

**NEW PERSPECTIVES ON LIFEWIDE LEARNING
LEARNING LIVES WORKING PAPER #1 18/03/21**

Conceptions of Lifewide Learning:

A Pilot Study of 10 Experiential Learning Vignettes

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Feedback Welcome

This Working Paper is offers some ideas on how we might try to develop deeper understandings of the significant knowledge base we have created through the Learning Lives Inquiry. It offers some initial propositions and thoughts on existing concepts and conceptual frameworks that we might make use of. It includes some ideas for the design of an analytical tool and shows how the tool might be used by providing a subjective interpretation of some features of lifewide learning in the first 10 vignettes.

Key questions:

- 1 What conceptions of learning might we draw upon? Are there new conceptions of learning waiting to be discovered within our own narratives of learning?**
- 2 What conceptions of knowledge are appropriate for the experiences being described?**
- 3 What concepts and conceptual frameworks will help us better understand and explain the nature of lifewide learning?**

I invite you to provide comments, criticisms and suggestions on these ideas and provide your own ideas on how we might develop better understandings of the phenomenon we are calling lifewide learning.

Thank you
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Introduction

The Learning Lives collaborative inquiry aimed to explore the nature of lifewide learning – how, why, when, what and where learning emerges in the everyday lives and practices of participants. Our inquiry encouraged a particular focus on ‘emergence’, meaning that the situations in which learning was required or desired grew spontaneously out of the circumstances of a person’s life rather than in more intentional, planned and sustained situations for learning.

Over six weeks, participants undertook to pay more attention to their learning in the different domains of experience in their life, and to describe their experiences and insights of learning in a series of vignettes. The collection of 152 vignettes of personal experiences (LWRDG 2021a) in which

learning emerges provide a substantial and perhaps unique database through which to develop better understandings of adult lifewide learning.

This Working Paper offers some perspectives on what we learned about learning. It does not attempt to review the whole data base but uses a sample of 10 vignettes to illustrate some of the dimensions of learning. It also provides some initial thoughts on a theoretical framework, based on John Dewey's concepts of learning through doing, that we might use to interpret lifewide learning narratives.

What is learning in everyday living?

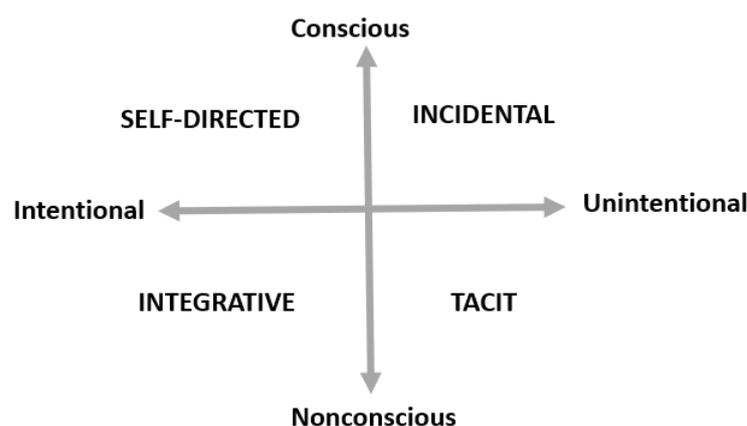
The question at the heart of the inquiry is what does learning mean and what does it mean to learn in the everyday doings, happenings and contexts of our lives?

From the vignettes it is clear that learning means many different things. As a starting proposition we might consider that learning is, *"the process of acquiring new understanding, knowledge, behaviours, skills, values, attitudes, and preferences [including our biases]"* (Gross 2020). Learning is demonstrated when the new understanding, knowledge, behaviours, skills, values, attitudes, and preferences have been applied or used to do or accomplish something. In everyday situations we often only recognise that we have learnt something after we have done something that we realise we couldn't do at some point in the past.

Informal learning through experience

Vignettes mainly describe learning that is informal and experiential i.e. that accompanies an experience in an environment that is not formally organised and structured for learning. Bennett (2012), building on an earlier scheme proposed by Schugurenksy's (2000), identified four modes of informal learning: a) self-directed, which is conscious and intentional, b) incidental, which is conscious but unintentional, c) tacit, which is both nonconscious and unintentional, and d) integrative, which is nonconscious and intentional (Figure 1). By placing a strong emphasis on reflection in the Learning Lives Inquiry we are trying to make ourselves more conscious of our own informal learning.

