taught and regularly use self-assessment.
- During learning, timely, ongoing, descriptive feedback about student progress is provided based on student actions and co-constructed success criteria.
- A variety of relevant and meaningful assessment data is used by students, educators and parents to monitor and to determine next steps.
- A culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve.
- A support for school improvement as respected, valued partners in student learning.
- Learning opportunities, resources and supports are provided to help parents support student learning and have productive ongoing parent-teacher-student conversations.

K–12 School Effectiveness Framework

- Instruction and assessment are differentiated in response to student strengths, needs and prior learning.
- Learning is deepened through authentic, relevant and meaningful student inquiry.
- Teaching and learning in the 21st Century is collaborative, innovative and creative within a global context.
- A variety of relevant and meaningful assessment data is used by students, educators and parents to monitor and to determine next steps.
- A culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve.
- A support for school improvement as respected, valued partners in student learning.
- Learning opportunities, resources and supports are provided to help parents support student learning and have productive ongoing parent-teacher-student conversations.

Home, School and Community Partnerships

- Students, parents, families, and educators understand the full range of pathways, programs, and experiential learning exist in all classrooms, schools and community programs.
- Opportunities for authentic learning experiences to further explore and reflect upon their life aspirations.
- Comprehensive education and career/life planning programs meet the learning needs, interests and options and supports that are available.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

- Resources for students are relevant, current, accessible, inclusive and monitored for bias.
- Timely and tiered interventions, supported by a team approach, respond to individual student learning needs, strengths, needs and prior learning.
- Students build on in-school and out-of-school strengths, needs and prior learning.
- Students, parents, families, and educators understand the full range of pathways, programs, and experiential learning exist in all classrooms, schools and community programs.
- Opportunities for authentic learning experiences to further explore and reflect upon their life aspirations.
- Comprehensive education and career/life planning programs meet the learning needs, interests and options and supports that are available.

Evidence-Based Direction

- Instruction and assessment are differentiated in response to student strengths, needs and prior learning.
- Learning is deepened through authentic, relevant and meaningful student inquiry.
- Teaching and learning in the 21st Century is collaborative, innovative and creative within a global context.
- A culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve.
- A support for school improvement as respected, valued partners in student learning.
- Learning opportunities, resources and supports are provided to help parents support student learning and have productive ongoing parent-teacher-student conversations.
A PROCESS
LIVING THEORY

• What are my values?
• What is my worldview?
• What is my concern?
• What is my living contradiction?
• Who am I?
• How do I know?
• So what?
• Now what?

• Explore “I” through journals, art, dialogue, video, literature…
• Identify patterns, themes, contradictions, paradoxes, false dichotomies, epistemicide
• Make values, beliefs, knowledge transparent
• Collaborate
• Repeat
LIVING CULTURE OF INQUIRY

Living Theory methodology includes

- ‘I’ as a living contradiction,
- the use of action reflection cycles,
- the use of procedures of personal and social validation and
- the inclusion of a life-affirming energy with values as explanatory principles of educational influence. (Whitehead, 2009, p. 182)

a safe, supportive space which is democratic and non-hierarchical where practitioner-researchers are enabled:

- to share their vulnerabilities,
- to make explicit their values and hold themselves accountable for living according to those values
- to recognize when they are not living according to their espoused values and are “living contradictions” (Whitehead, 1989).
- to be loved into learning
- to recognize their embodied knowledge
- to improve their lives and practice by creating their own living-theories:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What really matters to me? What do I care passionately about?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What kind of difference do I want to make in the world?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What are my values and why?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is my concern?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why am I concerned?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What kind of experiences can I describe to show the reasons for my concerns?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What can I do about it?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What will I do about it?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How do I evaluate the educational influences of my actions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do I demonstrate the validity of the account of my educational influence in learning?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I modify my concerns, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluation?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>