

# PAINTING as a Mode for Facilitating Organisational Development: Describing an Integral Process for Learning

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## Abstract

*Based on empirical data/experiences this paper describes the potential of “artistic painting” as an immediate and credible source of learning and inquiry within an organisational context. Through the example of painting, an integral process and methodology for learning is outlined, designed and delivered as an Arts Based Initiative (ABI). This form is highly adaptable and eminently suitable for meeting the needs of a broad range of organisational challenges. In particular when using painting those of collaboration, improvement, change and visioning. The following proposes that as a mode, painting presents minimal complications for direct participation and so can serve as a primary means of introducing ABI's into the workplace. However while the mode of painting might be seen as adaptable and foundational, its limitations indicate where other modes (and media) should be engaged. Such a blend with other modes and media is essential to considering the successful delivery of an ongoing and encompassing arts-based approach to organisational development.*

## Introduction

In a wide range of circumstances over the last seven years or more I have delivered numerous workshops using artistic painting as a visual mode for experiential learning. Mostly the workshops have supported some form of organisational learning although they can and have been offered within other communities such as social groups, schools and families. The workshops have comprised various short exercises using visual means, namely painting, to introduce new perspectives to these parties. The aim is to induce collaboration

or to broaden the possible range of choices available to people in their own situations. This work has been viewed as instrumental in helping people align their cultures to achieve what might then be seen by them as desirable outcomes within their situations.

Within the workshops framework I have come to call the individual exercises *Art Based Initiatives* (ABIs). Regardless of the varying applications of these workshops, the underlying theme is always learning. Importantly, throughout this work the same repertoire of ABIs have been employed, with different configurations and variations used to meet the different purposes of the workshops.

Since beginning this work, I have constantly endeavoured to make it more effective, reflecting on my approach and on the feedback of participants. Personal responses have come from my knowledge of painting technique and theory, my practical experience as an artist and musician, and company founder, my life experience which could be described as eventful, and last but not least the ongoing contributions made by workshop participants.

From Day 1 my ABIs were effective in generating high levels of engagement. Regardless of any initial misgivings people came away smiling and nodding; some even had small epiphanies. Yet despite this, achieving a focused outcome that could adequately meet the goals of business-driven objectives was quite another matter.

Gradually I improved the scope of the outcomes, and was better able to match them with the varying environments and tasks presented to me. While the circumstances and details of each brief were different, with constant repetition of the ABIs as a response, I came to recognise repeating patterns. (One

particular ABI I call “Scumble” has been delivered to well over 1500 individuals).

Eventually I developed my approach on two different but clearly interdependent levels.

One became an understanding of my **mode** (visual) to communicate and its **media** (paint) to provide simple access to enquiry and expression as an ABI. The other avenue of understanding was an **integral process** that emerged regardless of which mode and media were employed but that together with media resulted in learning being facilitated.

These two interrelated aspects might be described as **space** and **content**.

The space is a background context within which the ABI as a medium lies embedded and in which content becomes apparent, in this case through its medium; painting. Whilst we see and deal with the physicality of the painting, through doing it, handling it, and finding meaning in its visible contents, we are also given the opportunity to become aware of the integral conditions and effects that enable the new perspectives, and so learning takes place.

Whilst in practice the integral process made itself apparent after repeated use of the ABI's designed around painting, in this paper I will describe the integral process first followed by examples of my application of it through painting. During this commentary I will summarise and outline theory as well as the pros and cons of artistic painting for facilitating learning in the form of an ABI.

Within this integral process I identify 3 constitutive elements which together permit the ABI to function as a medium for the learning.

- The first element is the requirement for *Transitional Space*. This is the physical and transcendental space **in which** the process takes place.
- The second is a requirement for a *Transitional Object*. This is the art-based medium and associated mode **through which** the learning takes place. Importantly it is the way in which the ABI can be related to which affects the emergent third element.
- An emergent *Phenomenal Awareness* **from which** develops an ability to include felt senses that can move apprehension beyond content to reveal and simultaneously include an understanding of process.

When this approach to learning is consciously facilitated through the use of Art-Based processes learning insights are amplified and accelerated.

In conclusion I hope to leave the reader with a practical process supported by in-depth reflection as well as some insights into the use of painting as Art Based Initiatives for implementing this process. My hope is that where understanding can be achieved it may become the catalyst for implementing more effective and satisfying work practices.

## **Overview**

The **Integral Process** described here is a transformational process that is centred in the ideas and benefits of experiential learning in organisations. Experiential learning for the purposes of this paper will always refer to *situated learning* derived from reflection on direct experience and implies the learning is absorbed and retained in an embodied manner. According to their needs, participants engaged in this overarching process are drawn into virtuous cycles of sense- or meaning-making, both as individuals and as groups.

The three constitutive elements of this process, ***Transitional Space, Transitional Object, and Phenomenal Awareness***, outlined below are highly interdependent and therefore careful attention to each element is needed for their combined facilitation.

Setting up and recognising the contribution of each element directly relates to the participants' intensity of engagement and thus the learning outcomes. As a *facilitated methodology*, some points will be made using examples that involve artistic painting as a medium to illustrate how the ideas have been put into practice.

The experiential sequence of learning proposes that participants *first enter a Transitional Space* which is both physical and transcendental *in which* they then *engage with an Art-Based Transitional Object*. It is *through* this object they come to notice or develop a *Phenomenal Awareness from which* the new perspectives gained enable new sense and meaning-making.

### **Transitional Spaces for Learning**

This description of Transitional Space is presented under three subheadings that make up the space *in which* the work of art-based learning will take place. In describing this space I will first discuss the role of *Physical Space*, with concrete and environmental conditions of time and place. This will be followed by a discussion of *Psychological Space*, where feelings, emotions and thoughts arise, in particular through Anxieties, Play, Humour and Questions. Finally the concepts Negative Capability and Paradox lead to *Open Space*, an openness or 'void' of unknown potential from which new learning is derived.

## **Physical Space**

*Time* and *Place* are important dimensions of physical space, but as learning takes place constantly, it is optimal to consider their physicality as it relates to learning. Firstly, dedicated time can be interpreted as regular, reiterative or cyclic, and secondly, as intervals of short duration. Where learning is experienced as adaptive change or transformation, small constant efforts structured over time have proven to produce the most reliable results.

Therefore most painting exercises are designed to be between 5 and 15 minutes. This time period permits simple experiences to be included along with other work tasks, as part of a meeting. It also accommodates repetition over longer periods of focused learning, as in a workshop. Painting seems naturally to assume time frames depending on the task: either a quick sketch or part of a process that will inform a more time-intensive complete work. However, one key aspect linked to time is that painting as a mode and medium has the ability to 'visually capture' experience. Furthermore, it offers a 'time-space' where the immediate past can be consulted for contemplation and reflection.

When considered aesthetically as dedicated physical space (Sutherland 2012), places of learning can vary considerably from the quiet ambiance of a well fitted and decorated studio, in the case of painting, to a table in a busy workplace surrounded by the mundane. Much has been written about place and its aesthetic nature, how its situated meaning is conferred on the people and their work through occupying these spaces.(Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006; Hjorth, 2005.)

However specifying the significance of physical *scale* in providing for or inhibiting the undertaking of artistic work is worthwhile.

For painting, the size and quality of the blank sheet of paper that is set out for participants assumes the transitional quality of a dedicated space, particularly when placed with pots of paint and brushes on a work meeting table. The paper size is mostly A3, big enough to have the effect of displacing the ipads and computers regularly brought to meetings in today's business world. As well, the often sterile meeting rooms in organisations where the workshops mostly take place undergo considerable transformation by hanging participants' 'artwork' in them. During workshops the paintings produced serve a decorative role, personally claiming the space for the group. This has

the effect of relaxing participants, inviting good humour and provoking reflection. Personal physical space at the work-table is also a necessary requirement as it is essential people get



in touch with and work from their own impulses. Minimising distractions as well as the complexity of the task during the painting phase of work helps to bring participants into a state of flow and self direction (Csikszentmihalyi, 1992).



Furthermore, requesting silence for this brief period of painting promotes the focus of participant's attention on noticing their own responses to the work.

### **Psychological Space**

It is common to describe psychological space as an implicit or internal space within the psyche of the human being. It is a space where one might “find oneself”. This space of self-observed inner experience is also able to be expressed and exchanged in the physical space of shared realities and so it extends to one as a possibility of ‘finding the other’.

### **The role of Anxiety, Trust and Safety in enabling Authentic Responses**

Consideration must first go to the psychological requirement for the individual’s sense of safety and the inclusiveness it is essential they feel. Almost anything new brings with it some sense of anxiety in human beings. With painting it is usually because many adults consider they are not artistic and most claim to generally lack any technical skills. “I have not picked up a brush since bygone schooldays”. However this anxiety is quickly overcome as the short exercises and low technical requirements allow the painting’s execution to become secondary to the insights gained through creating it. Establishing a sense of safety that will result in confidence to explore cannot be over emphasised. Anxiety here is usually tied to self-judgment: producing something foolish; making a mistake; or being unable to produce a result at all. Relevant statements by participants include: “Excited but a bit nervous about executing an acceptable painting”, “Nervous I am not creative enough, excited to learn” or “No idea what to expect and worried about the painting”. This anxiety is quite different to the doubts which also arise as a state of mind between certainty and uncertainty. Knowing you can do it, but not being certain how it will exactly turn out. This state of anxiety, sometimes expressed as a fear, must actually be embraced as it is an important factor in holding open what might be emergent in the Transitional Space. In his ninth letter to a



young poet Rainer Maria Rilke advises “Your doubt can become a good attribute if you discipline it. It must become a knowing; it must become a critic.” (Rilke, 1992, p. 93)

Without being too confrontational, careful design can keep participants out of their comfort zone and held in a state of doubt in small ways. This prepares participants to maintain some space that will afford new opportunities. For example, no pens and pencils are available on the workshop table, only brushes. Most people prefer to use a pencil or pen. This puts everyone slightly outside of their normal comfort zone for making their painting. In this way a facilitator is introducing small seeds of doubt into the process of making that will later be recognised as an opening for possible opportunities.

