

Dear Iris, Robyn, Jason, Arianna, Giulia, Marie, Paula, (Jack), Liz, Sonia and Joy ( i - Living Theory research support SKYPE community, Sunday evenings);

Jacqueline, Robyn, Swaroop, Marie, Pete, (Jack), Mairin and Moira (ii - EJOLTS Editorial community);

Jacqueline, Robyn, Swaroop, Marie, Judy and Moira (iii - Living Theory post-doctoral enquiry community);

Margaret, Rosemarie, Robyn, Carmen, (Jack), and Marie (iv - Adlerian, Living Theory community);

William, Rachael, Deborah, Marie, Robyn, Sonia, (Jack), Donna, Andy (v - Conversation Café, Living Theory community);

Carmen, Margaret, Robyn, Marie, Joy and Jack(vi Transformative Community Development with good conversations in Living Theory research).

Bruce, Saddrudin, Liz, Margaret, Marie, Shelagh, Rachael, Jack, William, Chris, Debroah (vii Report of the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017 on the CARN study day/Pre-conference workshop on the 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2016, hosted by Rachael Burgess in Bath, for the '1<sup>st</sup> Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy: towards an ecology of knowledges' in Cartagena on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Here are some ideas and suggestions that I'd like to bring into our conversations on enhancing our contributions to Living Theory research as a global social movement. I find that planning to participate in an event might be more influential than the event itself, but that the planning and event together, help to formulate plans and intentions that can help to motivate a sustained and generative commitment to enhancing such contributions.

I'm writing this on the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2018 to suggest that one event we could focus on is the Action Research Network of the Americas Conference in Montreal Quebec, Canada, from June 26 - June 28 | 2019 on *Repoliticizing P/AR: From Action Research to Activism*.

For the event in June, I'm suggesting that we could all (if we wish), contribute our living-educational-theories from our own lives and contexts in a way that includes our ongoing conversations within our different communities below. Not everyone who is named is on the particular video. Whilst the participants can vary week by week, our conversations are being sustained, sometimes over years.

I have provided a couple of illustrations from the contributions of Swaroop Rawal and Moira Laidlaw, in the post-doctoral community, and William House in the Breakfast Café Conversation, to show how we could all make continuously evolving contributions to Living Theory research as a global movement and **learn how to share each others' contributions** in a range of digital and non-digital forums. It would be great to hear each others' suggestions on how we might do this.

- i) **Iris, Robyn, Jason, Arianna, Giulia, Marie, Paula, Liz, Sonia and Joy** (Living Theory research support SKYPE community, Sunday evenings);



35:18 minute video of conversation on the 11/11/18

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q36IGelQ2xM>

- ii) **Jacqueline, Robyn, Swaroop, Marie, Pete, Jack, Mairin and Moira** (EJOLTS Editorial community) – Catriona McDonagh – 3<sup>rd</sup> from left below – has been replaced by Mairin Glenn.



**9:25 minute video of conversation on 30-07-17**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZRCrAt8-Pk> Jack is raising the question of how might we know what influence EJOLTs is having.

- iii) **Jacqueline, Robyn, Swaroop, Moira, Marie, Judy, Mairin and Jack** (Living Theory post-doctoral enquiry community);



30:32 Video of conversation on 02/09/18 – See Mairin and Judy introducing themselves between 1:00-4:00 minutes into the video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhenTow0-9c>

The group includes Swaroop Rawal – on the far right below:



Here are some details of Swaroop's ongoing post-doctoral enquiries that include the following award of an honorary D.Litt. Degree from the University of Worcester on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018:

I examined Swaroop's doctorate in 2006. As a VIP guest of Swaroop I was sitting on the front row and able to take the following video of Swaroop's 6:54 minute response to the award in Worcester Cathedral:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLLygbX8DCY>

Here are the details of Swaroop, published in the University of Worcester details of Award Ceremonies for 2018:

*Dr Swaroop Sampat-Rawal,*

*Former Miss India and Bollywood superstar, Dr. Swaroop Sampat-Rawal, is an alumna of the University of Worcester, who travels across India training teachers, while also campaigning to get ore children, such as those in tribal communities or street children, into the classroom.*

*Dr. Sampat-Rawal studied for a Ph.D. in Education at Worcester, graduating in 2006, and since dedicated herself to community development and advocacy within the field of education. She aims to help children overcome adversity and become resilient.*

*She is a member of the Governing Council for Save the Children, whose mission is to create lasting change in the lives of disadvantaged children in India.*

