

Zines as qualitative forms of analysis

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Structured Abstract

Purpose – This report brings forward the possibility of capturing creativity and human experience through a visual ethnography approach, applying the use of ‘zines’ as a means of capturing individual engagement with a process. Zines are small (maga)zines from the do-it-yourself movement. They began as a means for fans to express their support of favourite musicians. They are a means to express collective voice from the ground up, less formal than a publication produced by an entity, but formal enough to be considered publications in their own right. Zines can be handcrafted in rough method or can be beautifully designed and produced to very high standards.

Zines are presented in this paper as a method of collecting and analysing data within a framework of qualitative analysis that retains more of the shape of the complete experience (Dewey). This is done so as to maintain a more overall sense of what the experience was for an individual participating in an activity within the organisational context. Accounting for experience only through evidence, this paper argues, loses many important elements of experience, such as tacit engagement, experiential knowledge, and individual judgement. What is being lost, this paper argues, is the human creative input and engagement with experiences in the organisational and workplace context.

Design/methodology/approach – For IFKAD 2016, we propose to produce materials ahead of the conference (in the form of an advanced colouring book or a photo album) and invite participants to gather materials, notate impressions, draw and photograph in

response to their experience in the conference. We aim for this zine to be a holistic record of a process, incorporating both positive and negative elements as a way of informing future activities.

At the end of the conference, the researchers will collect and analyse the individual zines submitted by the conference participants and prepare an edited summarised publication of key impressions as made by the participants themselves as a response to the conference.

Originality/value – This work proposed could be done solely for the Creative Coordination track or could involve all members attending the conference. The aim is to implement this as a qualitative means of accounting for human experience by using IFKAD 2016 as a testing ground. Can we capture the thinking and impressions in this way to account for creativity and inform new methods?

Practical implications – The researchers will co-create the materials. At the end of the conference, we will gather all mini publications from all the conference attendees who took part and create an edited summarised publication as a response to the conference. This will constitute a qualitative record of the creative endeavour during the conference.

Keywords – Artifact Analysis, Experiential Knowledge, Collective Voice, Visual Ethnography, Tacit Engagement

Paper type –Practical Paper

1 Introduction

This report brings forward the possibility of capturing creativity and human experience through a visual ethnography approach, applying the use of 'zines' as a means of capturing individual engagement with a process. Zines are small (maga)zines from the do-it-yourself movement. They began as a means for fans to express their support of favourite musicians. They are a means to express collective voice from the ground up, less formal than a publication produced by an entity, but formal enough to be considered publications in their own right. Zines can be handcrafted in rough method or can be beautifully designed and produced to very high standards.

Zines are presented in this paper as a method of collecting and analysing data within a framework of qualitative analysis that retains more of the shape of the complete experience (Dewey). This is done so as to maintain a more overall sense of what the experience was for an individual participating in an activity within the organisational context. Underlying this approach is a questioning of the breaking down of experiences into data sets that can be measured and therefore compared. It is not that this approach to the collection and analysis of qualitative forms is seen as invalid. Rather, the case is being made that retaining more of a holistic sense of an experience is also crucial at the analysis stage, and that this type of approach has the difficulty of not being regarded as credible. This is due in large part to the current bias for evidence-based decision-making requiring measurable components that can be compared against each other and across data sets (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008). The move towards that was precipitated by what was seen in the 1990s as an ideologically driven approach, and evidence was seen as a way of offsetting that and making the process more transparent. Accounting for experience only through evidence, this paper argues, loses many important elements of experience, such as tacit engagement, experiential knowledge, and individual judgement. What is being lost, this paper argues, is the human creative input and engagement with experiences in the organisational and workplace context.