Figure 1 Four modes of informal learning Bennett (2012)



All the vignettes describe learning by doing (Dewey 1916) and we will use Dewey's explanatory frameworks later to make sense of what we have learnt. We should also recognise that the writing of a vignette is also a process of learning by doing as new insights are gained by thinking about an experience. 'How do we know what we know until we write it down'? The process enables the author

to extract new meaning from their experience, and also to celebrate themselves and their own achievements. In the words of one participant.

"My four vignettes used the concept of 'learning' to describe experiences that helped me to appreciate my worth, build a relationship, re-learn something I once knew, and think positively in response to something that I could easily think negatively about. Some might think this to be an eccentric use of the word 'learning'. I quite like it." (LLRDG 2021b synthesis 13)

I like it too because it elevates the benefits of what we have been doing beyond the intellectual into the domain of personal development and wellbeing. Feelings that are extended even further when we consider the whole environment within which the vignettes were being shared. In the insightful words of another participant.

"I think the well-being benefits might be the way to get other groups involved, and make it accessible"

Through the vignettes we have seen that learning is not an easy or unproblematic matter to understand and describe, and the achievement or outcomes language of education does not work. This was illuminated in a contribution to the discussion *"It's one thing to construct a raft out of oil drums and wire (a tangible achievement). It's quite another to describe what was learnt as the boy who made the raft steps gingerly onto it and experiences what it felt like to float on water that he did not want to fall into as he had yet to learn to swim. What was that learning and how did it become a part of his undergoing?"*

Knowledge – what is it and where does it come from?

Michael Eraut studied the way people learnt in professional settings for several decades. He talks about personal knowledge which incorporates and integrates (Eraut and Hirsch 2007 p6):

- Codified knowledge in the form(s) in which the person uses it
- Know-how in the form of skills and practices
- Personal understandings of people and situations
- Accumulated memories of cases and episodic events
- Other aspects of personal expertise, practical wisdom and tacit knowledge
- Self-knowledge, attitudes, values and emotions.

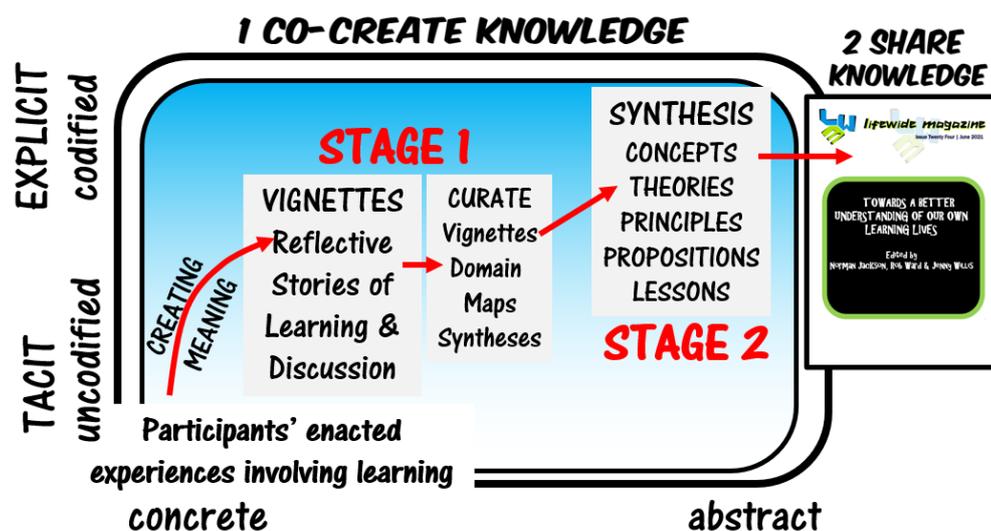
Learning usually involves acquiring or developing new knowledge that is meaningful because its significance is understood because there is already a foundation of personal knowledge. There are many definitions of knowledge. Davenport and Prusak (1998, p. 5) offer a definition that works well for the Learning Lives inquiry. They define knowledge as, *"a fluid mix of framed experience, contextual information, values and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information."* There are two parts to their definition. First, there is content: *"a fluid mix of framed experience, contextual information, values and expert insight."* This includes a number of things that we have within us, such as experiences, beliefs, values, how we feel, motivation, and information. The second part defines the function or purpose of knowledge, *"that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information."* We have within us a framework that we use for evaluating new experiences.