*She developed a training curriculum for Jeevan Kaushalya, an adolescent girls project in Gujarat, which was a drama-based life skills intervention implemented across 3,450 villages in six districts reaching out to 38,000 young members of the village-level adolescent girls' network.*

Here is the 13 minute video that includes both the introduction to Swaroop and the above response from Swaroop.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7GpmNK5OhU>

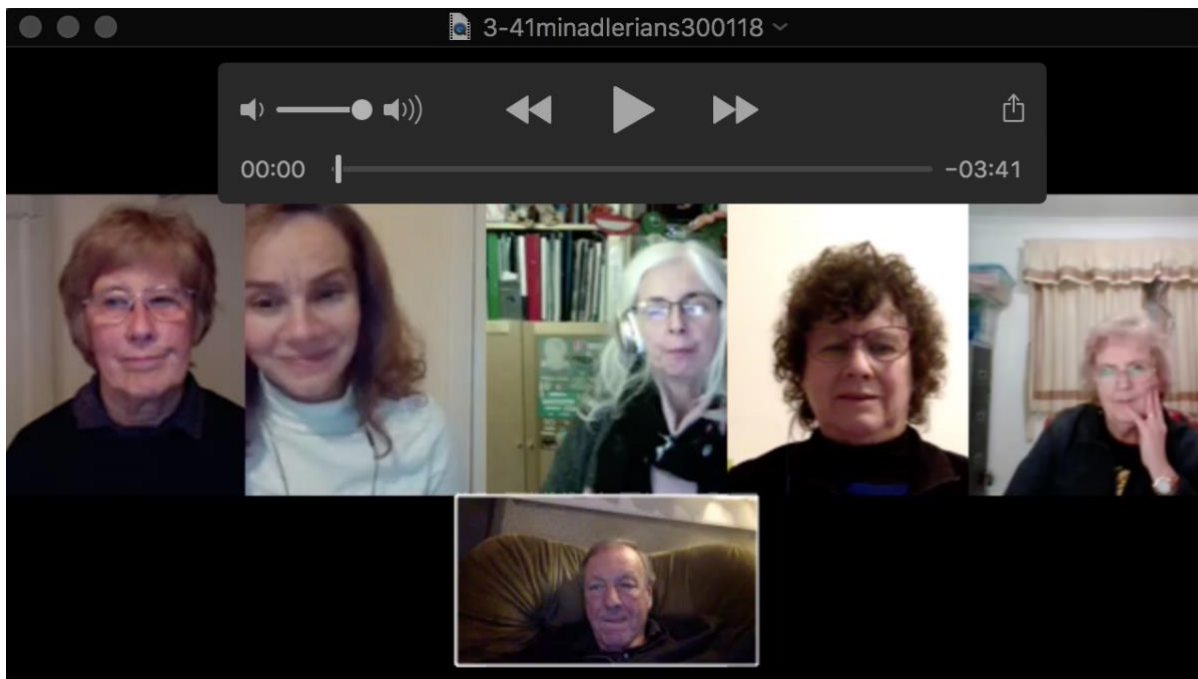
The post-doctoral Living Theory research community also includes Moira Laidlaw, whose original contributions to educational knowledge include the understanding that the explanatory principles and standards of judgement used by Living Theory researchers are themselves, living. Moira's (Laidlaw, 2018) latest original contribution to Living Theory research is on 'Living Hope and Creativity as Educational Standards of Judgement' in the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary issue of the Educational Journal of Living Theories. Moira explains in her Abstract:

This paper explains a transition between the writing of educational stories and harnessing their innate values within the work I am currently engaged in as a tutor at the Open University on a module for the Development Management M.Sc.. I offer two stories about my classroom-practice in the 1980s to illustrate the educational significance of creativity and hope as I perceive them now. I then show the development of my understanding of the educational processes involved in making links between hope and creativity and clarifying them as living educational standards of judgment and explanatory principles. I show how I use my understanding of hope and creativity in my present educational practices with two students and clarify further my understanding of the relational dynamic between hope and creativity as I continue to clarify and communicate their meanings as explanatory principles and living educational standards of judgment. Most significantly for this paper, I am claiming an epistemological significance in clarifying and communicating the relationally-dynamic meanings of hope and creativity that emerge from my practice.

This paper is also being presented as an expression of the hope I gain in working with colleagues through EJOLTS and to celebrate its 10th Anniversary in 2018.

