

# The Double Helix

## The story of your life

**Brian De Lord**

**Bob Townley**

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# Brian's professional story

- **Teaching-English & Drama, Sanctuary-Excluded students, TinC EBD students**
- **Youth & Community worker, community arts**
- **Counsellor/Psychotherapist, Young people & Families**
- **Associate lecturer, Brunel University, PGC in Counselling Skills & Guidance**
- **CEO & Headteacher, The PPP & Europeace Youth, independent school & alternative education service for vulnerable students & families.**
- **Leader & Participant in EU funded collaborations**

# Bob's professional story

- **Researcher and evaluator in the fields of work, learning & skills, employment, unemployment, economic development, social policy, mental health, community development and organisations**
- **Recent research interests include issues of change, loss, mourning, shame and repair in organisations. Currently researching issues with community groups and leaders in the UK vocational training sector**
- **Experience of working with a psychoanalytically-informed method**
- **A long history of working in EU projects, in areas of organisations, learning, mental health, inclusion and (recently) language and the integration of refugees and asylum seekers**
- **Currently a lecturer in Management and Organisations at the University of York, UK**

# The Double Helix Framework

- **Partnership & Collaboration, Epistemic structures, Environmental factors**
- **Application, Training & Supervision**
- **Acquisition & Application of Knowledge & Skills, Maps, Interpretation.**
- **Human Qualities: how to cultivate in clients & practitioners**
- **Practices: Reflexive, Non-Oppressive, Deliberate, Intuition, Informed intuition, Evaluation**

# Stories are important:

- **“no one ever made a decision because of a number – they needed a story”**. Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman

# And so is environment & culture:

- **“As my Home Office correspondent points out, governing at the front line is so often a matter of “blur and nuance”, of sensitivity to individual circumstance. That is specially so with vulnerable immigrants, where each case requires sympathy and the exercise of discretion. The target culture has no room for this. It says: keep your head down and watch the figures.”**

Simon Jenkins, The Guardian, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018

# The Contradiction

- **Our clients need services which are understanding, sensitive and considerate. This will mean that practitioners have to not only develop the skills to deliver this but also to manage the uncertainty that comes with it.**
- **They will also have to deliver these services in an environment that demands targets, evidence and certainty.**
- **How can this be done?**

# QUOTE:

- **Unexpressed emotions will never die. They are buried alive and will come forth later in uglier ways.**

Sigmund Freud



# The Double Helix

- **Understanding the past to create the future! Exercise:**
- Mark 5 events from your life, that are connected with a chosen theme, onto the spiral. 15 minutes.
- Write the stories that underlie these events? 15 minutes
- What is your analysis of them and their relationship to each other? 15 minutes.
- Share any insights you have made with a trusted other. 15 minutes each
- Notice whether the nature of the insights change from thinking on your own to discussing them with your colleague.
- Have you noticed any changes in the use of your language from that you used with your self to that you used with your colleagues.
- When using this exercise with students, there may well be occasions when the student discloses information that requires the additional support of specialist staff. If there is anything that you feel unsure about please discuss this with your supervisor.

# The Learning Journey

- **Relationship Building**
- **Understanding & Interpretation**
- **Interventions**
- **Partnership**
- **Evaluation**

# 2 IDEAS WORTH CONSIDERING:

- **Ivan Illich: Educational Funnel V Learning Webs.  
Which history do you have?**
- **Richard Holloway: Binary Reductionism**

# LEARNING, BLOCKS & STYLES

- **Majority of Learning blocks are emotional in origin.**
- **Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic Model**
- **Howard Gardener's Multi-Intelligence Model**
- **John Hattie – meta-analysis on what works in education, the child's self- concept as a learner is uppermost.**

# Relationship Building

- **Context of meeting**
- **Reflexive Practice**
- **Emotional Literacy**
- **Non-oppressive Practice**
- **Human Qualities**

**The purpose of relationship building is to create a platform on which trust in expertise can be developed.**

# LEVELS OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

- **Personal Self-Discovery & Growth**
- **Basic Professional Reflexive Practice: Technical reflection: focused on generic sources of knowledge & competence in applying agency values, policy, procedures & Non-Oppressive Practice (NOP).**
- **Specialist Reflexive Practice**  
**Specialist Reflection: focused on specialist sources of knowledge & competence in dealing with complexity & risk, greater insight into NOP.**
- **Critical & Emancipatory Reflexive Practice**  
**Advance Reflexive Practice: focused on knowledge & competence in being challenging in developing agency services, policy & procedures**