### **Play, Humour and Questions**

This space is also charged with possibility through including the intentional vagaries of *Play, Humour* and *Questions*.

Imagine something that strikes you personally as very funny. Now consider how this is expressed or shared with others; possibly with a nod or wink, with a cartoon, or through telling a story? What you first imagined you give form to and through your mode of communication, you extend your personal psychological space into the socio-psychological space of shared experiences. In a similar manner, qualities of Play, Humour and Questions contribute to co-creating Transitional Spaces of self and other. These *uninformed* Transitional Spaces are where the content of such qualities *inform*, encouraging not only the exchange of content, but also of process, *to take place*.

*Play* has been described in some depth, particularly its processes, so it is worthwhile to mark its contribution to the formation and conditions of

Transitional Space. According to Huizinga (1950), the central characteristics of play are that it is free, that it is stepping out of 'real life', and that it is bounded by time and space. Free play offers safety in an experiential space which is viewed both as implicit and explicit, and as incorporating a strong potential for self-learning and transformation. In a case study by Kolb he suggests that "*play exemplifies one of the highest forms of experiential learning*" claiming that play "in a *ludic* learning space can promote deep learning in the intellectual physical spiritual and moral realms". In a "Schillerian" way Winnicott claimed: "It is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self" (Winnicott, 1971, 54). This middle ground between objective reality and subjective omnipotence is what Winnicott called the *transitional experience*.

Play as something we devise is a universal human experience across cultures and in adult life, finding transitional space is an opportunity to develop further and mature. Extensive studies provide much evidence supporting the contribution of playing to individual expression and adaption. It relies strongly on timing and "*depends for its existence on living experiences.*" (Winnicott 1971 p. 146 original italics ). Furthermore it is seen as integrating experiential modes of learning "in a free and safe place" (Kolb & Kolb, 2010, p. 27)

Identification of this safe and specific place extends to Kolb's 'ludic space', Gadamer's 'Spielraum' or the 'consecrated spot' as Huzinga (1950, p. 10) put it. It is in these milieus that the activities of a *facilitator* will take a place. Working in this dedicated Transitional Space the facilitator aims above all for the lived *enrichment* of the play there. Their work in this space is like the role of a conductor orchestrating and encouraging the interaction of players, while at

other times appearing more like a referee in a ball game. The facilitator does not actually take part in the action but always champions and cares for the process.

Winnicott, commenting on enrichment in his book on "Playing and Reality", describes play by stating: "The essential feature of my communication is this, that playing is an experience, always a creative experience, and it is an experience in the space-time continuum, a basic form of living "( 1971, p. 67). This basic form of living may be observed in *how* we transact with each other and is described within groups as its culture. The neutral ground of Transitional Space lends fertile possibility for re-shaping culture as the self-motivating qualities of free play and leisure can be present. Outlined by Joseph Pieper in his work "Leisure as the basis of the Culture" (1952), leisure can be seen as an attitude of mind that engenders a sense of freedom, therefore defining 'work' (the commonly accepted antithesis of 'play') as a repetitive toil that has lost its sense of celebration. Leisure, he makes the point, draws its vitality from affirmation and celebration, strong values of social play. We can think of team games as a confirmation of this insight.

Pieper's ideas resonate with Winnicott in expressing that there is a crucial connection between the phenomena of play and leisure and the development and transformation of culture. These are the basic attributes that incorporate the sense of choice found within their (Transitional) Space.

Particularly within an organisational setting, Art-Based exercises like painting have the effect of establishing and maintaining a playful or play(ing) environment. Space created this way is generally perceived as a play and leisure space where as in fact it is simply providing the possibility for cultural development to take place between self and others by providing a supportive

Transitional Space. Moreover associating play with humour is not a big step; the laughter and good humour that the play space generates go hand in hand.

*Humour* may be seen as a psychological space reserved to keep things in flux, where nothing is sacred and where everything is up for game. In humour everything can arise between real and unreal, fun and earnest. It permits everything to be in a space that is neither, nor, rather a Transitional Space. Here good humour is being aware, is a form of knowing, and has exquisite timing. To be in good humour is to be open to anything and this in itself implies considerable degrees of possibility for making new connections. The opening of Transitional Space is a quality of humour most of us have experienced. It might have been through an awkward moment, often serious, that has been spontaneously diffused with humour. This shift in state or mood reframing the viewpoint, by its very act momentarily declares 'all possibilities', thereby creating a Transitional Space. In response to this space, being in an open state of mind can be transformational as it requires a generative psychological response that not only refuses to get stuck, but often continues to yearn for the next novelty.

Causes of humour and its power over people are occasionally indeterminable and so humour is sometimes considered ludicrous and its power often mysterious. Yet laughter will signal the current state of the space in a workshop without humour becoming a distraction as the focus on the learning seems to hold it in check. During facilitation, an awareness of how well exercises are going can be gained by the amount of laughter and good humour witnessed in the room, particularly in the reflection phases of work where the results of paintings are highly interpretable. Paradoxically at the beginnings of new workshops this laughter can also indicate participant anxiety. The

following comments by participants confirm this: “A little apprehension at first but I enjoyed the participation...(connections were)...friendly helpful humorous”; “I approached the task with an open mind, it was fun”; “Had a really fun time, was very interesting”; “I can find training stressful as I don’t have the best attention span and don’t find it easy to sit all day but I really enjoyed this day and would look forward to doing it again” or “Non judgemental approach, everyone was prepared enjoy and *even* expose their feelings”.

As with humour, *questions* too can be seen to hold their own mysterious power to be generative. The active enquiry that questioning can maintain broadens the field of endeavour and can be considered as a deepening or enlarging of the Transitional Space. Powerful Questions play a large part in the potential for learning, often activating cycles of deep reflection which require attentive and active contemplation. Like humour, which can hold everything in a space of questioning, acknowledged questions are the place between knowing and the desire to know, they act as a breach which triggers the imagination and fosters the growth of curiosity.

In groups, open-ended questions directed towards the inquiry dimension of dialogue can be pivotal in finding what’s true or real for others. Searching questions concerning feelings and meaning can act as strong attractors and are known to have a transformative effect even when unanswered. This greater sense of meaning finding and openness is also applied to the nature of the painting tasks that participants are asked to undertake. One such exercise is to paint their “Perfect Place- real or imaginary”. In essence, this request is a quest and a question.

Questions that demand consideration bring us into Transitional Space, as Rilke (1992, p. 35) advised from his fourth letter to a young poet: “Be patient toward all that is unresolved in your heart and try to love the question themselves.”

Loving the questions comes closer to the idea of *Negative Capability*, an ability to hold oneself in the state of doubt and questioning, and defined by the poet Keats in a letter to his brother as “capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts without any irritable reaching after fact and reason (Keats in Gittings, 1970, p. 43).

Negative Capability may therefore be interpreted as the ability to open and hold Transitional Space within a continuum that extends towards resolution in informed judgment and positive capability. We live in a world where ‘action’ is the catch cry, positive results, the measure, and the expectation is all too often ‘instantly’! To use John Kabat Zinn’s (2012) phrase, we become ‘human doings’ rather than human beings.

A strong requirement exists to balance this call to action with the need for reflection. In a paper on Leadership and Negative Capability (Simpson et al., 2002) it is stated “in terms of positive capabilities those attributes and abilities that allow the individual to promote *decisive action* even in the face of uncertainty”. The article argues that “alongside such positive capabilities there is a need to consider the contribution of negative capability, that is, the capacity to sustain *reflective inaction*.” (p. 1210, original italics) In this sense, we are endeavouring to recognise and hold open Transitional Spaces long enough that we can find integrity in our connection with ourselves and others, drawing more knowingly from this space to meet our needs.

### **Open Space**

Developed negative capability could seem to be leading us into suspended inaction, slipping over some edge into an abyss of indecision followed by panic or despair. A state where our quest no longer focuses on seeking the answer to our needs, but rather has us facing the struggle with our discomfort, our conditioned desires for resolution and closure. Clearly we enter a void at this point which goes against our very nature as human beings, our anxieties risking exacerbation by denying our need for connectedness and certainty.

Additionally this space can seem even more challenging to occupy when it is also considered the dwelling place of *paradox*: those many puzzling situations or feelings that while true in themselves stand in contradiction to each other promoting discursive circles of thought or feelings that double back on themselves to leave us in a place of uncertainty. As paradox challenges logic and conventional orders of reason, people will often be found polarised in opinion in order to act, or paralyzed and unable to act. In organisations the very idea of artistic or creative freedom alongside a desire for ordered certainty presents this paradoxical situation. Yet in the chasm between the polarities lie the varying degrees of choice, in the open spaces of in-between-ness. It is often the *in-between* where we actually dwell in order to emerge with new ways of being and becoming.

In “Paradoxes of Group Life” a comment sheds light on this “It is hard to know where we have come from and where we are going. But the more one lives with a paradoxical perspective, the more one develops a tolerance for circles and for the places where the two apparently contradictory paths join (Smith and Berg, 1987. P. 151). Although true paradoxes are unsolvable and do not lead themselves to dialectical synthesis, exploring them is useful in learning how to live with them and so move beyond them. In today’s “Age of Paradox”

(Handy, 1994) paradoxical issues appear in organisations increasingly<sup>i</sup> as rapid changes in the context like rising technological change, workforce diversity, and global competition intensifies. Managers are asked to get more from less, build individualistic teams, and think globally while acting locally etcera.