The Learning Lives inquiry brought people together and encouraged them to pool and share their knowledge and experiences through story-telling and generative conversations. It was a social knowledge development process which we framed what we were doing using a conceptual diagram developed by Max Boisot (1998) (Figure 1). It represents knowledge within a 2x2 matrix whose axes are Concrete-Abstract and Uncodified-Codified. The figure also includes Pollyani's (1958) concept of

tacit and explicit knowledge. According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) "Explicit knowledge can be expressed in words and numbers and can be easily communicated and shared in the form of hard data, scientific formulae, codified procedures or universal principles." 'Tacit' knowledge, on the other hand, is described as: "something not easily visible and expressible. Tacit knowledge is highly personal and hard to formalise. Subjective insights, intuitions and hunches fall into this category of knowledge.

"It is hard to formalize... difficult to communicate...deeply rooted in action and in an individual's commitment to a specific context...captured in the term 'know-how'. It consists of mental models, beliefs, and perspectives so ingrained that we take them for granted, and therefore cannot easily articulate them."

Figure 2 The knowledge development framework we used in the Learning Lives inquiry (adapted from Boisot 1998)



The inquiry was based on the premise that participants could codify and share their embodied personal knowledge derived through their enacted everyday experiences in their reflective written narratives. And that from this story form of codified knowledge we could derive and eventually share more abstract meanings – like concepts and theories. This way of visualising the growth of knowledge introduces the idea knowledge is distributed between people who can work together to share their personal knowledge and co-create new knowledge and understanding.

Importance of context(s)

The vignettes describe the relationships a person has with their world and the people, situations and objects in it in a way that has meaning and significance for them. The experience within which learning is located is bound up with this relationship. Perhaps the unique feature of lifewide learning is that the primary context for learning is the person themselves and the multitude of situations in a person's life that have meaning and are understood by the person. The everyday contexts and situations a person inhabits are merely the most recent situations in a lifetime of evolving contexts and situations. Context is hard to define in a general sense (Dohn, Hansen and Klausen 2018): it is something in the temporal/physical location, environment, situation or person that has a relationship with and influences cognition, emotions, actions and understandings. Contexts shape our perceptions and what things mean or might to us. In any situation involving learning there is rarely a single context. The vignettes provide abundant evidence of the importance of context(s) in relationship to understanding

the significance of a particular experience together with the meaning of learning that emerged. The environmental domains cited in the vignettes provide important first order information about contexts.

Lifewide learning demands that we become contextual knowers.

“Contextual knowers construct knowledge claims internally, critically analysing external perspectives rather than adopting them uncritically. Increasing maturity in knowledge construction yields an internal belief system that guides thinking and behaviour yet is open to re-construction given relevant evidence. Cognitive outcomes such as intellectual power, reflective judgement, mature decision making and problem solving depend on these epistemological capacities.” (Baxter Magolda 2004 p9)

We can characterise our contexts in terms of whether they are familiar or unfamiliar, simple/complicated or complex (Figure 3) with the highest potential (and most stressful situations for significant/transformational learning) occurring in contexts which are unfamiliar and complex.

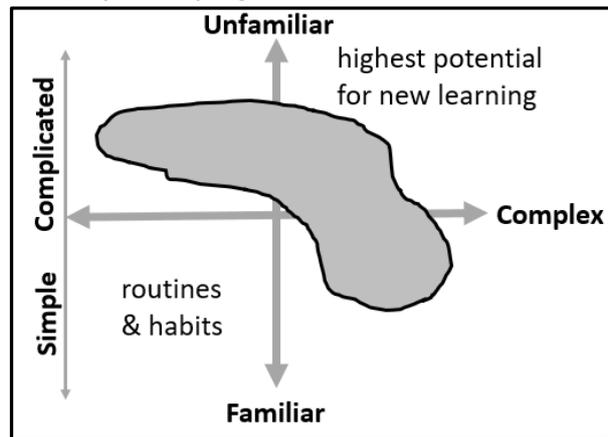


Figure 3 Characterisation of contexts

Of the 10 sample vignettes V2 and V6 would fall in the complicated and unfamiliar quadrant. The rest would fall in the simple/familiar quadrant.

Towards an analytical tool

We need the right tools in any significant work so it is right that we develop our own tools as well as use existing tools. The patterns and meanings in the wealth of information in the vignette database have yet to be revealed. As an initial step an analytical tool is being developed and piloted here (Table 1) to audit the narratives to appreciate variations in some key features associated with learning.

