



Transforming organisations and people

The importance of relatedness

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If we keep on doing what we have done, we will keep on getting what we have got!

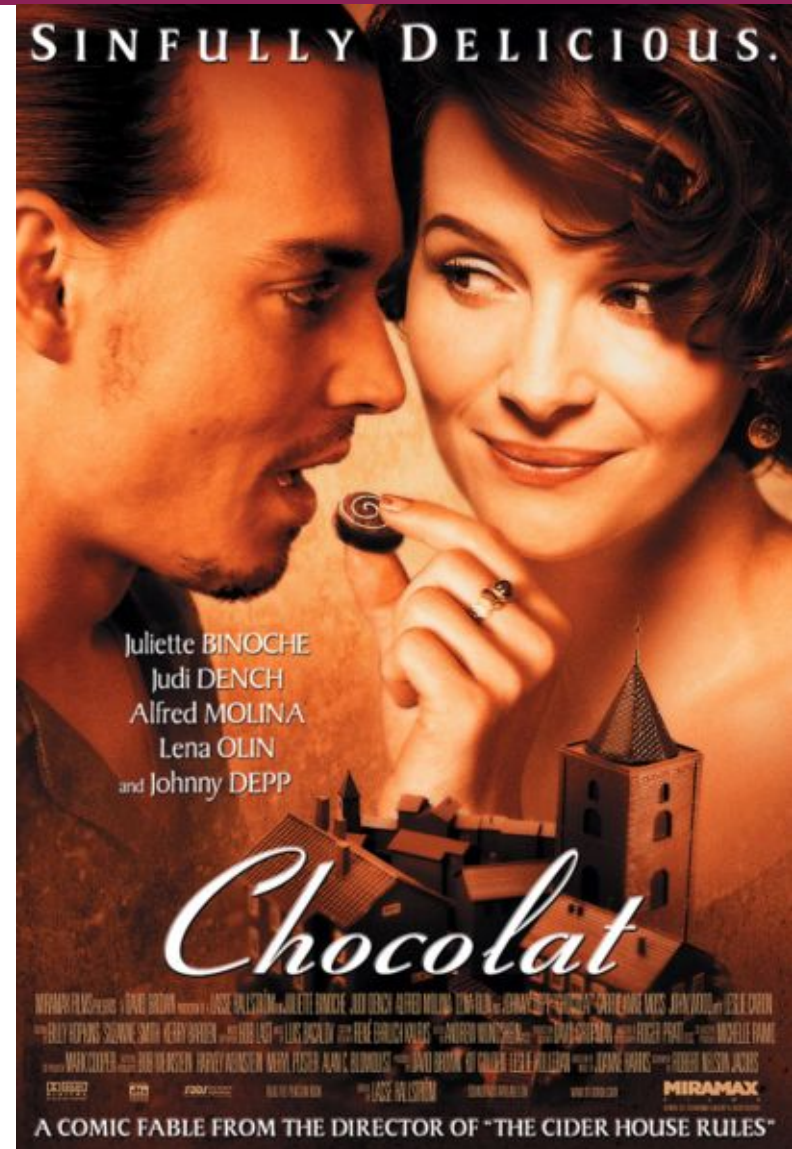
It's time re-imagine, dream and visualize a landscape and future of hope and success.

Gone is despair, anger, frustration and anxiety.



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I think that we can't go around... measuring our goodness by what we don't do. By what we deny ourselves, what we resist, and who we exclude. I think... we've got to measure goodness by what we embrace, what we create... and who we include. - Pere Henri : Chocolat the Movie





The questions that guide our relationships?

- What gifts do I bring to the relationship?
- What gifts does the 'other' bring to the relationship?
- What other ways of knowing can be offered through this relationship?
- How can I grow personally through this relationship?