Transitional Space is right here along this apparently contradictory intersection, where Human beings have found impetus for some of their deepest held convictions in meaning making. Meaning derived from considering the paradoxes of life and death, creation and evolution, free or regulated markets, the list is a long one. In this way the existence of paradox can be interpreted as “an invitation to take part in a game in which *serious playfulness* encourages the actor to engage fully with the sensorial, emotional and intellectual dimensions of paradoxical experience”(Beech et al, 2004, p. 1314).

Accordingly, what may be seen as a void can also be described as one of fullness deserving the true meaning of the word aweful, full of ‘awe’, demanding respect, numinous. It is an open, unformed space of potential, possibility, awaiting the work of the imagination.

Taken together, the outlined anxiety, play, humour, questions and paradoxes are all hosts inviting us as guests into the great ‘hall’ of Transitional Space, though their collective voice alludes to entering this place in a state of *faithing*!

### **Faith(ing)**

In his book “Faith Humour and Paradox”, Gotz (2002) reveals the strong associations between the three explaining that the structure of faith and humour are the same because they share the structure of paradox. Building on Kierkegaard’s contrast of comic reaction with the tragic and expressed as two



fundamental attitudes of response to paradox emerge: the tragic confronts it in terms of systems, logic, and reason, and the comic, as a mystery. As Gotz comments (2002, p. 111) "Humour is a transparent inkling into mystery; to hold oneself permanently in mystery is faith...there is no fundamental opposition between tragic and the comic". The tragic and the comic are sisters, as Aristotle saw in antiquity. Gotz also shows us the other side, what happens when faith and humour depart from paradox: faith becomes dogmatic and fanatical, and humour becomes superficial and banal.

Accordingly, the faith required to enter the outlined Transitional Space is not the noun that faith has been reduced or reified to today. It is an action, alive as in humour and play, but importantly it is an action that is devoid of specific contents or objects. As open acting and interaction it requires use of the unusual verb-form of '*Faithing*'. This should not be confused with belief; rather, it is an *ability to act in the face of uncertainty*. In the succinct words of Edith Hamilton: "Faith is not belief. Belief is passive. Faith is active." (1930, *The Greek Way*)

Traditionally the word faith followed its etymological roots, shown in the idea of 'setting the heart upon', as an emotive knowing. In a linguistic shift of meaning over recent centuries, faith has frequently a proposition as its object. In the meaning used here there is no proposition, nor reference to a belief in a higher power or adherence to some religious doctrine. Correspondingly Faith(ing) takes a more secular and fallible position, inferring what is 'believed' could be erroneous or false.

Faithing as a verb is a state of readiness and presence within the Transitional Space and as such is critical for any engagements with the emergent processes.

Acting on revelations that may emerge in response to faithing is yet a step beyond faithing as the 'unknown' becomes 'known' simultaneously bringing confidence to further possible acts of faithing.

Allowing the emergent through the activity of faithing is more than trust. It is faithing that enables trust, which is linked to something or someone and thus is provable or can be demonstrated. Faithing involves taking a stance in an *attitude of trust or assent* aware that the place of Transitional Space is one of new possibilities. Accordingly, the only basis for a person's personal faith(ing) here will be understood in the 'authority' of their own revelations or those shared by a group.

Faithing necessarily plays a crucial role in the engagement and development of non-rational elements that foster emergent outcomes for learning, especially in the face of prevailing "immunity to change" (Keegan & Lahey, 2009 ) perpetuated by the pervading paradigm of reason and rational deduction.

Challenging reason by staying with the senses is one-way of breaching the tendency to resort to rational ends. Kant believed that the ultimate worth of his own philosophy lay in his willingness "to criticize reason in order to make room for faith" (Kant, 1989, Bxxx, A745/B773).

In James' and Dewey's pragmatism, as lived and living philosophy relevant for organisation (Elkjaer, & Simpson, 2011) with its varieties (McDermid, 2006) which can be related to creative practices in organisation (Küpers, 2011), the full meaning of an idea, including that of faithing cannot be deduced from rational analysis of its heritage or logical structure. Instead, the consequences of the idea must also be experienced *and then* considered in reflection (James, 1895; 1907; Dewey 1925, 1931)

To experience an idea requires faithing into the openness of Transitional Space where one can commune with the revelation for a while, as if it were true. Kierkegaard saw this “subjective certainty about objective uncertainty” (as cited in Wong, 2007,p.214) as the essence of faith(ing). Similarly, the complete embrace of a possibility is also the essence of experiences that move the learner.

Heidegger proposes faith as a ‘holding for true’ of that which ‘is withdrawn for knowing’ (2012, p. 257 - 258 ). Faithing then, is not holding to an already-given truth, but an open projecting or questioning by which human beings lay out for themselves what is revealed most significant for decision or action.

The transcendental opens this aspect of the conditions and description of Transitional Space to many thoughts and feelings which are highly subjective. The point here is not to lead the reader into some fanciful esoteric theory or fixed viewpoint but rather to convincingly offer a general approach that in a perfect (theoretical) world would achieve an optimal use of the optimal space. The point in question rather becomes a search for how to achieve the best integrity of engagement.

Asking what we are engaging with and why, prompts this kind of existential engagement, attempting to go beyond what is already known or experienced. James Fowler in his book *Stages of Faith* (1981, p. 4) suggests “Faith is a person's or group's way of moving into the force field of life”, claiming faith “...is a person's way of seeing him or herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose”.

Accessing and understanding in non-rational fields can demonstrate wildly varying outcomes and it is beyond the scope of this paper to attempt any

explanation. What is worthy of stressing is that the integrity of engagement with what this paper identifies as an Integral Process is clearly related to the intensity of learning. Faithing is *relational*; there is always *another* to faith in, to respond, or to be loyal to. In this paper, the 'Other' is paradoxically qualified as a Transitional Space of 'nothing', a blank canvas, a fresh starting point, implying all previous habit and history is nullified; in the face of logic this claim is unreasonable, paradoxical, but it is never the less the ideal!

Intensity of the engagement can be observed in relation to participant's proficiency of skills, self belief, and ability for faithing into uncertainty. As there exists qualitative means for assessing the first two categories, the ability for faithing can be aligned with Fowlers (1981 ) 6 Stages of Faith(ing). In turn these can be related to the depth of engagement we might find in workshop participants .

Fowler's simplest stage (Undifferentiated) is based in mutuality and recipricocity, a kind of 'I'll do this for you because I get that in return', is shown by compliant employees fulfilling requests of management. "Art for our new building, we will be expected to paint and draw?" "I am excited to see the end result but I have limited artistic skills so I am hopeful it will be great" "I look forward to creating art with a trainers guidance" "To learn about the project and what it requires" These questionnaire responses to: *Describe in a brief sentence your sense of anticipation re today's activities?* illustrate the Undifferentiated stage.

Fowler's most developed stage (Conjunctive), centred in a selfless stance that acknowledges the interconnectedness of everything, can be found in the ardent participant already convinced of the value and place of art, who takes every opportunity to share their experiences. This developed stage contains a

sense of personal integration and responsibility involving meaning making is at its most intense. “Positive expectation-fun-contribution towards our workplace – bringing our values alive - Little bit of me - legacy” “Let’s get creative with our own individual ideas and to have fun” or “Very excited and enthusiastic about today’s activities” were more responses to the same questionnaire asking: *Describe in a brief sentence your sense of anticipation re today’s activities?*

In entering this Transformational Space human beings stand to leave with more than they brought, but the ‘how much?’ is related to the intensity of ‘how’ they enter it. While the ‘how much?’ is relative to the many interrelated facets mentioned so far, it is clear a cycle of virtuous learning is started, with an increased acceptance to re-enter this learning place shown by participants to date.

For several larger projects, written research needs to be undertaken to gain better insights into the effects of art-based processes. However written responses have assisted in shaping the approaches and the design of this work. Quotations made in this paper are nearly all written responses drawn from a sample of sixty people in one organisation who were subjected to the same ABIs and workshops. Indication of the engagement in virtuous cycles was illustrated from a survey where the sample was from nearly five hundred staff all attending the same art-based workshop. They were classified into three categories of engagement, negative, neutral and positive, according to their written responses. These responses were to questions related to their expectations and experience before and after the art-based workshop. Without exception the ‘after’ responses all shifted to the next category indicating improved engagement with the “positive before category” expressing further developments to their attitudes (Kayrouz 2013).

This is an exceptionally positive result and aligns with the recent research (Berthoin Antal, & Strauss 2013), which found that “Although employees are often initially sceptical about engaging with an artist at work, the artist succeeds in engaging them. By the end of the intervention, people **almost always report that the experience was positive ...**” (original emphasis)

### **Bringing a Learning Object into the Transitional Space.**

Being in the openness and potential of Transitional Space changes the manner in which people might ordinarily interact with each other and themselves, and convention is challenged. Uncertainty has replaced certainty, momentarily displacing any assumed purpose or meaning which now must be re-affirmed or discovered anew within this breach of the expected. To put it another way, the presence of Transitional Space is a breach in the continuity of expectations and predictions; it forms a gap in accustomed contexts.

Establishing the newly emergent within this breached space, be it re-affirmation or discovery, can be found through the medium of a Transitional Object that the facilitator will introduce. Having created the optimal Transitional Space in time, place, and in the (psyches of the) participants, this introduced content as the focus of making and doing mediates an Integral Process of transformation through learning and meaning making. Through a shared authenticity, the introduction of this art-based object serves similar functions to those contributing elements already outlined in the Transitional Space.

### **The Transitional Object**

With language, the idea of an object or phenomenon mediating the understanding between human beings implies that our ideas can be better understood when we refer to them through the concreteness of a mutual object or experience. An even better understanding becomes possible when the experience of a Transitional Object or Phenomenon is not past or remote, but *simultaneously shared in time and place*. Then the understanding is directly informed by a collection of senses that diminish the vagaries of spoken language. As touch, sound, sight, and smell or taste in-form, we bring a certainty of embodied 'knowing' to the communication, imbuing it with greater shared meaning. At a simple level, gesticulation, diagrams, pictures, metaphors, are examples of mediating (also understood as boundary objects or phenomena ) that provide additional dimensions to verbal understanding or cognitive knowledge.