There are methods for quantifying creativity at key junctures in problem solving or consensus gathering, for example through qualitative analysis of idea generation sessions, interviews/testimonials, and case studies. For the most part, these qualitative methods are textual. These can inform decisions by gathering supporting evidence for a decision taken or a direction pursued in solving a problem. The approach is most often to break the tracts into coded components that can be compared and measured against one another. Quantifying the findings is the overriding consideration in decision-making as they can be

compared against one another and can fit into existing modes of analysis which involve, in a greater and greater part, the use of computer-aided data gathering and analysis. What this approach leaves out are the more holistic expressions of an experience that can inform a study about the effects of a certain process or environment or grouping on the human beings involved. For example, how changes to a system will affect the individuals using those systems and how to gather the individual creative approaches to problem solving that emerge from the individual's experience and knowledge shaped from a holistic view of the situation. Capturing subjective experience and allowing for that expression to play a role in decision-making has been more difficult to argue at a time where evidence in the form of data is a requirement for decision-making.

As the conference theme states, “creativity is one of the remaining human faculties that cannot be replaced by computers for now”. It then becomes more relevant than ever to begin to properly account for that contribution in the workflow so that work environments and procedures can capture and benefit from human creativity in the process of innovation. This is an area that requires care and attention, as so much emphasis is currently placed on what can be quantified.

During IFKAD 2016 in Dresden, we aim to distribute blank zines to all willing conference participants and let them create their own personal zines from their conference experiences. There will be a basic template applied to all with prompts for input, but participants will be able to create the zine as they please. These will simply be guidelines to facilitate the collection and expression of experience. At the end of the conference, we will gather all the individual zines and produce a publication with a collection of individual findings from the conference. This will constitute a collective qualitative record of the creativity and knowledge expressed through the individual zines. What this paper addresses are forms of accounting for experience that are formed as artistic responses and design propositions alongside textual notations to give a more holistic sense of an experience or a problem and how to move forward from it.

Innovation through collaboration: Research and pedagogy

As three collaborators from three different fields we are also interested with innovation in research methodology that benefits both us and other participants and the ways we model learning with them. Innovative activity does not only take place in the worlds of university education or business in isolated institutions as evidenced by current developments in knowledge transfer and exchange in the UK higher education sector. The

relationship between formal and informal knowledge exchange is important and ability to innovate involves interacting and translating ideas into contexts that have originated from several knowledge sources (Bodas Freitas et al, 2009).

On a pragmatic level we are concerned with developing research, learning and teaching approaches which are novel in an academic conference or seminar setting, but not necessarily elsewhere in art departments in universities and the world of professional publishing, and so we are keen to offer novel approaches to augment the participants' experience. (Holtham and Owens, 2011).

Secondly we seek to promote learning as an active process in which learners construct the world through dialogue, action and reflection as they interact with other people and their environment. Freire's focus on the development of critical consciousness helps define our pedagogical position in the sense that learners' concrete realities are central to the learning process, but the job of the educator is to enable learners to 'read' that reality differently. He argues that when immersed in daily life '...our minds do not work epistemologically', in other words we have no great need to '...ask ourselves anything' (Freire, 1998, p.81). One key role of the educator is to enable learners to step outside the experience of daily life, to 'emerge from it' in order to '...distance ourselves from it...'. The distancing ourselves from the object is epistemologically "coming closer" to it' a technique of productive 'alienation' (Willet, 1964).

We engage in this process of using the zine as an affordance for conversation, to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar to improve our own research practice and because it is an enjoyable approach to collaboration. Finally we view our collaboration as part of the process of revitalising professionalism in education and business and improving practice through artistic inquiry and action research. (Holtham and Owens, 2011). We are seeking to develop approaches that enable us and invite others 'to reach behind that experience in order to develop a more profound understanding of that experience' (Sachs, 1997). This is in contrast to the competency based models of education developed as part of the 'new managerialism' inherent in the public sector since the 1980's (Randle and Brady, 1997).

2 Background

For IFKAD 2015 Biagioli produced a small zine publication, loosely in the form of a play score as a response to her experience of attending the conference and responding to

ideas, people, and situations during the conference. This included all facets of the conference, not just the paper presentations or larger sessions, but included as well the walks taken, conversations had, and sights seen in Bari. The publication included photographs she took, drawings she made, notes she took, as well as various ephemera from the conference itself. This qualitative record of the conference captured Biagioli's holistic experience of being there and being influenced by the group of researchers gathered for the event. She sent the zine to the 'players' involved in the play as well as the conference organiser as a qualitative record of their experience together.