We all need windows and mirrors in our lives

- Allows me look beyond myself
- Projects the future
- Assists me to understand what experiences sit outside of my own experiences
- Allows me to be an advocate for change
- Helps me understand what others may need from me



- Reflects back to me my own subjective experiences
- Teaches me about myself
- Allows me to be critical of my own experiences
- Allows me to be reflective of my own experiences and decisions
- Provides me with clarity regarding what I can offer others



Get off the dance floor and onto the balcony



We are a parliament of selves



A closed mind is like a closed book, just a block of wood -
Chinese proverb



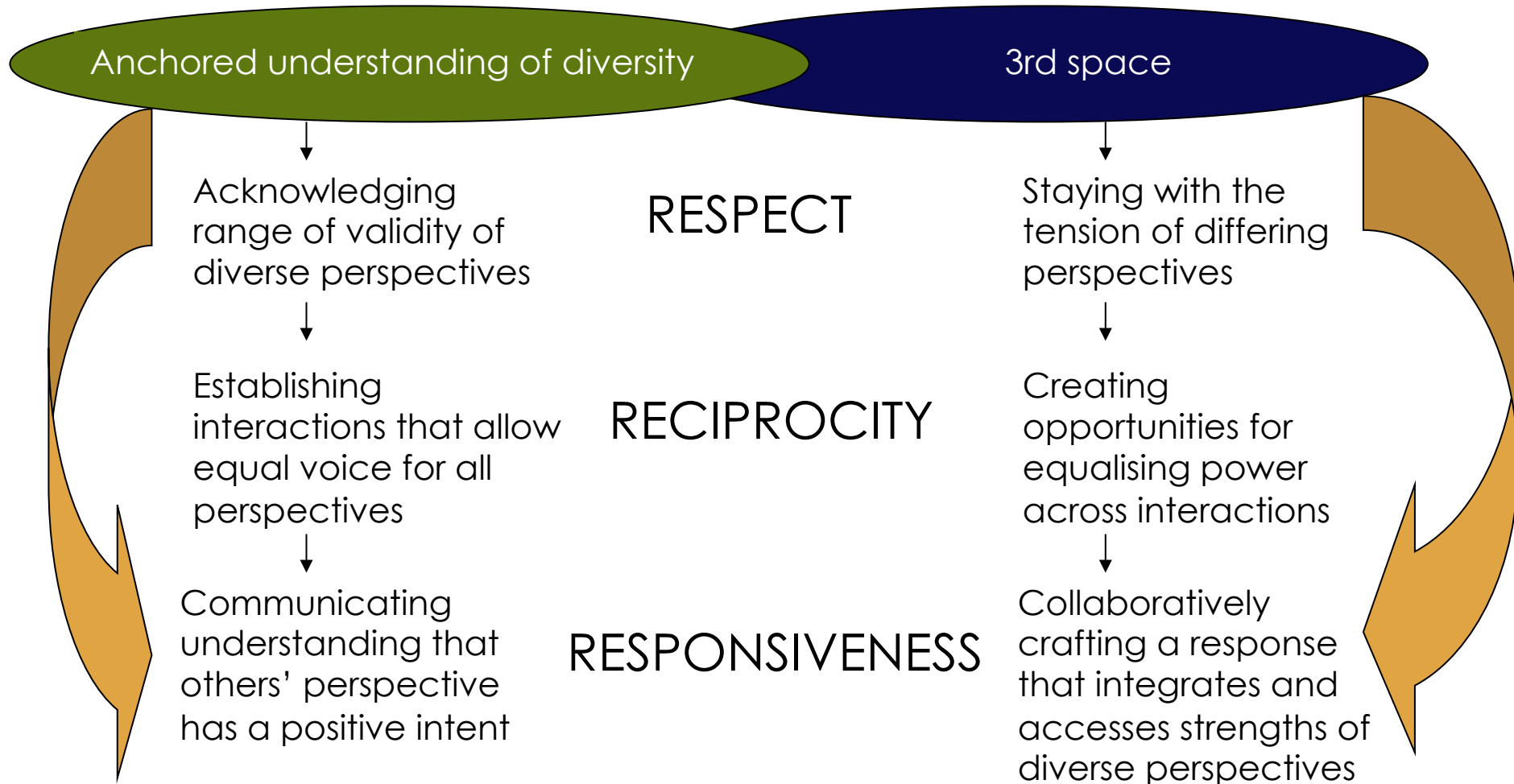
Relatedness

A sense of connectedness or association



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Skilled dialogue





Respect

Respect is a hallmark quality of relatedness

Respect refers to an awareness and acknowledgement of boundaries between persons. Boundaries are therefore markers that both connect and distinguish us from others.