Table 1 Structure of the analytical tool being developed and piloted here

Vignette	CS – Context(s) & Situation(s) ED – Environmental Domain I/S – Individual or social activity T/P/I Task, Project or Incidental KS – Knowledge source TS – Time Scale M= Motivation ERG = Alderfer’s ERG model	What does learning mean? What does it mean to learn in the contexts being described?
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The tool includes a brief description of what learning meant and key information relating to contexts and situations, environmental domain, whether the activities involving learning were undertaken by an individual or in collaboration with others, whether learning was embedded in a task or project, or was incidental – a byproduct of everyday doings, the source(s) of knowledge, the time scale of activities within which learning is embedded, the motivations that encouraged involvement in the situation. It also includes an attempt to assign motivations to the existence, relatedness and growth

categories of Alderfer's ERG psychological motivations model (Appendix 2). Table 1 summarises key features of learning in a sample of ten vignettes.

Piloting the tool: Key features of learning in a sample of 10 vignettes

An analysis of the first 10 vignettes (Appendix 1) reveals:

- Nine different situations in four different environments (Home and /or Family n=6, Work n=4, Social interaction with friends n=1 and Interest n=1).
- Six of the vignettes involved activities undertaken by an individual and four involved others.
- Five described activities where a task or project was being undertaken and in five cases learning was incidental.
- The time scales of the activities within which learning is embedded vary from a few minutes (n=4) to hours (n= 4), days (n= 1) and weeks (n=2) reflecting the scale and complexity of the activities and the effects the activities were intended to make on the world.
- Motivations that drove actions within which learning was embedded were diverse. In six cases need was dominant, in two cases curiosity and interest were involved and in two cases desire or ambition to influence or promote were motivational factors.
- Using Alderfer's (1972) ERG theory of motivation , (see appendix 2) the needs in three of the vignettes might be related to 'existence', four contain 'relatedness' motivations and four contain both 'relatedness and growth' motivations.

In the sample of 10 vignettes learning means:

- V1 Having a rough idea of what to do building on previous but incomplete knowledge. Learning was the byproduct, and embodied in the act, of trying to fix the problem.
- V2 Being shown how to use technology by someone who is competent but not feeling confident or competent. Then being thrown in at the deep end trying to deliver a coaching session with things going wrong but being supported and eventually working out what has to be done and surviving. Learning was embodied in the act of engaging with and completing the task and reflecting upon it.
- V3 Watching and listening to a group of men at work and interpreting where they come from and their social order. Learning was embedded in the act of attending to the social interactions of the group of workmen and reflecting on and interpreting what was seen and heard.
- V4 Conducting background research on a topic that was not previously known and the preparation of a synthesising White Paper. Learning was embedded in the process of seeking out new codified knowledge and connecting and integrating it with existing personal knowledge. It is embodied in the artifact which others can read.
- V5 Discovering new facts in YouTube interview clips about musicians whose music was enjoyed as a teen. And codifying the facts in the emails and links sent to and discussed with former school friends.
- V6 Trying to fix problems relating to a computer and some software. Searching for 'how to do it' information on YouTube and applying the knowledge that had been found to the problem and after much trial and error discovering that the problems had been solved.
- V7 Finding and copying a recipe from a YouTube video. Learning was embodied in the act of searching for new information relevant to problem, connecting it to what was previously known and applying the knowledge to the problem, cooking the meal and discovering that the recipe worked.
- V8 Soliciting and gaining feedback from a family member to improve performance recognising the value in the advice and using the feedback. Learning was embedded in recognising the wisdom in the advice (reinforcing what was already known) and applying it to the artefact that had been these vignettes created.

V9 Building a small team, planning and designing a process together and learning how to facilitate to gain the desired results. Learning was embodied in the numerous interactions, conversations and negotiations and creating the artefacts that were produced to develop and share ideas. The result of learning how to do it were displayed in the successful process of implementation.

V10 Discovering more about the person who had died and observing and marvelling at the resilience and fortitude of family members. Learning was embedded in the act of paying attention (observing and listening) to the family and interpreting what was seen and heard.

Knowledge and knowing in the context of lifewide learning

In academic contexts knowledge is mainly acquired through studying textbooks and journal articles. This is called explicit knowledge. It can be articulated into formal language, including grammatical statements (words and numbers), mathematical expressions, specifications, manuals, etc. More recently a combination of video and audio can be used as a medium to communicate explicit knowledge.

In lifewide learning the sources and nature of knowledge are more diverse and much of the knowledge that is used in learning is not derived from explicit sources, mostly it is tacit personal and subjective knowledge embedded in individual experience and involving such things as personal beliefs, values, perspectives bias and prejudice. Before tacit knowledge can be communicated, it must be converted into words, models, or numbers that can be understood. The vignettes are our attempt to convert personal tacit knowledge gained from experience into narratives that can be shared and understood.