This approach was further refined by Pässilä, Owens, and Biagioli to be tested during a network session of Gnosis 2020 in February 2016. For that session, the researchers agreed on a zine template to be distributed to network participants on the last day of the network sessions. Network members were also provided with markers, pencils, and various colour and shaped dots and they were asked to record in visual form their experiences and findings from the network sessions as a self-contained zine publication to be gathered by the researchers at the end of the last session. Twelve zines were collected at the end of the session. These zines were then analysed for their ability to express key ideas running through the sessions; for their ability to express through subjective form a notion that the researchers had observed as collective voice running through the group attending the session. Elements were gathered from each of the zines and a Gnosis 2020 zine format was agreed and applied to encapsulate the knowledge and expressions of the group who attended the session.

The Gnosis 2020 zine (Issue 1) is designed to be an A6 booklet that folds down from an A3 sheet. It can be read as a booklet, and when it opens up it has an A3 poster on the backside. A description of the content of the eight-page booklet follows. Page one (the cover page) has a schematic drawn by the network organiser which expressed her vision for the network in visual form. Page two (two-page spread) reading left to right: on the left (leading from the network visualisation on the cover) are the key dimensions that the network organiser identified in her zine as well as the kinds of activities/outputs she envisioned for them. On the facing page is a visualisation by one of the network attendees which expressed the complexity of the territory the network is engaging with as well as its problems. Page three is a montage of three different visualisations from three different participant zines: the schematic, the text headers, and the representation of the human form processing learning. Those were put together to express the subjective/objective links and relationships. In other words, quantitative analysis can quantify certain key stages/processes of problem-solving/new learning, but also there is the subjective

dimension of processing which needs to be accounted for as well, and a qualitative form of representation in the form of participant drawing suits that best. Page four was a hopeful representation of how new learning can be processed in an effective way to integrate negative/positive feelings and outcomes from the process. The facing page has a statement from the research team about this approach of gathering input, analysing content, and representing it in qualitative format. Page 5 (the back cover) is a schematic (visually linked to the front cover schematic) produced by one of the network participants that expressed well the intention of the network to continue and what the network organiser hoped for in terms of contact and interaction, as well as next steps for the network.

The zine is going through a review process involving the network organiser, to be published in time for IFKAD 2016.

3 Methodology

For IFKAD 2016, we propose to produce materials ahead of the conference (in the form of an advanced colouring book or a photo album) and invite participants to gather materials, note impressions, draw and photograph in response to their experience in the conference. The zine produced for IFKAD 2015 will inform the design of the template, as it included plans for IFKAD 2016 as announced during the conference in Bari. This will be a means to represent the aims of the conference as announced a year previously and check on progress of ideas and application. This will be an important area to check to see how well the zine operates as a means of checking on progress, accounting for aims previously stated and how they were able to be implemented in reality. The zine will be an opportunity to account for any problems encountered during the process, the bottlenecks created as a result of group dissensus or unforeseen circumstances. We aim for this zine to be a holistic record of a process, incorporating both positive and negative elements as a way of informing future activities.

The researchers aim to announce the activity at the start of the conference and any interested conference participant will be able to use the publication to track their experiences and insights as the conference progresses. At the end of the conference, the researchers will collect and analyse the individual zines submitted by the conference participants and prepare an edited summarised publication of key impressions as made by the participants themselves as a response to the conference. The edited publication will be a visual ethnography record of the holistic experience, retaining as much as possible the shape of the individual expressions of what participants experienced during the sessions.

It will also, in its choice of elements to include and how to combine and pace the various contributions made, represent an analysis of the conference activities, the key ideas that came out, and how to take them forward. This would be a qualitative record of the creative endeavour during the conference as reported by a team of researchers to express collective voice.

This work proposed could be done solely for the Creative Coordination track or could involve all members attending the conference. The aim is to implement this as a qualitative means of accounting for human experience by using IFKAD 2016 as a testing ground. Can we capture the thinking and impressions in this way to account for creativity and inform new methods?

4 Findings

Exit, Stage Right. Zine produced for IFKAD 2015, Bari, Italy.



Zine IFKAD 2015. Cover.