**Keywords: Creativity; Hope; Living educational standards of judgement; Forms of power; Relationally-dynamic epistemology; EJOLTS' 10th Anniversary edition.**

- iv) **Margaret, Rosemarie, Robyn, Jack, Carmen and Marie** (Adlerian, Living Theory community);



3:41 minute video of Adlerian, Living Theory conversation on 30/01/18 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWRq6eIMXu0>

- v) **William, Rachael, Shelagh, Deborah, Marie, Robyn, Sonia, Donna, Andy and Jack** (Conversation Café, Living Theory community).



58 minute video 09/11/18 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFsYIjASnGY>

On the 16<sup>th</sup> November's conversation we are going to respond to the following pilot project, supported by William and others, on transformative community development through the promotion of good conversations, to see if it might be possible to Include Living Theory research in way that might support the project. I know that clarification will be need about meanings of 'good' in 'good conversations'



## The Conversation Solution project charter

### KAN Keynsham Action Network

**Aim: To pilot an approach to transformative community development through the promotion of “Good Conversations” in Keynsham**

#### Goal

Support a change in community culture which enables individuals to flourish through connection and purpose and the community to become health-creating.

#### Funder

St Monica Trust

#### Background

- Training provided in ‘Good Conversations’ to 25 health and social care workers by Thistle Foundation in March 2018
- Appointment of project manager / development worker or ‘Producer’ (EB)
- Relationship with SHINE Project, Fife International Futures Forum, Fife
- Evaluation support from Richard Kimberlee, UWE

#### Objectives

- Support trainees to take an asset-based approach in helping people who live or work in Keynsham to articulate their needs, identify and achieve their personal outcomes.
- Develop a local training programme in the Good Conversations technique (Fife) and facilitate local training of health, social care and others in using the approach.
- Identify and co-ordinate a responsive network of community resources to support recipients in achieving their personal outcomes.
- Develop a framework for evaluation of the project, focusing primarily on the collection of stories and experiences amongst all involved.

#### Initial Success Criteria

- 25 individuals trained as Conversation Makers are active in Keynsham
- KAN Development worker trained and competent
- Tools and resources are available
- Connections made with local authority departments
- Stakeholders satisfied

#### Resources

- William House (vision holder), Elly Bernard (Project Manager/ Development worker/ ‘producer’)
- Julie Wevill (group training support)
- KAN-Do support group
- KAN community network
- £15,000 funding from St Monica Trust
- Good Conversations Skills
- Good Conversation Training
- Stakeholder resources

#### Outcomes

- Cohort of conversation makers
- Capacity to train further people
- Increased understanding of approach
- Access to information on Good Conversations
- Lessons learned documented

#### Key Activities

- Discovery – Survey & Interviews
- Co –Production with stakeholders
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Reflection, Practice & Training
- Tool/ resource development
- Comms eg website, podcast
- Training
- Evaluation

#### Dependencies & Constraints

- Volunteer - conflict of commitments
- No specific funding for training venues, back-fill time or advertising for recruitment
- Availability of team in Fife to provide training for local trainers in Good Conversation technique
- Stakeholder resources

#### Outputs after one year

- Minimum trained 25 “conversation makers”
- Minimum 1 qualified trainer
- Tools/resources
- Evaluation report
- Built relationships with members of team in Fife

#### Key Risks

- Ambitious in scope
- Lack of engagement
- Changing context of other services
- Community may not want to engage

#### Expected Benefits/ Impact

- More individuals able to make decisions about their health and wellbeing
- Reduction in GP consultations
- Improved staff morale
- Reduction in A & E attendances
- Improvement in referral systems
- More connections between statutory agencies and community

### vi) Carmen, Margaret, Robyn, Marie, Joy and Jack (Transformative Community Development with good conversations in Living Theory research)

Joy accepted an invitation to join the Adlerian Living Theory research group. Joy’s doctoral research enquiry is presently focused on the question:

**How can I contribute to the creation and enhancement of the educational influences of a community of learners, supporting each other and their own development?**



54 minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OUanTRffB-o&feature=youtu.be>

**vii) Here is my report of the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017 on the CARN study day/Pre-conference workshop on the 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2016, hosted by Rachael Burgess in Bath, for the ‘1<sup>st</sup> Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy: towards an ecology of knowledges’ in Cartagena on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017.**

(I have included this report to show that global conversations of Living Theory research as we seek to enhance the influence of Living Theory research as a global social movement with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.)

