

PAPER:

A RESEARCH JOURNEY

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Abstract:

This paper will share with you my story as I travelled the windy research road within a Collaborative Inquiry group, blending research philosophy and methodologies to investigate the question *How do you nudge a culture towards self-managed professional development?*

Allowing the different perspectives to be heard and honoured was critical to the inquiries, as well as recognising that each of us (the inquirers) brought our own interpretation into the inquiry. Accepting this was the easy part – dealing with it was quite different? How do you capture the emergent themes and deal with the different perspectives so that a framework for action may be developed? As we slipped in and out of a search for certainty, paradigms and approaches became blurred.

Methodologies and techniques used included a Hermeneutic Dialectic process where the different perspectives of the research participants were shared and confronted requiring each participant to deal with the perspectives of others; Strategic Questioning using Fran Peavey's (1992) model of allowing participants to move from what is to what could be, and what they could do to make it so; Narratology where participants told their stories; and Action Research where ideas for action were tested out, modified and tried again.

Personally, this research journey provided a fertile learning environment as I explored the different perspectives and reshaped my own mental models as my assumptions were constantly challenged. It was a rewarding and fulfilling experience and one I am keen to share with others wanting to adopt qualitative approaches to research.