When the mediating object is such that it appeals to the intellect through an open capacity for interpretation, say by offering qualities of either neutrality or paradox, this would then bring it into the realm of a Transitional Object.

A process beginning with childhood and later informing adult life, Winnicott (1971) gives the example of a teddy bear or old blanket, where "this immediate area of experience, unchallenged in respect of its belonging to inner or external (shared) reality, constitutes the greater part of the infant's experience, and throughout life is retained in the intense experiencing that belongs to the arts and to religion and to imaginative living, and to creative scientific work." ( p.19 )

For the Transitional Object to be effective in cultural ways, it must also include a *social dimension* that can provide a place of acceptance for difference and

similarity by being recognised or related to across a broad range of people and circumstances.

This last point is essential, especially in large organisations, where the challenges lie in dealing with the dynamics of relational complexities and where communications are often difficult. One symptom is the inability to communicate context resulting in the contemporary compulsion to generate over-long reports and compliance documents that further exacerbate the problem.

Transitional Objects offer a possibility to deal with this relational complexity. Daved Barry (1994) described the use of “analogues” to mediate organisational development. These analogues which function as a kind of Transitional Object created by staff were used as a means for multilayered communication. By referring to them, participants opened new lines of perceiving and thinking which enabled them to consider strategic problems in a different way.

Participants’ paintings created as Transitional Objects described in this paper are *meaningful concrete objects that mediate a ‘contextual openness’* through which communication can be directed and shared.

Both the Transitional Space and Object *simultaneously share the time and opportunity of the learning situation* that provides the learning’s purpose and experience. In all this, neutrality is vital as Winnicott states:

“The transitional object and the transitional phenomena start each human being off with what will always be important for them i.e. a neutral area of experience which will not be challenged” (Winnicott, 1971, p.17 ). This object neutrality is a key in opening and establishing relational forms of communication that will, for the most part, be eventually entrapped in spoken



language. Accordingly, the objects, phenomena and processes that best fill these criteria are *Art-Based*.

### **Why art-based?**

Participation in art processes invariably involves expressing and soliciting value judgements, which represent or refer to a core process for meaning and sense making. Since in art-making, creative processes permit us to dispense with 'logic' or cognitive-rational orientations, we are better able to engage with the bodily senses as our primary way of experiencing, perceiving and then also knowing and judging. This implies that being in the world around us and with others, emerges or results out of our attention to sensual happenings and responses. In turn, this sensual involvement activates and develops the generative aspects of our nature particularly as the work of presentation through art-works evokes questions and stimulates the imagination.

Art offers a wider means of communication than literal verbal language. Its diverse ability to express and solicit responses and value judgements make it eminently suitable as a Transitional Object. Within the organisational world, which is mainly orientated towards rationally approaching and assessing objective things, art offers a complimentary sophistication of means for representing, sharing and appreciating the subjective matters that create meaning. As accepting meaning is not limited to what words can express, art provides alternative "forms that enable us to construct meanings that are non-redundant; each form of representation we employ confers its own features upon the meanings we make or interpret" (Eisner, 2002, p. 230). Visual arts for example inherently embody relational meanings within in their compositions through scale, colour, definition, and balance that are implicitly understood.

Art happens in a make-believe world connected to the Transitional Space as its experiences are “notably marked by the manner in which it decouples imagination from practical concern, freeing it from the constraints of logic and rational understanding” (Dutton, 2009, p. 59). This decoupling may be considered parallel to that of the earlier described qualities of Humour in creating Transitional Space, as the Transitional Object is freed for possible interpretations.

### **Involving the Senses**

As mentioned before, rather than just engaging with the thinking skills of logic, art objects primarily direct their appeal to the senses in ways that will trigger an affective response. This appeal is our experience of the object. While the object or phenomenon may be perceived and shared by any number of people as logically residing in some specific domain or other, the actual experience of what is perceived is idiosyncratic.

An example would be experiencing music. It is easy to agree that the phenomenon we both experience is music, though no one can determine how we should respond to what we are hearing. Likewise, when we view an image the response it conjures up in us is our personal truth. Accordingly, the use of concrete Art-Based Objects presented in an organisational environment can be used to signal a clear stance on freedom for interpretation. This permits the object to be interpreted by each individual thereby establishing it as a Transitional Object.

Unfortunately for many people today a first conditioned response to art work is to judge or value it in a logical and rational way, when what matters most here is a sensual awareness of how we relate to it personally. Subjectively

interpreting and judging an art work is an aesthetic matter posing many inter-related questions that pertain to it and its context. Because aesthetic judgments are a response to implicit knowing they can be difficult to agree on. However, when art-based exercises used for learning in small groups are kept simple, agreement on their aesthetic nature can usually be found easily. Finding accord (more of the heart), as opposed to seeking consensus, (generally perceived as rational agreement) constitutes the type of group 'success' dynamics that sets in motion greater reliance on non-rational means of knowing and judging.

Etymologically derived from the Greek *aisthesis*, aesthetics comprises expressions that designate embodied sensation and perception taken as a whole, prior to the assignment of any cognitive or artistic meaning. The Greek verb *aisthanomai* denotes the capacity to perceive with our senses. Having an aesthetic experience means being sensually responsive to the pattern that connects (Bateson, 1979), ceding the subject a sensual perception and feeling of wholeness and of belonging to a heightened reality.

In presenting the idea of *aesthetic sensibility*, Umberto Eco points out that in previous times, aesthetics "did not refer first to something abstract and conceptual. It referred also to the everyday feelings, to lived experience." (1986. p. 4 ). He reminds us that mediaeval people habitually employed their arts for didactic purposes. For example their church buildings and all they stood for were living symbols of sensual communication conveying the messages of religion.

The ancient navigational skills of Polynesians, whose cultures were oral, were preserved and passed on through sense-mediated art-based and aesthetic forms. The learning of songs, carving and weaving of 'star maps', and the

experience and interpretation of patterns, particularly those of waves, clouds, insects and birds were central.

### **Selective and Generative processes**

Living with the senses is not something consciously developed or supported in organisational worlds, where logic, rationality, purpose-driven and pragmatic skills dominate. In terms of knowing, these are selective skills that converge in bringing various pieces of information into consideration to result in singular outcomes such as a solution. Furthermore, these results are mostly considered in a sequential manner. Selective processes are dominant and serve as a basis for analytical investigations and (quantitative) inquiries or cognitive approaches as well as other rational thinking functions and orientations. The underlying rational-bound paradigms influence our cultures driving the immunity to change mentioned as one psychological aspect of Transitional Space.

On the other hand its generative processes that prevail in our sensuous relationship with the world as our senses contact and perceive space, form, colour, sound, smells and a plethora of other experiences. Generative capabilities play a major role in being able to perceive, expand and associate information and interconnected knowing, as well as generating emotive responses and actions.

Where selective forms of knowing are communicated they tend to be expressed in a *propositional form* as instructions, documents, quantitative evaluations, and the chalk and talk of much conventional teaching and learning. However the generative forms of knowing which involve feeling and experiencing qualities and values, present quite a different scenario and

realisation. Opportunities to communicate these generative aspects of knowing can be found in relation to art objects which offer a *presentational form* of knowing that contains generative possibilities.

While objects of art are not collectively precise when communicated, as in the selective proposition, they are still able to achieve strong consensus and understanding among people. Comparatively, art carries this potential to illustrate and convey a sense of essence in the same way theory proposes and articulates forms of knowledge. Taylor and Ladkin (2009, p. 59 ) state “Theory states an abstract concept (that) is meant to have *convergent generalizability*, or be true and the same for all. Art offers specific illustration that is meant to have each observer connect to it in their own particular way and thus has *divergent generalizability*“. In summary, art objects offer a means for sharing the generative basis of knowing found in communicating the relational matters concerning human experiences and values.

While these two distinct patterns of knowing are found in different ways, they are inextricably tied. They may be envisaged as extremes sharing the same continuum of knowing. Though it is argued here that the generative processes are less understood and less part of our conscious attention, it is in the end more a matter of how we incorporate both forms of knowing. Clearly generative processes without the intervention of the selective lead to chaos but conversely the dominance of the selective leads not only to order, but to a rigidity that begets atrophy without the intervention of the generative.

### **Art as an Active Enquiry**

In his seminal publication “The Story of Art”, Eric Gombrich (1950) opens his introduction with the statements: “There is really no such thing as Art. There

are only artists.” His vital message is that art is the result of an activity, of doing, of making. The implication is that we must first consider the activities as the important living aspect and that Art with a capital A can be anything we care to name.

Importantly it is the *process of artistic work that actively engages us in enquiry*. Its media may be our painting, music, poetry or a dance, but they are our representations resulting from the work of the experience and imagination. Whether individual or collective, the language of the arts is communication by means of stimulating the same senses through which we are aware of the world around us. By endeavouring to re-present the responses we make to our surroundings, our work of presentation inevitably leads us to enquiry and so to a call upon action and the imagination.

Moments of response to exceptional experiences remind us how strong calls can be made by our feelings in which we inevitably find questions waiting for us: “Why?” in grief,” What?” in heightened alarm “How?” in need. These felt demands can be problematic questions as they seek beyond the limits of logic in their request to explain experience and by nature require considerable reflection of a generative kind.

James Baldwin’s statement that “The purpose of art is to lay bare the questions that have been hidden by the answers” (1962, p. 17) reflects art’s ability to provide questions of this emotive kind rather than to provide answers. Art as the Transitional Object carries this intrinsic quality for posing questions, inviting quests and aligning itself with parallel qualities required to establish the Transitional Space it occupies.

## **Learning**

In very tangible ways the practice of *making art* is still the result of an everyday experience-in-the-world, working material, refining approaches, experimenting, and trying new ideas. Accordingly it is the work of making art that constitutes the practical opportunity for experiential learning. In this manner, the work of art-based enquiry as part of learning is also a process of active reflexivity.

