

## **Exploring education, inquiry and reflection as modes of conversation**

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The presentation is a participatory workshop designed to provoke inquiry, conversation and reflection. Participants will use matrices, quotations, anecdotes and other material to identify their own and others' assumptions about teaching, learning and research. By creating a communal conversation containing reflective spaces participants may realise something about themselves and may discover kindred spirits. We will explore conversation as inquiry and reflection and as a core practice linking research and education.

‘Conversation’ is a common metaphor for the practice of education and for the practice of research. One aim of education is to develop the capacity for conversation with others, with history, and with the self. Research or inquiry is considered integral to educational practice. Indeed, another aim of education is to develop the capacity to ask good questions. Education has a transgressive and challenging quality, and is fraught with dilemmas and paradoxes. It requires constant reflection, a form of dialogue.

Inquiry is a process of making the strange familiar and the familiar strange. Like education, it has a transgressive and challenging quality. Good outcomes rest on the capacity to ask good questions. It depends on, and the results contribute to, the education of those involved in the research. The process itself is educational. Like educators, researchers face a range of dilemmas and paradoxes. Research reflects values and attitudes, whether or not the researcher is aware of it.

Educators and researchers confront many basic dilemmas: to follow a logical, linear way or a creative, divergent way; to plan processes or rely on emergent incrementalism; to take the self as a starting point of contextual discovery, or to discover the self through exploring the context, and so on. In this process, are we discovering or creating? Education and research require and create the capacity for reflection. They seem to require structure, and yet, in a sense, be anti-structural. This workshop will reflect these tensions.