Exit, Stage Right

The players:

Allan Owens

Anne Pässilä

Jukka-peka

Nurit

Monica Biagioli

Isabelle Mahy

Susana Vasconcelos Tavares

Mary Ann Kernan

IFKAD conference
Bari, Italy June 2015

Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 2-3.



Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 4-5.



Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 6-7.

Zones of intensity: reinforcing a sense of place

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Abstract

This paper addresses the current state of work and its adherence to free market principles that override considerations of culture and sustainability at the local levels. It posits that globalisation encourages fragmentation and dislocation of the senses by emphasising the visual bias through disembodied structures and communication. In a globalised economy guided by free market principles, it is the systems that matter rather than the individuals using the systems. The visual bias reinforces this favouring of the systemic and programmed over the holistic and organic. The creative work proposed here attempts to address this imbalance by creating zones of intensity in and around areas of work. These areas of artistic production/installation/performance would operate on the informal level of cultural transmission, as set out by Edward T. Hall in his theory of culture, where cultural knowledge and assimilation happen on three distinct but porous levels that can influence each other: the informal, the formal, and the technical.

"Zone of intensity" is a term coined by Russell West-Pavlev and deployed by Dario Radovic to address the visual bias of urban planning. By researching spaces through the artistic inquiry of derive from the Situationists and encouraging modes of recording those investigations through artistic forms such as drawing and poetry, Radovic champions the importance of the subjective in expressing the meaning of spaces. This notion is a key focus point of the work presented here to give equal weight and importance to the qualitative (experience) as that of the quantitative (data) in designing spaces, assigning function to those spaces, and creating the organisational structures for people to live and work in those spaces.

Keywords – sense of place, presence, visual bias, non-power, the subjective

Breaking Through: A journey towards deep learning for the 21st century

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Structured Abstract

Design/methodology/approach – We propose a participative collective arts- and design-based approach to creating a learning space (also referred to as 'container'), both on a virtual platform and in presence.

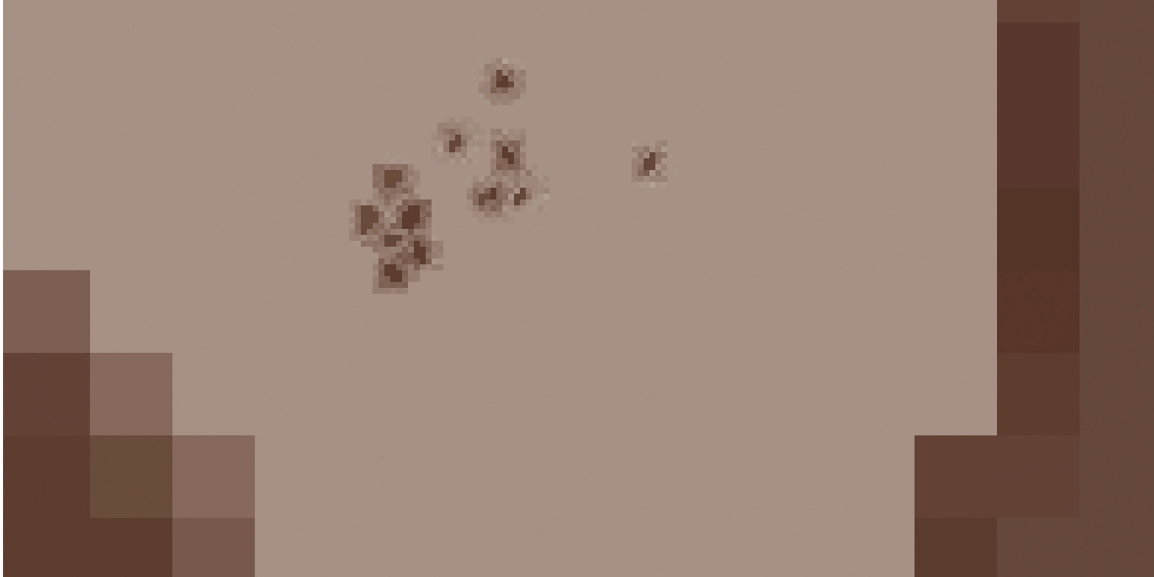
Originality/value – This methodology puts in evidence the role of artistic creative processes in creating learning spaces in which art-based learning methods, and arts as a creative means to learn about complexity, transformation processes, the self, the commons, and social innovation as key elements are mobilised.

