

'5x5x5=creativity: sharing our values and principles'

Some responses to the paper with 10 statements of values and principles tabled at the 5x5x5=creativity meeting of the 3 February 2012.

Our values and principles are clarified, shared and evolved through multi-media data and action research narratives from our website at: <http://www.5x5x5creativity.org.uk/> as we work to enhance our educational influence as an independent, arts-based action research organisation which supports children in their exploration and expression of ideas, helping them develop creative skills for life. The following image serves to emphasise our focus on, and valuing of, the well-being of individuals.



The following 2:03 minute video clip of 'Edwina exhibition with young people': <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0JXH3NXwM4>, serves to emphasise our focus on, and valuing of, our learning together, in community.



Because our values are clarified and developed in the course of their emergence in our practice, we share on our web-site visual data and visual narratives from events at which we are clarifying and living our values as fully

as we can. For example, on the 11/11/11 - a day of remembrance for the First World War's Armistice day - we organized a day's seminar on 'Creativity and Emotional Well Being' at Bath Spa University. Participants in 5x5x5 explained how they were fulfilling the organization's aims and philosophical principles. These can be accessed at <http://www.5x5x5creativity.org.uk/?id=136> .

Our aims are to:

- demonstrate ways in which creativity can be fostered in children and young people to fire their interest in learning
- influence educational practice by establishing creativity as an essential foundation of learning
- produce research to demonstrate the value of creative enquiry, relationships and environments in helping children and young people develop as confident, creative thinkers
- share the research findings as widely as possible, creating a legacy for the future
- provide integrated training and mentoring for participating teachers, artists and cultural settings

5x5x5 philosophy

Our key philosophical principles are that:

- children and young people are seen as innate and creative knowledge builders, explorers and co-constructors of their learning
- educators and artists are enablers and companions in the children's and young people's learning within a culture of listening
- learning is focused on the process of the participants explorations, not the end product
- documenting participants' learning journeys is our method for evaluating and reflecting upon the children's thinking and learning
- the development of a creative learning community of teachers, artists, co-workers in cultural centres, parents, children and young people
- involving family and community in life-long learning

'Children need the freedom to appreciate the infinite resources of their hands, their eyes and their ears, the resources of forms, materials sounds and colours. They need the freedom to realise how reason, thought and imagination can create continuous interweaving of things, and can move and shake the world.' Loris Malaguzzi, founder of the Reggio Emilia preschools (<http://zerosei.comune.re.it/inter/reggiochildren.htm>)

In our action research we hold ourselves accountable for living the values of 5x5x5 as fully as possible as we develop our understandings of how to deepen and extend our influence in supporting the learning of young people. Rather than only setting out **statements** of values and principles in lists such as those above for our aims and philosophical principles, we believe in showing our **embodied values** in our practice as the explanatory principles

we use in explaining our influence in our own learning and in the learning of others.

For example, in the following 27:06 minute video of Helen Jury and Catherine Lamont Robinson from the event on the 11/11/11,

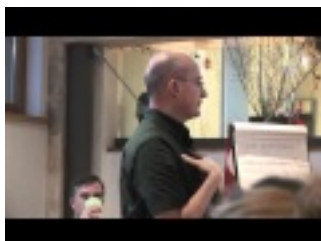


<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7MKmCr66czg>

Helen and Catherine are clarifying their values and explaining the influence of their practice as trust is built up through layers of dialogue within settings. They focus on the role of empathy, intuition and their respective professional backgrounds with their understanding that a variety of interventions may be necessary to consider for the wellbeing of the participants.

In terms of sharing meanings of values and principles they stress the importance of recognizing the significance of **embodied responses**. We cannot stress enough the importance of finding new ways of recognizing and responding to cognitive, somatic and sensory experiences and communications. We share Helen's and Catherine's emphasis on the '**relational body**' and are emphasizing the importance of multi-media narratives because in their terms '**Words don't cut it**'. They share insights into the meanings of non-verbal communications and the Artist's and Art Psychotherapist's response to these at different stages of life.

In the following 17:13 minutes of Gillian McFarland, Ed Harker and James Aldridge from the event on the 11/11/11 they begin with three short presentations, as introductions to each of their roles and their understanding of the work carried out together. They then focus on responding to the interests of audience members, inviting discussion and linking with the two previous conversations/presentations.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woOsoY5T0DM>

Ed responds to an earlier presentation by Robin Pound and Karen John on their exploration of creativity and democracy. Ed responds with illustrations of what this could actually look like within a school setting. Gillian shared the

experiences of her son and the effect that being part of the 5x5x5=creativity research project has had on him, and James looked at the creative dialogue between a child and their environment, and the dual benefit for child and environment.

Penny Hay, Director of Research for 5x5x5=creativity can be seen introducing the speakers in the two video-clips from the event on the 11/11/11. Penny lives the values of the action research organization as fully as possible and in the introductions we can see Penny expressing her embodied value of inclusion. We hope that watching the visual records will help you to appreciate the ecological nature of our values. These values are embodied in what we are doing. The values are relationally dynamic and develop through relationships with others and the environment. They are receptive, responsive and creative as Ed shows. To communicate the meanings of our embodied values we need to show, to clarify and to evolve them in the course of their emergence in what we are doing. In the spirit of cooperation embodied in 5x5x5=creativity we hope that you will join us in working together to enhance the well-being and learning of each other and the young people in our care.