Benchmarking Reflective Practice in Social Work Education and Training: George Wilson

# The Double Helix

- **Understanding the past to create the future! Exercise:**
- **Mark 5 events from your life, that are connected with you training to be an educator, onto the spiral. 15 minutes.**
- **Write the stories that underlie these events? 30 minutes**
- **What is your analysis of them and their relationship to each other? 15 minutes.**
- **Share any insights you have made with a trusted other. 30 minutes each**
- **Notice whether the nature of the insights change from thinking on your own to discussing them with your colleague.**
- **Have you noticed any changes in the use of your language from that you used with your self to that you used with your colleagues.**

# What type of practitioner are you?

- **What practitioner legacies do you have?**
  - a) **as a learner**
  - b) **in building professional relationships**
  - c) **In your reflective practice**
- **Are there any changes to your future aspirations?**



# Non Oppressive Practice

- **When you make a decision, how do you know whether it is based on prejudice or intuition?**
- **Do you look at the mirror or in the mirror?**

**‘The very idea that slavery and its aftermath might play a role in an individuals psychological state raises a lot of discomfort. This idea – on one side – causes people to feel that they are accused of barbarism or on the other side that they are victims of permanent damage. Any examination of slavery and its aftermath is thus fraught with difficulties’**

Barbara Fletchman Smith – Mental Slavery (2000)

# The Double Helix method

- A particularly useful way of using this exercise is to explore your own legacies around prejudice and discrimination.
- Plot 5 events that have contributed to your legacies (i.e. beliefs and behaviours) around prejudice and discrimination. 15 minutes
- Write the stories that underlie these events. 15 minutes
- What patterns/themes do you notice? 15 minutes
- Discuss these with a trusted colleague. 15 minutes each
- Make a note of any realisations and reflect on how you intend to apply these to your behaviour.

**A possible exercise for the future: Analyse an incident in your experience that has prejudice/discrimination as a component. How has your developing awareness changed your perception of the incident and the desired response?**

# Understanding/Interpretation – Embracing of Complexity

- **Identification of theories that support mutual/shared interpretation from Therapeutic – Psychodynamic, Humanistic, Behavioural/Cognitive-Behavioural, Multi-Cultural, Cultural psychology.**
- **Educational – Learning needs, Specific Learning difficulties, Gifted/talented students**
- **Social – Environmental, Family, Culture, Gender, Societal, Legal, Global, Media & Social media**
- **Economic – effects of poverty, wealth**
- **Health: Neurology & Brain function, Other health issues**

# Remember:

- **Training and experience shapes our perceptions and our professional responses**
- **All theories are maps, they do not have to be completely accurate to be useful**
- **What are the gaps in your map?**

# PARTNERSHIP

- **Collaboration – What are the skills & tools needed to participate and facilitate this?**
- **Inter-dependence, The Dependency Spectrum**
- **Co-Creation, is this different to collaboration?**
- **Competition: When is it a good idea?**
- **Working with families and communities: vital for sustainability, safeguarding & future development.**
- **Networks of employers/work experience providers**
- **Use of other agencies: statutory, community. Voluntary, virtual**

# QUOTE:

- **“People don’t choose between things, they choose between descriptions of things,”**

Daniel Kahneman

# EVALUATION – first impressions

- **Please reflect on your learning experience today. What have you learnt in relation to:**

*(a few words on each)*

- 1. Your ability to reflect on your career experience**
- 2. Your motivation to be an educator**
- 3. Your ability to develop and maintain professional relationships**
- 4. Your personal legacies of discrimination and prejudice**

**And...**

- 1. Do you now feel you have clearer idea of how your past experiences are likely to affect your future decisions (personal and career)?**
- 2. What do you feel you have learnt today which will be useful?**

# EVALUATION – on reflection

- ***If agreeable to you, we will send out an email link to a short online survey asking you to consider these issues again in a few days time – once you have had more of an opportunity to reflect on your experience***
- **We may also send you a short survey again in a few months time to see if/how you feel you are putting this learning into practice**



# Thank You! Please stay in touch!

- **Brian De Lord**

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