Practical implications – The outcomes of the application are a prototype of a learning space and process, which constitute a contribution to renew and/or provide a rich alternative to institutional education programs. It aims at sustaining the development of knowledge and competencies necessary to develop in order to be able to evolve individually and collectively and innovate socially. Each outcome will be subject to a creative strategic process aimed at storyboarding the journey from prototype to sustainable enterprise.

Keywords – Creativity, Art Based Learning, Social Change, Worldview, Social Innovation. (max 5 words)

Paper type – Academic Research Paper

Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 8-9.



Zine IFKAD 2015. Poster folded in three folds as part of Japanese binding in center of the zine.



Collective Mindfulness – Arts & High Reliability

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Structured Abstract

Purpose. The purpose of this paper is to carry out a literature review on collective mindfulness and identify the key conditions and processes under which it can be developed within organizations.

Design/methodology/approach. Systematic analysis of published empirical studies and theoretical models about mindfulness in organizational contexts. The summary of analysis is listed below.

Collective mindfulness, defined by Weick et al. (1999) as the "capability to induce a rich awareness of discriminatory detail and a capacity for action" is a fundamental resource for effectively respond to environment changes (Tsoukas and Cummings, 2002; Levinthal and Rerup, 2006; Weick and Sutcliffe, 2000). If so, in an ever-changing environment to promote collective mindfulness is to develop and support a crucial key to organizational success and survival. Therefore, one might ask what can organizations do to cultivate collective mindfulness? What are the fundamental conditions under which it emerges? The body of literature on collective mindfulness describes two different ways of fostering mindfulness within organizations. One answer rests in Weick's and colleagues (Langer 1989 and Weick et al. 1999) theory about mindfulness in High Reliability Organizations (HROs). In this approach mindfulness is promoted through processes of improving quality and quantity of attention towards work processes and organizational environment. A different answer argues that artistic processes can also promote collective and individual mindfulness, by removing objects from the automatism of perception, by defamiliarizing predominant beliefs and assumptions and allowing people to "see more" and "see differently" (Langer 1989, 2005; Barry & Meisick, 2010). Moreover, art as one of the most important ways of expression of human feelings and values can provide processes and tools to approach emotional dynamics and aesthetic aspects within organizations, which are also expected to broaden people's perception and people's willingness to be open to new ways doing things (Schmitt, 2011; Barry, 1994; Barry, 1996; Berthoin Antal, 2009).

Originality. We integrate into a single model of mindfulness in organizations, two separate and apparently disparate theories about mindfulness in organizations which hitherto have been developed separately (Arts and High Reliability Organizations).

Practical implications. The most important implication is to identify the key conditions and processes under which collective mindfulness can be developed within organizations.

Key words. Mindfulness; Attention; Arts; High-Reliability Organizations; Arts-based Initiatives;

Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 10-11.



Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 12-13.

Jörg Rainer Niering - Dresden University

Sense of place from architects
helpful for knowledge management

- ① creating architectural objects
- ② Space (something where you can go inside/
enter yourself)
- ③ creative procedures/process that brings people
together

epistemological settings/spaces

Tables

→ technological bridge

getting clear to the links between process + space

cross cluster cooperation how it has been chosen

smart cities → reconnection of this idea from
how to create a disaster-resistant
cities

collective intelligence
massive cooperation
co-thinking co-creation
cross creativity
genious crowds etc.