Process cycles explaining experiential learning have been well developed and documented and provide further valid ways to comprehend the intricacies of practical learning. In the following discussion, through the lenses of three cycles it will be shown how understanding can be considerably influenced due to the way various learning experiences are ordered, understood, and subsequently applied to design or facilitation of learning.

## **Experiential Learning Cycles**

Kolb's four stage model (1984) proposes a much discussed learning cycle comprising concrete experience, observation and reflection on that experience, formation of abstract concepts based on reflexivity, and testing the new concepts. This repetitive cycle has been developed to further enquire into ways in which various human beings process their concrete experiences. One accepted classification is expressed in learners' preferences for observations or interactions, both with other beings and with objects. Already this adds to the cycle considerable layers of possibility for learning styles, further adding considerable complexity to questions of choosing appropriate modes and media for art-based learning. But more importantly if one takes a look at what information or knowledge is being gathered experientially, rather

than how, it will be found to be a mixture of rational deduction and affective impressions.

For the organisational world Kolb's concept integrates the four components of managerial learning into a single framework. Sensory information arising from experience (apprehension) and cognitive abstractions (comprehension) are given meaning through reflection (intension) and put to practical application through purposeful behaviour (extension). In six points Kolb concludes:

1. Learning is a process, not an outcome,
2. Learning derives from experience,
3. Learning requires an individual to resolve dialectically opposed demands,
4. Learning is integrative and holistic,
5. Learning requires interplay between a person and the environment,
6. Learning results in knowledge creation. (Kolb, 1984:41)

When we look at the reflective and affective dimensions of learning, John Heron's 'Cycle of Knowing' (1996) sheds light on the question of what information we are gathering, and *how* it is being gathered. His four *interdependent ways of knowing* are experiential, presentational, propositional, and practical. *Experiential knowing* means knowledge created/shaped through participation and grounded in the immediacy of the direct sensory environment, while importantly *presentational knowing* emerges from and is grounded in experiential knowing. In particular, its knowledge is generated by and communicated through emblematic artefacts whereas *propositional knowing* is conceptual knowledge, generally expressed in language. Finally, *practical knowing* is knowledge in action – supported by a body of knowledge and demonstrated in a community of practice (see also Heron and Reason, 1997).



In short, in the first instance experience delivers presentational knowing, which is then reflected on by the individual to deliver propositional knowing, and the abstract models, concepts, theories that result, which we apply to our practice.

Both Kolb's and Heron's cycles are models that view experiential learning as being an embodied practice which involves both cognitive-rational and bodily-affective aspects. While Kolb's model has mainly pedagogical implications, John Heron's model additionally addresses questions of cooperative inquiry, knowledge transference or communication. He also posits that experience is first presentational and after reflection takes a propositional form that then can be communicated or at least made some sense of for the individual. This latter approach is the *structural order of apprehension for the art based exercises* as described in this paper.

In communicating experience it is found that people demonstrate a mixed preference between factual information based on logic on the one hand, and judgements based on the value of an experience on the other.

There is another cycle of learning used proactively for practical improvement in production situations. This is commonly referred to as the Deming cycle (Rother 2010, p.134. Deming, 1950, PDCA. - based on Shewhart, 1931). It puts planning at the fore and so encourages the propositional and factual as the first step followed by action reflection and response to the reflection. This is adequate for reinforcing the cognitive rational aspects of learning that are essentially selectively based, but denies open attention to the affect of many subjective elements of experience that are generatively based. Where values or experience themselves are the centre of our attention, we are endeavouring to know or communicate the generative or affective aspect.

### **Presentation before Proposition**

Achieving the generative aspects of communication and learning successfully have been demonstrated by numerous workshops facilitated by the author. In, these workshops, shared experiences were first made directly with overt presentational forms. This means that art-based objects establish a 'neutral' ground for the subsequent communication of shared experiences. Such an approach permits the propositional forms to be co-developed or co-created as a result of first successfully sharing the presentational material. This accord leads to quite different outcomes compared to those that can be achieved by first sharing propositional forms, even with consensus, as is traditional, particularly in organisational environments.

Furthermore, the contention is that if in time and place the collective experience of individual and group is based on material that has a capacity for being transitional, a first-person experience is also shared that confirms participants' implicit knowing for underlying processes. In other words, alongside the material being worked there are foundational processes being shared by co-participants. This sharing can be conceived as a manner of 'experiential metaphor'. This means that the experience is apprehended as a living metaphor(isation) grounded in embodied shared experiences and as such is an 'entity' capable of intersubjective mediation.

"Studies in cognitive linguistics have shown that much of ordinary human cognition is not represented in terms of propositional and sentential information but is grounded in and structured by various patterns of our perceptual interactions, bodily actions, and manipulations of objects" (Gibbs, Lima, Fracozo, 2004, p.1192; also Johnson, 1987, 1993; Lakoff, 1987, 1990; Talmy, 1988;)

A metaphoric experience is embedded in the creative act of bringing something into being from a place and state of neutrality allowing transitions to happen. Where this type of first-person experience is followed by reflection and finally some manner of proposition, the underlying process can also be 'objectified' and treated as an 'object in the world' (Sutherland, 2013, p.11). This sequence and type of experience facilitated by art-based Transitional Objects promotes a shared consciousness of *process* as well as a collective apprehension of 'not just same' or 'similar content'. Such process-related, metaphorical and shared knowing builds tolerance, confidence and mutual understanding of living through learning cycles. Within participants this then collectively provides the adaptive basis for working with and in dynamic relationships.

### **The Art-Based Initiative**

Based on the concepts outlined above, the use of artistic painting as an Art-Based Initiative (ABI) will now be described in more detail. These descriptions of practical processes and contents correspond to the theoretical dimensions and criteria of Transitional Object in Transitional Space.

The structure of the related ABI follows John Heron's cycle: Presentation/experience; Reflection/facilitation; Proposition/theory, and is described using a particular exercise called the 'Scumble' as the example.

### **ABI experience**

Random splodges of paint, similar to a Rorschach inkblot, are made on each participant's sheet of blank A3 paper by the facilitator. Participants are then challenged to find recognisable images within the splodges and list them, first working as individuals and then in small groups.

Choosing a simple Art-Based process such as this permits participants to be fully involved in the work of making or creating. As basic skill requirements for the chosen mode are minimal this permits a suitable level of attainment to be achieved to render learning. Musical expression for example, though appealing very directly to the senses, is related to a level of ability to play on a chosen instrument. Likewise, representational painting is avoided as it involves a high degree of technical skill.



*Workshop result for the Scumble exercise.*

The entry-level to expression in whatever mode is being employed must be well within the capability of the participants, or anxiety will overshadow the process and block learning. What is aimed for here is '*Flow*', where the level of skill meets the task to be performed, and the enquiry takes on an *autotelic* nature (Csikszentmihalyi, 1992, p. 144).

The observing phase of the Scumble's process is timed equally between individuals and groups. First, as individuals, they capture in list form the images they can identify. This is repeated as groups and always after a lot of laughter and animated activity the results are shared in a facilitated discussion this time capturing and recording the participant's experience of this exercise.

### **Facilitation of the experience**

For everyone the image outcomes, while always fascinating, are overridden by the notably positive group experience of embracing ambiguity and diversity. Statements like the following confirm these experiences: "Working together is good; seeing others ideas can inspire"; "No judgement, no right or wrong,

seeing people respond positively to being taken out of their comfort zone”;"Important seeing the space with the eyes of others".

The realisation that participants could not have completed the exercise without embracing these qualities is found to confirm implicit knowing but at the same time is acknowledged to contradict behavioural norms. Even more importantly, participants most often find that they generated more novel ideas and associations when including their colleagues which provided an inherent satisfaction. On deepening the discussion, it is usually revealed that they had to listen more openly to exchanges of ideas; in other words, to be present to what was there as well as being able to respond to their own curiosity about what others were discovering!

Diversity of opinion becomes an asset as does the sense of collaboration when people deepen the questions and explore the value of their responses. Comments like: "What begins as child's play soon reveals itself to be a powerful tool for deeper discovery and ideas generation" reveals this shift in state.

The transitional nature of the material is born out in recognised potentials as expressed in this statement by a participant: "For me it felt like learning another language - one that is infinitely full of possibilities and opportunities". Comments like this show what people feel to be implicitly true, but is often denied when presented purely as proposition devoid of surrounding experience. This exercise took presentational material of an open or transitional nature that could be described as chaotic, and through consideration and judgement, transformed it into an ordered object.

The reflection phase is when a strong conscious sense of ownership over the learning arises. This is particularly true of the peer-to-peer learning that takes place in the group. People commonly acknowledge each other in a spirit of co-operation and respect indicating an elevated atmosphere of trust. This is confirmed by statements like: "It was very nice to meet and know my colleagues in a new light" or "Important acknowledgement that we are all different and no one is more important than anyone else".

Importantly experiential learning first derived from presentational forms presents a possibility to highlight recognition of the underlying dynamics at work over and above any content produced. John Heron sees this as part of a developing participatory world view "also expressed in an extended epistemology: our conceptual knowing of the world is grounded in our experiential knowing - a felt resonance with the world and imaginal participation in it". (Heron, 2013,) Heron also discussed the world-transforming potential of aesthetic achievements in relation to a collegial applied holistic spirituality in that it encourages us to inquire together, imaginatively and creatively, about how to act together in a spirited way to flourish on and with our planet.

The facilitation role during this phase of the exercise is to perpetuate questions and enrich the experience. Surfacing personal insights about what happened reveals and emphasises the processual elements that enabled the result.

### **Proposition**

As the results of group discussions in the reflection phase of the experience are captured in list form, a diagram provides a useful way of summarising. This

type of presentational form condenses the material to a simple plan which can order ideas and permit common reference.