The purpose of this study day was to prepare for the 1<sup>st</sup> Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017, in the Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA) conference in Cartagena between the 12-16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 with the theme of ‘Participation and Democratisation of Knowledge: New Convergences for Reconciliation’

(see <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/brief.pdf>). The study day built on our learning from the Town Hall Meeting convened by Jacqueline Delong at the 2015 ARNA conference in Toronto with the multi-media living-posters gathered and organised by Marie Huxtable and myself in the UK

(see <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage061115.pdf> ) with multi-screen SKYPE participations and living-posters from educational researchers who used a variety of methodologies but all shared a commitment to enhancing their educational influences in learning even if they didn't see themselves as researching their educational influence and creating their living-theories. These researchers came from different countries including, Japan, South Africa, Canada, Columbia, India, Australia, China, Albania, Croatia, Ireland and the UK.

The study day extended our learning about i~we~i relationships in a collaborative community of practice. During the day we also extended our understanding of Action Research, Self-study, Autoethnography and the insights they offered to Living Theory researchers. We also considered recent writings on non-Western epistemologies from East-Asian perspectives (Inoue, 2012; 2014) and divisions, conflicts and exclusions between epistemologies of the North and South (Santos, 2014).

I facilitated the conversations in which participants shared our living-educational-theories, with our living-posters (see below).

Following on from our workshop conversations over the next few months I intend to work with others to demonstrate, before the Global Assembly, how the epistemologies of our Living Theory perspectives transcend exclusions and conflicts of the epistemological categories of North, South, East and West, with the living logics of conversations and explanations of

educational influences with values, as explanatory principles, that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

Some members of Conversation Café relate the idea of an ecology of knowledges to Bateson's (1987) idea of an ecology of mind and to the idea of natural inclusion or inclusionality which Rayner (2004) describes as a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that are connective, reflexive and co-creative. We work with a 'process understanding' of both 'I' and 'We' that we represent as 'i~we~i' to emphasise this process and relational understanding in which 'I am because we are' and 'we are because I am'. 'I am because we are' draws insights from the African expression of an 'Ubuntu' way of being (Charles, 2007). 'We are because I am', draws insights from Huxtable's (2016) understandings of 'i~we~i'. I experience a tension in my use of 'I' and 'We'. My use of 'I' can appear as egotistical in the sense of an independent and autonomous 'I' that is failing to recognise the influence and contributions of others. My use of 'We' can appear to be colonising in the sense that I haven't checked with others that I have their agreement for me to include them in my use of 'We'. I continue to engage with this tension in contributing to an ecology of knowledges.

Gadamer's (1975, p. 367) ideas were also brought into the art of our conversation in order to develop a productive conversation:

To conduct a dialogue requires first of all that the partners do not talk at cross purposes. Hence it necessarily has the structure of question and answer. The first condition of the art of conversation is ensuring that the other person is with us. ... To conduct a conversation means to allow oneself to be conducted by the subject matter to which the partners in the dialogue are oriented. It requires that one does not try to argue the other person down but that one really considers the weight of the other's opinion.

Hence it is an art of testing. But the art of testing is the art of questioning. For we have seen that to question means to lay open, to place in the open. As against the fixity of opinions, questioning makes the object and all the possibilities fluid. A person skilled in the 'art' of questioning is a person who can prevent questions being suppressed by the dominant opinion. A person who possesses this art will himself search for everything in favour of an opinion. Dialectic consists not in trying to discover the weakness of what is said, but in bringing out its real strength. It is not the art of arguing (which can make a strong case out of a weak one) but in the art of thinking (which can strengthen objections by referring to the subject matter).

Our conversations in the CARN study day were informed by the collections of living-posters below. You can access all the posters from the following url and access the individual contributions to the various networks.

Bruce Damons in South Africa, Qutoshi Sadruddin in Pakistan and Liz Campbell in Canada, joined us through SKYPE. The recording of their contributions shows how the digital technology helps to give people a virtual presence in a space that transcends geographical distance and impermeable boundaries. Their living-posters below are offered as examples of how technology can also be used to bring people into such a space.

Sadruddin Quotoshi's poster

at: <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/qutoshi010217.pdf> focuses on his work in Gilgit-Baltistan, one of the remote areas of Pakistan connecting China with the Karakorum High Way, with his question 'How can I contribute towards developing transformative living theorists in my context?'

Bruce Damon's poster

at <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/bruce010217.pdf> .

Focuses on his work in the coastal metropole of Nelson Mandela Bay, South Africa, in the Centre for the Community School (CCS). This is an engagement entity within the Faculty of Education at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. The Centre for the Community School works within the public schooling system both peri-urban and rural and specifically with socially and economically marginalized communities. Together with school communities, CCS contributes to enabling every child to reach their full potential.

Liz Campbell's poster focuses on her contribution to the Bluewater Action Research Network in Canada

at <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/barn/barn010217.pdf>.