activated through
digital
devices

Jörg Rainer Niering

Condit programming / Knowledge diffusion

intelligence
creativity
cooperation

epistemic process

ambient communication
disordered coordination
↳ makes accident and
inspiration

Knowledge: co-ordinated thinking
modelling thinking as a collective

coordination of collectives

the place has a knowledge

Physical modelling → to create commitment
to create passion

Formel: 1D Campus Incubator

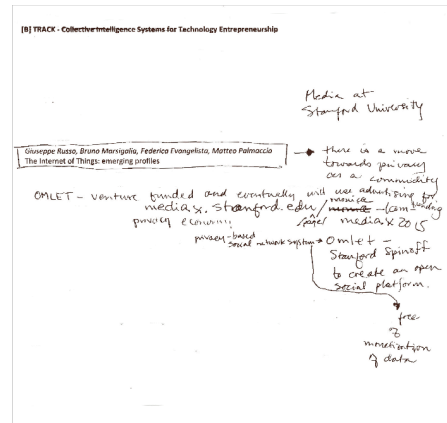
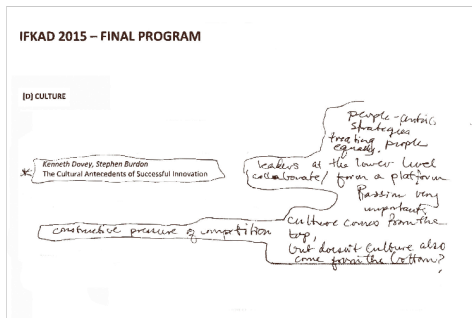
space within, meshlike
in order to amplify academic content

Process

- ① Knowledge coordination of collective thinking
- ② architecture to coordinate collective
thinking on a massive scale
- ③ coordinate spaces to coordinate
our collective thinking

Big data, Culture and creativity

Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 14-15.



Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 16-17.



We met with Isabelle to discuss her research project:

Cartesian view is fragmented

Move through different world views

Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 18-19.

I had a great send-off at the Bari train station, courtesy of Allan, Anne, Jukka-Peka, Susana and Isabelle.

The platform happening we performed lasted fifteen minutes while I sat in the train facing the players at the platform station: Anne, Allan, Isabelle, Jukka-Peka, and Susana.

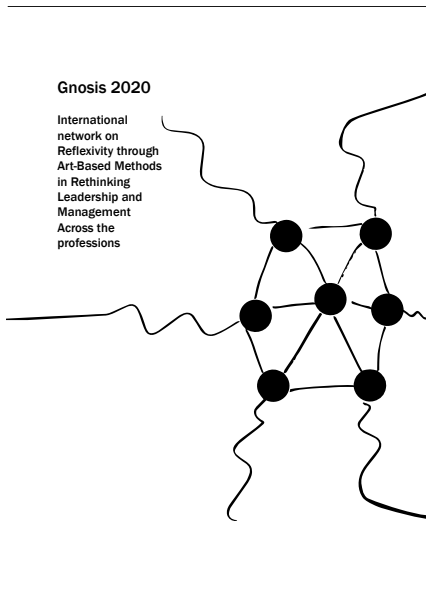


Zine IFKAD 2015. Pages 20-21.

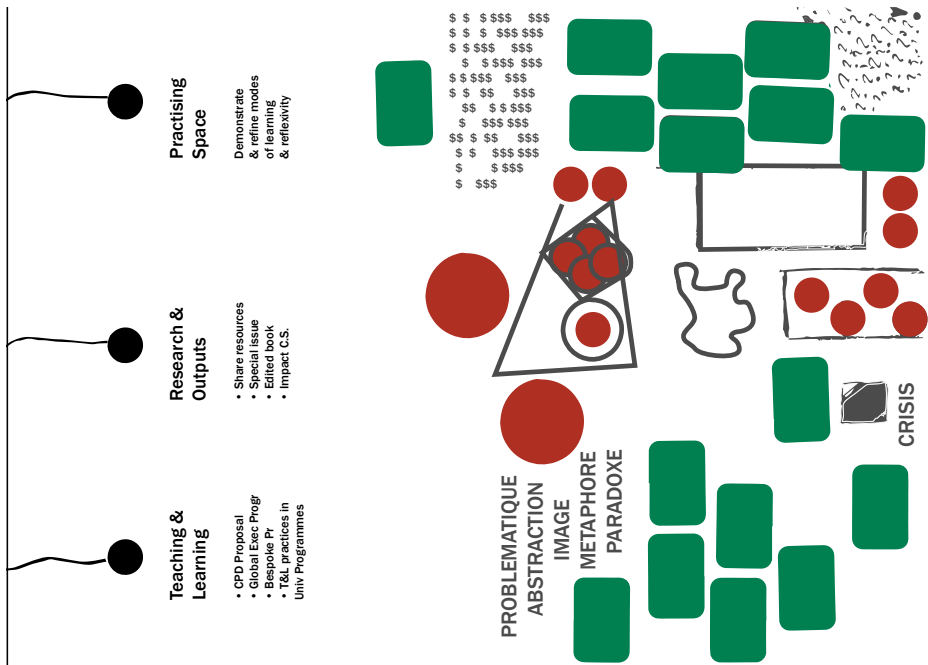


Zine IFKAD 2015. Back cover.