In the case of the Scumble, a Venn-diagram based on three continuums of experience is offered. (see Figure 1). The generative right-hand side of the circles is where continuums represent one way of acting and the left-hand side their counterparts. In the overlap between them are found the emergent images resulting from the Scumble exercise.

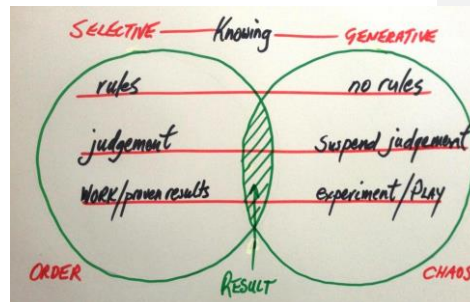


Fig 1

With no instructions to participants for finding the image, a reliance on the generative pre-requisites of no rules, suspend judgement, experiment/play, were necessary, the selective capabilities contributing to complete the experience with choosing a final result.

### **Ability to communicate process**

Each of the various fine art-modes can be seen as principally appealing to one of the senses but they are also intertwined with the others. The mode of music though primarily linked to hearing also involves rhythm and movement, which may be viewed as elements of touch or vision. Pictures primarily relate to vision, but also incorporate movement and rhythm in composition. This confirms the role of inter-sensorial synaesthetic processes as part of an embodied aesthesis in organisations. (Küpers, 2013).

In practise, no art-mode and its associated sense can exist in isolation without the support of another sense and its associated mode and media (Statler & Taylor 2008). The leaning or tendency of each art form to relate primarily to

one sense coupled with the technical competencies required to employ it, implies then that some art modes and their media might be more appropriate than others for approaching experiential. This is borne out by the wide range of initiatives and matching methodologies described in a report of comparative studies of practical art-based processes (Berthoin Antal. 2011). The question of suitability of mode and media requires further exploration and deepened understanding. However the volitional matters of the relationship of participant to the work of learning is of equal if not greater importance to art-based learning's outcomes.

Firstly, the degree of involvement that enables the individual to actually initiate the creative process of making, rather than just observing, is essential to *aesthetic reflexivity* ( Sutherland, 2012,p. 3) Creating here refers to those means by which we bring an object or an idea into being and with which there belongs the strong sense of *ownership*.

This ownership can be interpreted as a kind of relational authenticity; a feeling of response that an object or action stirs in an individual as if the thing itself is an inherent part or an extension of the person. This sense of owning can be accompanied by a sense of pride and often protection, as though it's very existence and meaning is vital. Such engagement also leads to strong intrinsic motivation; the autotelic qualities of Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1992). In fact, Csikszentmihalyi (1992, p. 124) refers to an intense feeling of ownership as a sense of connectedness with the content recalled. In describing one of the basic differences between a person with an autotelic self and one without it, he states: "On the one hand, having a feeling of ownership of her decisions, the person is more strongly dedicated to her goals. Her actions are reliable and internally controlled. On the other hand, knowing them to be her own, she can



more easily modify her goals whenever the reasons for preserving them no longer make sense. In that respect, an autotelic person's behaviour is both more consistent and more flexible (p. 210)."

The process of creating is itself a necessary and core part of what should be understood and considered as transferable learning i.e. learning to learn. Confirmation of this implicit knowing is what was previously referred to as an *experiential metaphor* and is recognised and shared by participants in the Scumble. It is an intrinsically driven experience, regardless of the concrete contents that act as its intermediary. Moreover, it is one which is held and transferred in a shared sense of the aforementioned act of faithing ; that is an ability to act in the face of the unknown.

Secondly understanding will be transferred in a relationship that considers the dominant sense employed for learning along with its associated mode and media in a making that parallels it with the learning's purpose and meaning. For example, painting, a visual mode, applies to visioning and other pictorial forms of imagining. Theatre skills or craft may be employed for various others forms of interpersonal learning. This raises the question of choosing suitable art-based transitional objects.

### **Choice of art based object**

The painting exercises chosen and used in workshops and described in this paper are simple tasks requiring minimal representational skills. Painters may decide to represent things as they please, sometimes in an abstract manner playing with colour, composition and movement. To avoid complications with colour, they are offered only four: red, yellow, blue and green. This simple arrangement supports enough freedom of expression that the actual task of painting does not absorb the attention of participants and they move into

states of flow. Initial experiences with art-based learning are critical, and having convincing experiences by producing creative results in the first person establishes further cycles of self-perpetuated curiosity. This is validated by statements like: “more open to it as we went” or: “Frees the mind, opens to allowing the mind to follow different paths”

Another concern is to alleviate the sense of anxiety the Art-Based mode might generate in the work context it is being used in. Some organisational environments involve a reasonable amount of creative work of various kinds and so participants are already conditioned to trying out different ideas. Provided that the chosen art-based mode fits well with the occupation there is less or little anxiety.

For example actors and acting are well established in medical training where dealing with people is the core business. Role play by actors serves to experientially enhance diagnostic skills of trainee doctors. However, bringing aspects of theatre to a group of technicians or engineers will be highly confrontational, particularly if they are involved in first-person creative work as participants. This aspect of choosing mode and media was highlighted by Barry (1994, p. 195 ) “less threatening methods, such as drawing, might be used where high levels of organisational resistance are present; more sensate methods, such as group sculpture or psychodrama might be used where resistance levels are low”.

As a participatory process, the visual mode of painting is generally the least confrontational providing people a private space physically and psychologically in which their initial feelings can be quietly accommodated without external interference. Painting ties closely with the imagination, which tends to be

pictorial as visualising thoughts and feelings are more concrete ways to mediate more complete and direct understandings.

In summary, painting, with its reflective nature of working, the simplicity of materials required, and the low levels of skill employed to be a creator, unequivocally provides a best choice for effectively introducing the process and benefits of art-based learning. Painting also best facilitates those generative capabilities that foster collaborative behaviour and change, and improvement initiatives in organisational settings.

As a result of participants engaging with Transitional Objects in a Transitional Space there emerges a Phenomenal Awareness. This experience refers to a specific sensitivity that although it develops as a disposition for paying attention to the senses is simultaneously consciously apprehended. This awareness is multidimensional and strongly embodies generative processes. Its effect is noticing more and differently (Barry & Meisiek 2010, Berthoin Antal, 2013, p. 27; Springborg 2010, p. 117 ) of all that is there to be perceived and apprehended through enlivening an implicit awareness of the senses responses and sharings. In this way it allows for 'reflective' sensing by making more conscious individual and collective relationships to self and others, as well as the things that are noticed.

### **Phenomenal Awareness**

Through engaging in practices with Transitional Objects in a Transitional Space there emerges for the participants a Phenomenal Awareness, a specific sensitivity and disposition that is paying attention to the senses while it also consciously apprehends phenomena.

This Phenomenal Awareness is a multidimensional sense of being-in-the-world and strongly embodies generative processes as conscious and sub-conscious ways of knowing. One effect of this awareness is that it allows noticing more and differently (Barry and Meisiek, 2010; Berthoin Antal 2013.) of all that is there to be apprehended. This is comprehended through an enlivened awareness of sensual and affective responsiveness, making more conscious the greater relationships to self and others, as well as things or phenomena that are noticed.

As Phenomenal Awareness matures, it reveals a more comprehensive relational understanding of the interconnectedness of the surrounding world, thereby providing a broader and deeper understanding of the context as a ground for knowing, understanding and judgement. By bringing other perspectives into view this shift gradually enlarges more immediate or limited comprehension that can be significantly centred in rational ends and limited ways of responding.

### **Finding context**

Judgements that have not accounted for a larger context and are made “in the face of circumstances” are often found wanting when used as the basis of making immediate responses or as justification for instrumental actions of a minority.

The life-world surrounding us as a sphere that we perceive and comprehend through our senses is filled intrinsically with the potential for sense-making (Kupers 2013a p.8) “that is *pregnant* with an irreducible *meaning*” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, pp. 21-22). The stimulation of the body, its responding and acting makes it a gateway to this meaningful world with the concepts we may form

from these meanings based in the '*lived sense*' we make of it. This lived sense, which underscores the meaning making gained from what we do, is grounded and informed in the awareness of our sentient body (Gendlin as cited in Del Gandio 2012, p. 37 ), memory and imagination.

Coping with a highly relational view of the world, the use of, and work with, physical objects or phenomena permits our intentions and attentions to grasp this dynamic relativity as if it were one without our connection becoming discursive. "The process of representation stabilises ideas and images, makes the editing process possible, provides the means for sharing meaning and creates occasions for discovery" (Eisner, 2002, p. 239).

In matters where logic can conceal complexity, transitional objects and space, especially when the form is non-lingual, have a potential to momentarily disrupt dispositions of habit and memory to allow meaning and co-created meaning to be found anew. In an organisational life-world, art objects are particularly effective in breaching the expected because they do not rely on or justify any of the preconceived norms of organisational communication. These tend to be based on the lineal rationality found in the various selective or propositional forms that maintain a cause and effect mentality. Counteracting such reductive orientations, the quality of ABIs is that they engage and develop the generative functions of affectivity and cognition in particular "expanding our consciousness" (Eisner, 2002, p. 3) and making "sensibilities refined" (p. 91), conceiving and rendering the realisation that everything is in a constant state of flux.

The latter point is probably the single most important factor in shifting any dominant ideas of permanence or stasis, and opens participant's perspectives to new possibilities, including the importance of 'chance'. This shift of

emphasis to more open processes leads to practices that are essential for today's organisations, especially as "the creative economy is driven by chance, not cause"( Hutter, 2013,p. 1 Berthoin Antal, p. 38 )

A reflective understanding of these processes is often acutely realised exactly at the propositional stage of the ABI, with the Scumble, when the summary model (Fig 1) for it is presented. Participants that are entrenched in thinking in rules, standards pre-judgements, and the idea that successful work is a product of quantified proven results, are confronted by the antithesis. Now seeing the overall process of the exercise expressed and summarised as a *rational idea* in the model, their understanding of certainty is considerably challenged having just arrived at a satisfying *felt state* with the result having evolved from an experience of chaos and fun. Comments reflecting a *change in state* express this clearly: "Opened my mind, enjoyed the challenge to think differently", "Really interesting and thought provoking, matched a lot of my thoughts about learning and progression in life" or "...fascinating, quite insightful, really helpful."

