

Living Theory Researching within Communities

Jack Whitehead, University of Cumbria, 31 January 2018

Dear Joy and Marie,

The question I'm asking, researching and seeking to answer is:

How can I enhance my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement with communities of learners?

This is the first time that I have sought to ground my question within community relationships and I'm wondering what you think of me beginning by acknowledging my connection with Joy's doctoral enquiry with its inclusion of the educational influences of a community of learners:

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?

I'll begin by clarifying and communicating my recognition of the qualities that distinguish the Living Theory communities I belong to, from my experience of your relationship.



17:13 minute video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYYBBJV-0qY>

The above still from the conversation shows me both of your embodied expressions of the pleasure of being in each others' company. All of the Living Theory communities I belong to evoke a similar feeling of pleasure in being in the others' presence. I value the feeling of belonging in a community that I associate with the valuing of accepting rather than threatening my ontological security. One community I belong to is the Living Theory Adlerian research group and I have started to give my own meanings to the Adlerian ideas of community feeling and social interest.

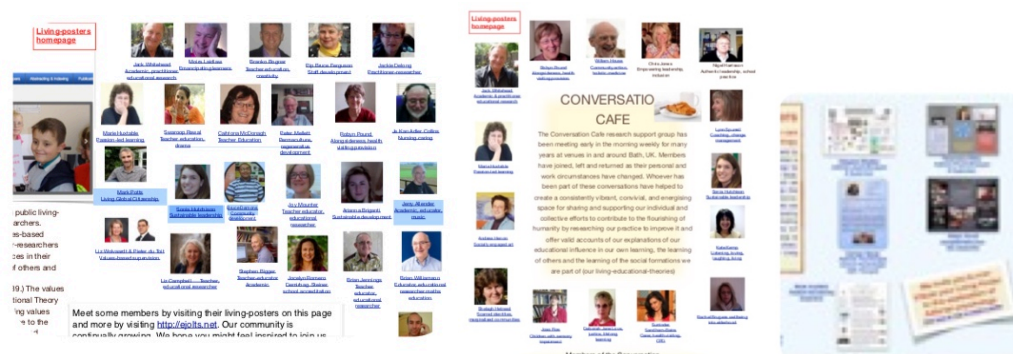
I am grounding my meaning of community within the community feeling I experience in our relationships as we express the pleasure of being in each others' company. In belonging to a Living Theory community I add to this pleasure the commitment of social interest. By this I mean that each member of the community is actively engaged in educational enquiries that are intended to make the world a better place to be with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. For me, these values include working and researching co-operatively within a community, in a way that recognises the uniqueness of each individual's identity and enquiry, whilst contributing to Living Theory research as a social movement.

What I would now like to do is to explore the implications of researching my question, How can I enhance my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement with communities of learners? whilst supporting the enquiries of other members of the communities, such as Joy's:

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?

Here are some of the Living Educational Theory communities of Learning I belong to. You can access more details of each of these communities from

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage020617.pdf>



EJOLTS - Educational Journal Of Living Theories
...an international journal and community of Living Theory researchers

Conversation Cafe
...a community supporting developing practice in diverse fields meeting in and around Bath, UK, with occasional SKYPE visitors

Adlerian SKYPE group
 Adlerian Living Theory researchers researching their practice together



SKYPE Living Theory research support gp
...an international online community developing and supporting research and researchers

Univ. of Cumbria Living Theory Research gp.
...doctoral researchers & supervisors researching their diverse practice

What I would like to enquiry into with you both, and then to extend the enquiries with others from our various communities, is what emerges from our co-operation initially from now until,

- i) My keynote, to the 2018 World Congress of the Action Learning and Action Research Association (ALARA) in Vermont, USA from the 20-23 June.

"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." (Tetteh, 2017)

- ii) The joint workshop with Jacqueline Delong and Marie Huxtable at ALARA 2018 on 'Where do we go from here in contributing to *The Action Learning and Action Research Legacy for Transforming Social Change?*'

"The workshop will bring together through social media the evolving living-posters and living-theories, of global citizens who are engaged in action learning/action research inquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing with values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity?' The participants will also include, through their 'virtual presence' contributors to the 2015 Town Hall meeting of the Action Research Network of the Americas Conference in Toronto, the 2016 participatory workshop and CARN study day for the 2017 1st World Congress for Knowledge Democracy: towards an ecology of knowledges in Cartagena and other new participants. This workshop will focus on the legacy for transforming social change of the living-theories of educational practitioner researchers including those engaging in AL/AR practitioners. The living-theories to be used in the workshop will include those accredited for doctoral degrees in different universities around the world. Taken together they take into account critical insights of reflexive change agent models in reflective learning, experiential learning, action learning, action research, appreciative inquiry, reflective practice inquiry, learning history inquiry and living theory inquiry.

The workshop will demonstrate the communicative power of multi-media narratives with digital visual data to clarify and communicate the meanings of embodied expressions of values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. Ideas critically and creatively engaged with will include current social theories such as de Sousa Santos' (2014) ideas on 'epistemicide'. These ideas will be used to show how Western academic reasoning and epistemology, can be understood and transcended, in the generation of the living-educational-theories of individuals, grounded in their experiences and contexts." (DeLong, Huxtable & Whitehead, 2018)

What I am suggesting is that we start to explore the potential of the EJOLTS wiki to support our co-operative enquiries, as well as our individual enquiries.

Joy – you can access the EJOLTS wiki paper at

http://ejolts-wiki.mattrink.co.uk/index.php/Main_Page

You can access my wiki page at:

<http://ejolts-wiki.mattrink.co.uk/index.php/Jack>

Where you can see at the bottom of the page my express of desire to enquire co-operatively with you.

References

Tetteh, E. (2017) Keynotes for the 2018 ALARA World Congress. Retrieved 31 January 2018 from

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

Whitehead, J, Delong, J. & Huxtable, M. (2018) Where do we go from here in contributing to '*The Action Learning and Action Research Legacy for Transforming Social Change?*' Retrieved 31 January 2018 from

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