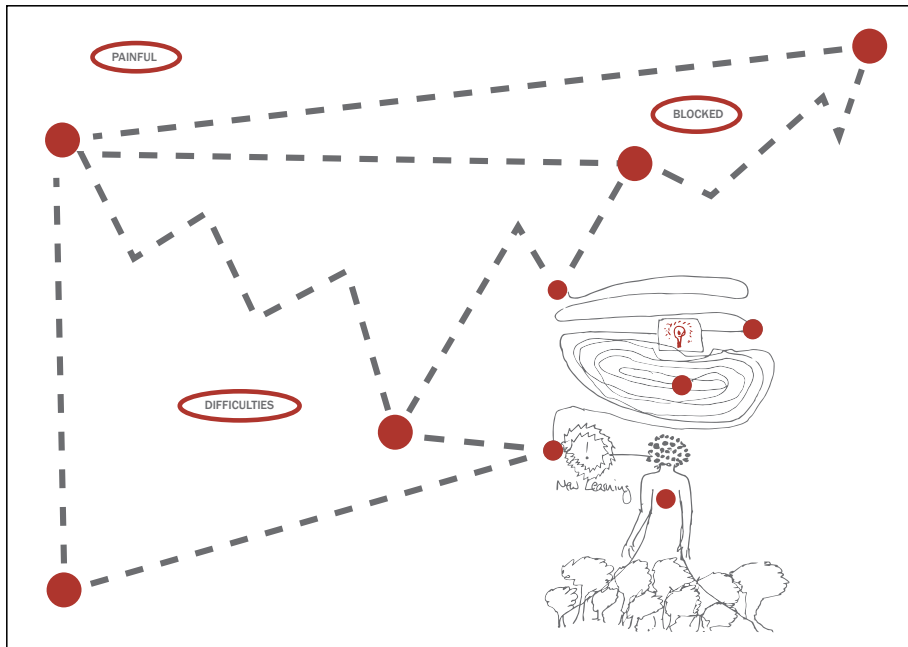
Gnosis 2020: International network on Reflexivity through Art-Based Methods in Rethinking Leadership and Management Across the professions. Zine currently in production.



Gnosis 2020 Zine, Issue 1. Cover.



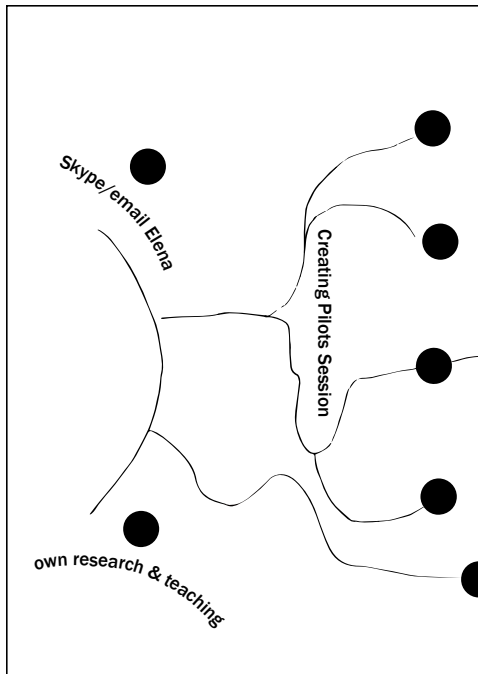
Gnosis 2020 Zine, Issue 1. Pages 2-3.



Gnosis 2020 Zine, Issue 1. Pages 4-5.



Gnosis 2020 Zine, Issue 1. Page 6.



Gnosis 2020 Zine, Issue 1. Back cover.

5 Conclusions

To be included in paper post conference.

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