The outcome of this learning is a realisation that 'truths' are not immutable. Participants are sensitised to pay more intense and conscious attention to trusting their own senses and feelings as well as each other's, instead of acting solely out of knowledge or expectations. Some comments which indicate this learning experience: "I feel I gained a knowledge of how different people work and how to work with them" or "It's made me a bit more patient with my colleagues, as I understand not everyone views things in the same way I do".

This process of moving *from* the generative qualities of the presentational *to* the selective qualities of the propositional *offsets the selective bias we have for knowledge and certainty*. Knowledge, in particular, possesses a tendency to

truncate our ability for learning as well as subjugating the senses where they should be the dominant means of perception.

St John of the Cross, a 16<sup>th</sup> C (organisational!) reformer said “to come to the knowledge of everything, desire the knowledge of nothing” (Kavanaugh & Rodriguez 1991, p. 111). ABIs start and mediate their work in this spirit. This is especially so if the re-presentation begins with an initial absence of spoken language and is coupled with the open transitional nature of the objects and space. As stated earlier, maintaining silence during the painting work further encourages a non-verbal or presentational approach. ABIs designed in this way have been the most successful in engaging, interrupting, and leading participants into new possibilities.

### **Conditioning and Knowing Differently**

A response to questions about the relevance of this approach for learning will be made in the realisation that subjugation of generative processes, and with that Phenomenal Awareness, is both a natural process and currently as a result of education methods, a conditioned state of being. Importantly, conscious development of sensual awareness can confront the propensity for selective resolution developing the negative capability described previously. While perception via the senses is processed mainly through the activity of the generative processes, perceptually we are quick to draw conclusions often truncating our take on reality. We commonly accrue for ourselves an historically mediated schema compiled through patterns of habitual (mis)conception.

This selective bias, a function of our need to terminate generative processes in order to draw conclusions, can be demonstrated quite simply with visual

paradoxes, magic, and examples of counter-intuition (Byron, 2008). Historically even art teachers “bent on accuracy of representation found, as he still will find, that his pupils difficulties were due not only to an inability to copy nature but also an inability to see it” (Gombrich, 1960, p. 12).

Avoiding this selective bias requires staying with the senses (Springborg, 2010) to ensure that an adequate ground of experience-ing is sufficiently established and that any bodily feelings we have in response to this experience we feel properly acquainted with. For it is working with and from these bodily felt senses that our feelings, thoughts and actions will emanate.

During ABIs participants are asked to stay with the bodily senses and usually the first thing they notice is a *shift in state*. This is specifically explored in an ABI called Face/Vase and is based on an exercise of Betty Edwards (2001, p.50) where participants are asked to trace and name the face then complete the missing side of the vase. By moving from the selective mode of naming and tracing the face they must then move into a generative mode of spatial awareness to complete the vase (Figure 2).

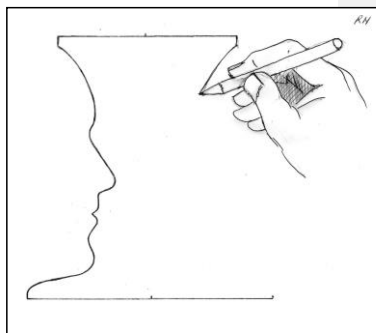


Fig 2

For most people, the result is to experience a distinct shift in the state of their being as they complete the drawing. The shift in state during this ABI is regularly experienced as momentary paralysis. This state may later be given a description or emotional name, but it is the recognition of the change that is of value.



Over a considerable number of ABIs it has been observed that the majority of participants placed little importance on the *felt sense of experience* as an informative process, especially those people in organisational environments. Many have developed little or no conscious relationship with their sentient bodies outside of awareness of their own physical space or a personal response to overt sensations of pleasure or discomfort.

ABIs can reveal that many people have a limited conscious memory of their sentient body's response to experience as temporal process. This fact is regularly born out in the facilitation phase of an ABI when participants are asked to "recall the felt sense of their experience during the time of the exercise". This is a question that is certainly not asked of us often, but which plays a large part in directing many of our perceptions, feelings, thoughts and actions.

When asked to recall these experiences the overwhelming majority make first reference to what they found difficult, name it, and explain what strategy was employed to overcome it. This preference for content over process suggests that little recognition or importance is placed on the journey of the experience that produced the expressed conclusions. When the question is pressed or further clarified often there is little clear recall chronologically of the felt sense of the experiential process that led them to the given point.

Three considerations arise from these responses (i) that there is an inherent *bias for resolution* and cognitive outcomes and this is selective; (ii) that there is little conscious awareness of the *felt sense* that guides generative processes throughout as well as (iii) that the declarative memory of process is weak or remains unconscious in expressing how experienced processes led in conclusions felt as *shifts of state*.

The first point has been covered in the explanation of the censorship of generative processes, but these replies indicate the propensity for rationality and certainty as a 'positive capability' in neglect of the development of 'negative capability'. There is also the consideration of our innate 'negative bias' explained as an immediate response to 'primary threat' as the more intense limbic system arousal fires up when it perceives danger, the reward system being slower to find response (Rock, 2009, p. 107).

The second point is one that is immediately understood when attention is drawn to it. We experience a constant stream of felt impulses away or toward the objects of our attention (Del Gandio, 2012; Rock, 2009, p. 105). This is an important indicator guiding our generative manner of being as there are no theoretical limits to connections and possibilities, although in practice energy and memory certainly do limit us. Sensing the 'away' or 'towards' feeling is an innate *felt sense* of attraction or repulsion that contributes to our conclusions. This 'inner voice' is a crucial part of making judgements, where the answers involve generative processes that result in decisions of feeling, gestalt, value, risk and any plethora of those elements, sometimes aesthetic, involving non-rational elements.

The third point begets the second as once aware of the 'away/toward feeling' as a *felt sense*, it becomes possible to consciously relate responses to circumstances, rational facts, and other indicators that will build a more integrated and temporal memory of the results of felt sense. This is like a continuous track record rather than an isolated feeling arising involuntarily as a knee jerk reaction attached to some specific trigger. Previous experiences, established consciously and continuously as felt sense can then be recalled as a

stream of responses leading to a conclusion, *experienced as a shift of state*, and related to any new circumstances.

Working within these three points, Phenomenal Awareness may be considered as a continuous and conscious apprehension of the bodily senses and processes coupled with cognition. As such, a mature Phenomenal Awareness may also stand to offer a better access, approach and grasp of the varying intensities of response to the non-rational elements that make up the outcomes of judgement. Little is known about the part the sentient body plays in learning compared to cognition, yet the generative patterns or processes of the sentient body are by far in the majority. The iceberg metaphor is relevant here as what appears and can be exchanged consciously is mostly a result of selective processes. From an aesthetic viewpoint, a greater knowledge of *shared experience* is needed to further refine learning and understanding through the medium of *felt sense* and *shifts of state*. In this respect, the 'Focusing' work of Eugene Gendlin (1978) could prove helpful in building awareness and understanding of the bodies responses in relation to experiential learning.

### **Knowing How**

Phenomenal Awareness offers a broader context for knowing that impacts on doing or action as the broader reflective cycle of consciousness is kept ever present. As a virtuous cycle, it permits and participates in acknowledging the sentient body as part of our knowing entity. Consequently it is the embodied knowledge formed as part of implicit knowing that often feels liberated in a shift of state when we can work in ways that 'give it voice'.

Including this aspect of self, the participant's responses and their outcomes to the exercises aforementioned indicate clearly that holding a Transitional Object within Transitional Space will result in an atmosphere of heightened trust, tolerance and empathy. Within these conditions, all that happens does so with a significant level of relational authenticity. Through this raised sense of reciprocal ownership or belonging, the desire to know encourages a natural sense of curiosity, risk taking and faithing in a search for further sense and meaning making. Fulfilling this quest for meaning, as in the exercises, becomes felt and found moment by moment in the efficacy of doing and making, "to becoming aware of possibility against the background of reality or, to express it in plain words to become aware of *what can be done* about a given situation." (Frankl, 1959, p. 144 original italics).

'What can be done' means acting in the moment with a rightness of fit and requires not only an acquired knowledge of content and process but also their combined comprehension applied in varying situations, since life's dynamics always seek appropriate timing and integrity. This fit resembles the idea of practical wisdom as 'phronesis.' Phronesis was defined by and from Aristotle onwards as *intellectual* virtue and the ability to deliberate and conduct of a good life; i.e. make right use of knowledge and choices to be good, or the capacity to judge rightly in matters relating to life. Phronesis is not theoretical knowledge or abstract reasoning (*episteme* of science, knowing why), nor a technical knowledge (*techné*— particular 'knowing how to', art, craft, replicable skills or set of techniques for particular ends) to be deployed, but a *situated practical knowledge*. Phenomenal Awareness as such involves knowledge that enables (us) to act rather than knowledge that informs about action (Kuepers, 2013).

### **Art & Wisdom: An Integral Aesthetic Practice**

What has been described in three parts in this paper is a singular overarching process and methodology that is in practice an integrated experience. As a transformational process it can be facilitated and stimulates learning through the qualities of 'making', and the work of the imagination. Employing the medium of art-based Transitional Objects and phenomena directs this process by requiring a primary engagement with the senses which brings a greater faculty into effect. It encourages interpersonal exchange and develops curiosity beyond the habitual frames of attention. Thereby it opens perspectives to a more creative and comprehensive understanding of being-in-the-world as a context for decision, action, and meaning making.