Awareness and acknowledgement of boundaries different from our own can be problematic when it challenges our own assumptions.



Respect

We must therefore be willing to (a) acknowledge differing perceptions and boundaries and (b) suspend the need to immediately change them to match.



Reciprocity

Reciprocity seeks to balance power between persons.

At its core is the recognition that each person in an interaction is equally powerful. As such reciprocity in this sense distinguishes between common understandings of power as expertise and authority and the less common understanding of power as capacity or capability.

Reciprocity is not about denying that one person has more expertise or knowledge than another in a particular area of knowledge. Rather it attempts to equalize power through a process of valuing differences.



Reciprocity

Reciprocity allows for 'other' points of view to be heard rather than one dominating. It allows for choice and eliminates a forcing of 'either-or'.

When differences are acknowledged as potential contributors, no sense of debt is incurred by any of the persons involved; no one is solely "giver" or "receiver".

In reciprocal relationships everyone has something to offer that enriches not only the persons involved but also the outcome of their interactions. Every interaction therefore becomes about giving and receiving.



Responsiveness

If respect is about recognizing different boundaries, and reciprocity is about acknowledging that every person has something of value to contribute, then responsiveness is about where we go from there.

Responsiveness “requires...an openness to allowing (others) to uncover who they are rather than shaping them into who we want or need them to be” (Freedman & Combs, 1996, p.281)

It is about turning all our assumptions into lightly held hypotheses e.g. saying ‘I wonder if’ or ‘maybe’ rather than ‘I know’ or ‘I’m sure’



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Our reflection: Can you identify a time when you were faced with a moment that required you to question your own knowledge and power?

Where there is power there is resistance - Foucault



The role of mystery





Responsiveness

Mystery requires that we attend to children and families with focused attention, patience and curiosity (Freedman and Combs, 1996).

In this sense, being responsive is about being willing to not know for sure, to not know exactly what to do or what to say.

“Knowing all too easy encourages us to fall asleep...a part of us to rush ahead to our destination the moment we see it’. (Remen 2000)



Responsiveness

Being responsive is particularly important in diverse situations because these situations, in their very diversity, challenge us to recognize that a person is always more than, and perhaps even radically different from, our ideas about who they are.

While we cannot always eliminate our preconceived ideas and judgments, we can, through mindful attention, refuse to reduce reality to their limited space.



Anchoring our understanding of diversity

An anchored understanding of diversity refers to a compassionate understanding of differences “anchored” both experientially and cognitively.

The experiential anchor situates information and makes it truly comprehensible. It is the knowing that stems from face-to-face and hands-on experience.

An anchored understanding of diversity is designed to generate compassionate knowledge that “arises not from standing back in order to look at, but by active and intentional engagement in lived experiences” (Groome, 1980)



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Respecting someone else does not require that we admire the behaviors they exhibit. It does require that we understand how their behaviors makes sense from their cultural, as well as their personal experiences.



The 3rd Space

The third space is a mindset that focuses on creatively reframing contradictions into paradoxes.

As a mindset, 3rd Space supports respectfully holding divergent and sometimes seemingly contradictory views in ones mind at the same time without forcing choice between them.

What does this mean for you as a practitioner?



3rd space in practice

The 3rd space invites practitioners to make a fundamental shift from a dualistic and exclusive perception of reality to an integrative, inclusive perspective that focuses on the complementary aspects of diverse values, communications, behaviours and beliefs, which can lead to a 3rd choice.

It asks the questions: How can we both end up in the same space without moving.



| Qualities that characterize skilled dialogue | Specific strategies |
|--|--|
| Respect: Stay with tension of differing perspectives | Listening and observing without judgment Identifying specific contradictions or culture humps |
| Reciprocity: Develop opportunities for equalizing power across interactions | Shift focus of conversation to 'equalize' participation Reframe contradictions into complementary perspectives -What if we are both right? |
| Responsiveness: Create a response that integrates and accesses strengths of diverse perspectives | Explore/create responses that incorporate multiple perspectives |

What gifts are offered to us when we

- Look for the unexpected
- Hear the silenced
- Search beyond the borders
- Work with others who think like us
- Work with others who think differently to us



The three c's

C-ollaborate

C-ritical reflection

C-onversation



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Collaborate: work jointly on an activity, to produce or create something

Critical reflection involves:

- Assumption analysis – Involves thinking in such a manner that it challenges our beliefs, values, cultural practices, and social structures in order to assess their impact on our daily actions.
- Contextual awareness – Realising that our assumptions are socially and personally created in a specific historical and cultural context.