Cathy Griffin



Liz Campbell



Jackie DeLong



Kelly Hanson



Michelle Cunningham



Krystal Damm

The project's purpose is to create meaningful, relevant, authentic & sustainable professional development for practitioners that can be directly transferred to the classroom to create similar learning opportunities for students.

We use action-reflection & data-driven self-directed inquiry in a collaborative community. Members are supported by facilitators and peers through their research project. Each participant presents the results of their research at a Bluewater Action Research Network Symposium in the spring.



Sabre Cherkowski



Avis Daigarno



Cathryn Smith

## BLUE WATER ACTION RESEARCH NETWORK BARN

Liz's doctoral enquiry includes the original idea of 'being loved into learning' as an explanatory principle in the creation of her living-educational-theory.

This data can be used as evidence, in explaining the educational nature of our conversations through which we are evolving and sharing our contributions to an ecology of knowledges that transcends the divisions and exclusions reinforced by the categories Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western epistemologies.

For example the following still images show the inclusion of others within the space in a way that individuals commented they felt the individuals on SKYPE were present in the room with them.

Sadruddin Qutoshi in Pakistan, Bruce Damons in South Africa



Liz Campbell in Canada with Bruce.





This brief video clip below shows the inclusion of Bruce's contribution to our conversation on the nature of democracy.



On the right of the wall can be seen the living-posters of members of Conversation Café with a poster of Margaret Wadsley. Margaret came down from Edinburgh from an Adlerian Research group convened by Robyn Pound (who also arranged the lunch for the day). Our hostess

Rachael Burgess provided the space as a community space and had printed off the posters and displayed them on the wall. You can access each individual poster by opening the url <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/conversationcafe010217.pdf>

And clicking on the individual contributions:



**Jack Whitehead**  
Academic & practitioner educational research



**Robyn Pound**  
Alongsideness, health visiting provision



**William House**  
Community action, holistic medicine



**Chris Jones**  
Empowering leadership, inclusion



**Nigel Harrison**  
Authentic leadership, school practice



**Marie Huxtable**  
Passion-led learning



**Andrew Henon**  
Socially engaged art



**Shelagh Hetreed**  
Scarred identities, marginalised communities



**Joao Roe**  
Children with sensory impairment



**Deborah Jane**  
love, justice lifelong learning



**Surrinder Sandham-Bains**  
Carer, health visiting, CPD



**Rachel Burgess**  
Wellbeing into Elderhood

## CONVERSATION CAFE



The Conversation Cafe research support group has been meeting early in the morning weekly for many years at venues in and around Bath, UK. Members have joined, left and returned as their personal and work circumstances have changed. Whoever has been part of these conversations have helped to create a consistently vibrant, convivial, and energising space for sharing and supporting our individual and collective efforts to contribute to the flourishing of humanity by researching our practice to improve it and offer valid accounts of our explanations of our educational influence in our own learning, the learning of others and the learning of the social formations we are part of (our living-educational-theories)



**Lynn Spurrell**  
Coaching, change management



**Sonia Hutchison**  
Sustainable leadership



**Kate Kemp**  
Listening, loving, laughing, living

### Members

of the Conversation Cafe research group, some of whom you can see above, share a common passion to contribute to the flourishing of humanity through researching our practice to improve it, making public valid accounts of our living-theories and spreading knowledge of the transformational and life-affirming and life-enhancing possibilities Living Theory research offers.

Each individual with their living-poster exists within a network of i~we~i relationships between other individuals, groups and communities shown on the following homepage of living-posters:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage010217.pdf>



One connection we are making to the ideas of de Sousa Santos (2014) on ‘Justice against Epistemicide’ is through the idea coined (with some humour) by Peter Mellett of ‘Pan-epistemogenesis’. The term is used to mean a global movement that is focused on the creation (or birth) of knowledges. Whilst we understand de Sousa Santos’ focus on justice against epistemicide (Whitehead, 2016) we go further by holding ourselves to account to research our efforts to live our values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity, as fully as possible. These values have unique expression in an individual’s practice. They form the explanatory principles of each of us in our explanations of educational influence. These

explanations are our individual living-theories. As we share our living-theories (Whitehead, 1989) we can contribute to Living Theory research as a social movement that is committed to enhancing the flow of values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

In the centre of the homepage of living-posters are the details of how you can contribute your own as we move towards the 1<sup>st</sup> Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy: towards an ecology of knowledges, in Cartagena on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at the end of the 2017 Action Research Network of the Americas conference 12-16 June with the theme of 'Participation and Democratisation of Knowledge: New Convergences for Reconciliation'