This work takes place in a dedicated Transitional Space which creates an in-between of uncertainty and possibility while it is filled with the elements of anxiety, play, humour, doubt and questions. This process and space serves as a breach in the predicted certainty of time and habit, permitting reformations, transformations, and novelties to emerge both individually and as shared learning in organisations. The conditions of the overarching process encourage the authentic self to be present fostering individual self knowing and shared ownership as relational authenticity. In this atmosphere of amplified learning there arises a Phenomenal Awareness that intensifies an attention for being sense and mindful in the very moment while simultaneously consciously holding a processual awareness of their content, intensity and relationality. As this whole integral process has a strong generative basis for learning it relies on the structure of presentation before proposition.

## **Conclusions and Future Research Directions**

The Integral Process as a methodology opens new possibilities for how some aspects of a different kind of learning might be facilitated. Purposefully, creating a transitional step between a current state and a future desired state lends considerations to how we deal with existing knowledge and habit when we orchestrate change and re-learning particularly in organisations. It also suggests that when a greater ground of sensual knowing is acknowledged, the broadened context informing this learning radically alters perspectives. There is a need to consider the use of presentational forms to question the results of traditional cognitive and propositional approaches to learning, especially where the former fails to engage the informing sensual realms. Moreover, further research studies are needed to understand how to match learning needs with transitional mode and media in lesson design (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, p. 56), as well as recognise the sentient body's part in such learning situations.

With respect to presentation before proposition as an orientation towards experiential learning, further study of existing practices could identify the different *modes strengths and weaknesses* as related to their primary senses and any syn-aesthetic reliance other modes and media. Further, the clear classification of such work according to senses and tasks, and documentation of ABIs according to their strengths and weaknesses for achieving specific outcomes would lead to more meaningful and effective alignment with specific organisational needs. Many existing initiatives or interventions already closely follow the ABI procedures described in this paper. Additional research along the previous lines could also align individual learning styles with a specific mode and medium, and align mode and media with their associated senses, as

well as recognise the sentient bodies' part in such learning situations (Küpers, 2008).

A deeper study of existing literature along with practical research is required to explore the links between underlying patterns and forms associated with process experience shared as '*experiential metaphors*.' Holding to the greater meaning of 'language' as all forms of communication and understanding, a similar approach to that of linguistic studies (Lakoff & Johnson. 2003) could be used. This could permit specific aspects of experience to be communicated and understood through the medium of ABIs. Research into learning in cultures with oral traditions could also be useful e.g. Polynesian, Micronesian, African, where crucial information and practices are learnt using mainly generative capabilities and through a dominance of presentational forms.

An ability to work with and embrace both cognitive and affective means is optimal. Working in a 'cultivated improvisation' between the propositional and selective forms of knowing would help develop a flexibility of response that employs only the best attributes from both 'worlds' and avoided their pitfalls.

In the facilitation stage of ABIs the power of self organising *peer to peer learning* is often observed. A key part seemingly appears from a 'safe' and 'owned' intrinsic process where questions of faithing and trust are the most important components in a situation of minimal hierarchy, collaboration, and willingness to embracing diversity. Greater understanding of these phenomena might be found in by studying the generative capabilities of children's learning, i.e. relational understandings, judgment with the senses etc, which contrast with adults' more rational (selective) approach. Rediscovering the inner-child in adulthood along with its sense-based memory may reconnect adults to essential qualities informed in earnest play.

Although *spoken language* can embrace the propositional as instructions on one hand, and the presentational as poetry on the other, with story somewhere between, it possesses no clear demarcations. Spoken language is the one form of communication that can encompass many categories in a continuum from selective to generative capability. The various forms of spoken language therefore pose considerable difficulties for ABIs, particularly for presentational or sensually based orientations in making or delineating mode and media effects. Consequently, as an enquiry subject, it has been purposely omitted to date. However, paradoxically this omission can also be considered as indicating its possible potential across a wide range of applications.

Enabling engagement and facilitation of ABIs must consider the *anxieties and resistance* endemic in creative processes that add to a fear of their inclusion in rational processes. Recognising, accommodating, and coping with these natural uncertainties offers improved possibilities accommodating similar uncertainties in the organisational arena. The Venn-diagram (Figure I) used as a framework for expressing knowing as continuums can also be applied to anxieties as continuums (Riemann, 2009). Anxieties may be classified as intrinsic, caused by the dilemma of opposing needs for belonging and for independence, and extrinsic, caused by opposing needs for order and for change. An awareness of these types of anxieties along with a deeper grasp of the roles of humour, paradox and play, may considerably advance the design, facilitation and acceptance of ABIs as a practice within organisations.

Breakthrough work is still needed for *evaluation* of the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the learning achieved through art-based means, particularly the qualitative aspects. The ABI process itself demands constant qualitative information as processual evaluation to guide it, as well as the



monitoring of quantitative measures it enables through cause-and-effect (Schiuma 2011). The latter will continue to be a demand linked to business outcomes, and form an essential part of robust business cases for the use of ABIs.

Art-based approaches to organisational learning have strong links to theories of *Meta-Learning*. In a rapidly shifting environment, where authority and information are no longer the only acceptable means for coping with change, new strategies are needed. “How to manage up?” is a question in many minds. Being able to improvise between selective and generative modalities and capabilities is an important skill for coping with change. Practice and critical reflection on ABIs, where there is a clear focus on the knower as well as the known (Fenstermacher, 1994), offer transformative learning of this kind (Gunnlaugson, 2005).

Rarely considered is the part *faithing* plays in ‘the act of bringing in the new.’ It is closely associated with a sense of safety, trust, risk-taking, and belief based on the revelations of past experience. As an enabler of action in uncertainty, its practice develops out of life experience as relational experiences of being-in-the-world. Weick (2006) suggests that belief and faith reach outside the notions of deduction and induction to ‘abductive reasoning’ (Peirce’s third form of reasoning) that focuses and evaluates hypotheses in order to make sense of puzzling facts. “When an observed fact is read through an imagined rule, this action can generate a world not previously thought of” (p. 1731). Examining these multiple facets of faithing could bring understanding closer to the realities of learning’s varying outcomes.

In addressing faithing as a practice, parallels may be drawn between artists and their work and employees and their organisations using Fowlers Six Stages of

Faith (1981). The rich string of relationships between individuals, organisations, the Arts, or any recognition of the 'intercession of the unknown' provides enormous scope for study. Such a study could produce an understanding of the *intensity of engagement* in a response to optimal conditions for learning and meaning making.

The future of ABIs lies in more consistent application and more effective measurement of their outcomes. There is no doubt that they can develop skills that will enable effective and dynamic responses in complex environments. In an intricate backdrop embedded with challenges such as sustainable work practices, and responsibility for the environment, ABI's have an inbuilt capacity to effectively connect and inform at all organisational levels. Convincing leaders with declarative power to invest in this approach to change and development will be the result of combining effective practice results using methods such as those outlined in this paper, developing effective tools for measuring outcomes, and critically pursuing further academic research.

For a number of years on my studio wall a piece of paper with an enlarged print-out has caught my eye, as it does now. It is a communication from someone to the AACORN community. It reads "Understanding the dynamics that are at the core of the artistic process - and to recognise the relevance to universal human qualities - the more we will understand that the dynamics of collaborative innovation are rooted in each individual struggling to actualize their own full potential".

In conclusion, the more we are able to be fully present and conscious i.e. phenomenally aware to all that surrounds us, and in particular the other human beings that share our space, the better we will sensitise and in-form

our memories and habits, enabling us to develop rich imaginations informing our future experiences.

While the ideas presented in this paper cover a broad range of areas, the common thread is the endeavour to explain what 'sits' at and emerges through the nexus of creative processes. The sense of nurturing that is life-supporting is also the nature of learning and creativity. Whilst the emergent may be found poised at some constant centre, the surrounding process is, at best, a dance. Here you have witnessed an endeavour to describe some of those dancing steps. The dance is continuous, the dancers many, and any experience of reality tells us there is no single dance and no fixed or single starting point. Despite this, for those of us that want to dance together, I hope some steps for the dance will be found here, even if we jostle a little in our attempt.

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<sup>1</sup> Handy (1994) lists various paradoxes of our age: 1. *The paradox of intelligence*. Intelligence is the rising form of property; yet such assets never appear on company balance sheets. 2. *The paradox of work*. Because the economic system discourages people from working for free, simultaneously we have work crying out to be done (from helping the elderly to environmental cleanup) and people endlessly searching for work. Modern organizations cannot seem to bridge this gap. 3. *The paradox of productivity*. At the organizational level, productivity improvement means more work from fewer people. At the social level, more people become inactive or enter the underground economy. The result is organizations become more productive and society less so. 4. *The paradox of time*. The application of modern technology means less time is needed to make and do things. People should have more spare time. But time has become a competitive weapon and getting things done quickly is imperative. As a result, many of those who work have less time than ever before. 5. *The paradox of riches*. Economic growth depends upon more people wanting more things. But increasingly, the things people want most (clean air, safe environment) are collective and cannot be bought by individuals at any price. And because there is no customer, organizations cannot produce them. 6. *The paradox of organizations*. Today, organizations need to be local and global at the same time; to be small in some ways but big in others; and to be centralized some of the time and decentralized the rest. Managers are expected to be more entrepreneurial and more team-oriented at the same time. No one knows what is needed to run organizations now. 7. *The paradox of ageing*. People never learn very much from the previous generation because their experiences were so different. The result is most organizations are led by people whose experiences do not equip them to lead in today's environment. 8. *The paradox of the individual*. Managers are urged to challenge old ways. At the same time they are asked to remember that they are a part of a larger group-a team. The tension between individual rights and collective will has never been more explosive. 9. *The paradox of justice*. People want the organizations they work for to treat them fairly. But being treated fairly means different things to different people. To some it means treating different people identically, but to others it means compensating for their differentness. Either way, the manager will be accused of being unjust.