Conversation: the informal exchange of ideas by spoken words



Our passion for seeking the truth



Scully – in search of the truth through traditional knowledge

Mulder – a post modernist at heart, seeking to unravel the taken for granted





Organic Intellectuals

Antonio Gramsci (1891 - 1937) was a leading Italian Marxist. He coined the term organic intellectuals.

Organic intellectuals are those who recognise that their knowledge is produced through educational systems and the other forces around them.

Organic intellectuals reject the idea that their expertise is neutral or independent, They also reject their status as 'the experts' in a particular field. Instead they use their knowledge and expertise to improve democratic relationships by introducing new ways of thinking and raising new questions that challenge 'accepted wisdom'.



Conformist Approaches

‘It’s really difficult working with that family, they seem to be resisting all the advice we provide them’

‘Our role is to educate parents on the best way to raise their children’

‘It would be so much easier if that family understood the most appropriate ways to raise their child. It’s really obvious this is the way it should be done based on brain research and good parenting training’

'IT'S REALLY DIFFICULT WORKING WITH THAT FAMILY, THEY SEEM TO BE RESISTING ALL THE ADVISE WE PROVIDE THEM'

'I WONDER WHAT BEING AN 'EXPERT' HAS ON MY RELATIONSHIP WITH A PARENT'

'Our role is to educate parents on the best way to raise their children'

'It's interesting understanding the different ways child rearing is understood across the world. I wonder why I believe in what I do'



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'It would be so much easier if that family understood the most appropriate ways to raise their child. Its really obvious this is the way we do it here in Australia and what is best for their child'

'it's really important that I don't judge families about their child rearing practices. My way of understanding 'good parenting' is so specific to my cultural context and is only one way of understanding parenting'

'That parent just isn't interested in being involved, it's just the way their culture operates'

'I wonder what institutional or societal barriers exist which may disable parents from participating fully'



Transformative learning (or transformational learning) is a process of getting beyond gaining factual knowledge alone to instead become changed by what one learns in some meaningful way.

It involves questioning assumptions, beliefs and values, and considering multiple points of view, while always seeking to verify reasoning.



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Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world

W.B. Yeats

He wishes for the cloths of heaven
Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths.
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

Dreams = Wishes and Dreaming = Wishing

In the recent positive psychology daily Sean Doyle (2009) wrote

“Wishes touch on so many aspects of positive psychology. They play a role in appreciative inquiry, hope, resilience, savoring, purpose and goal setting just to name a few. That is because **wishes tell us something about what it means to be human. They frame for us our vision of what is important** – both those things that are “big I” Important that **give us meaning and purpose**, as well as the **little pleasures and comforts** that ease and aide us in our enjoyment of life. **Wishes help us define a vision of what is possible and show us what life could be.**”



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While they are not the same thing as hope, our wishes have a hand in the motivation, passion and clear goals that make our hopes possible. When times are hard, sometimes wishes offer the comfort we need.

Of course, we are not always good at guessing what we want, or what will make us happy. As a result, sometimes we wish for the “wrong” things. But this too says something about who we are, and what it means to be human as we go about stammering and stumbling through life. Ultimately our wishes connect us to one another. No matter where you are from, or where you are going, when we hear the wishes of others, so often we realise that we are not alone in our dreams.'



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On April 12, 2007, I asked 63 first graders at JY Joyner Elementary in Raleigh, NC, if they had one wish for the world, their families, or themselves, what would it be?

This is what they said.



“One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said, ‘My son, the battle is between two wolves inside us all, disgust, fear, embarrassment, guilt shame and hate.

The other is Positivity. It’s joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe and above all love.’

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: ‘Which wolf wins?’

The old Cherokee simply replied, 'The one you feed'



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