In the sample of 10 vignettes all the vignettes involved the acquisition of some form(s) of knowledge. Only one vignette used explicit text-based sources of knowledge (V4), two vignettes drew on explicit knowledge from YouTube video content (V6 & 7), one drew on the tacit knowledge of a musician talking about another musician in a YouTube video recording (V5), two gained tacit knowledge from family members (V8 & 10), two gained tacit/embodied knowledge from work colleagues (V2 & 9) and two gained knowledge from observing situations (V3 & 10). Five of the vignettes used knowledge that was only accessible in the particular situation (V2, 3, 8, 9 & 10).

The vignettes also reveal that although we might have enough knowledge to start acting in a situation where we are not certain what the outcome will be, ie we can assess a situation and what it might mean for our participation in it, we do so in the belief that by acting we will gain new knowledge and understanding ie. our participation will enable us to come to know (V1, 2 & 4 provide examples).

Conceptions of learning

Säljö (1979) surveyed a group of mature students to understand what learning meant to them. He identified five conceptions of learning (Table 2 concepts 1 to 5). A sixth conception emerged from a six-year longitudinal study of adult students by Marton, Dall'Alba and Beaty (1993) (Table 2 concept 6). The six conceptions of learning can be said to be part of a developmental hierarchy in the sense of "epistemological growth", that runs in increasing order from the first to the sixth. The first conception corresponds to the lowest developmental stage and views learning is a thing, while conceptions 2-6 view learning as a process. Conceptions 4, 5 and 6 look to the 'internal' suggest that learning is seen as something that you do to understand the world and the highest levels (5&6) bring the idea of transformation into play.

Table 2 attempts to relate possible conceptions of learning that are represented in the sample of 10 vignettes with the conceptions of learning defined by Säljö (1979) conception 6 developed by Marton, Dall'Alba and Beaty (1993). All the vignettes involve a quantitative increase in knowledge. One

involves learning to memorise and then embody procedures in action. Five of the vignettes describe the gathering of information in order to use it to do and achieve something. Six of the vignettes seem to be extracting meaning from a situation. One involves reinterpreting existing knowledge to comprehend the world differently, and one is engaged in a process where the extraction of meaning is associated with changing self. Two vignettes do not seem to fit neatly into the conceptual categories V1 and V9.

Table 2 Left column - conceptions of learning. 1 to 5 developed by Säljö (1979) conception 6 developed by Marton et al (1993). Right column - best fit of conception of learning to situations described in the sample of 10 vignettes.

Experience refers to a concrete reality in relation to a specific situation or content, and conceptions corresponding more to a general idea of what we know about our experience (Marton, 1983)

CONCEPTS OF LEARNING	EXPERIENCES WITHIN WHICH LEARNING IS EMBEDDED
1 Learning as a quantitative increase in knowledge. Learning is acquiring information.	All vignettes involved acquiring various forms of knowledge
2 Learning as memorising. Learning is storing information that can be reproduced.	Perhaps the need to memorise procedures is apparent in V2
3 Learning as acquiring facts, skills, and methods that can be used as necessary.	V4, V5, V6, V7, V8 – acquired information that is relevant & useful to a specific situation
4 Learning as making sense or abstracting meaning. Learning involves relating parts of the subject matter to each other and to the real world.	V3? V4, V5, V8, V9, V10
5 Learning as interpreting and understanding reality in a different way. Learning involves comprehending the world by reinterpreting knowledge	V4
6 Learning as personal development resulting from new understandings or appreciations, seeing the world differently.	V10 But perhaps all of the vignettes contribute in small ways to the development of the person in the sense that the person knew and or could do something that they couldn't before.

Lifeworld domains provide a personally constructed framework for experiential learning

In our inquiry we tried to anticipate the idea that learning was relational, situational/contextual by encouraging participants to recognise the domains (or environments) within which their experiences occurred. *[Experiential domain - a recognisable part of our life in which we spend time doing particular things, with particular people, often in particular places, using particular tools and other objects. Through these experiences we learn, develop and achieve in ways that are consistent with who we are and our past history of experiences in that domain.]*

Most participants tried to use this idea and a synthesis of all the domains cited in all the vignettes is shown in Figure 4. In addition to the physical, social and virtual environments recognised the synthesis reveals the category of a self-domain, which it can be argued, is the inner psychological and cognitive environment of a person. This pattern of interaction between self- and environment is consistent with Dewey's transactional / interactional model of human experience within which learning emerges (to be discussed later).

Figure 4 Synthesis of domain categories cited in 150 vignettes

		vignettes		vignettes
Inner Environment	Self	43	ENVIRONMENT	Work/professional life/practice
	beliefs, values, concerns, conscience, identities, confidence, agency, culture, spirituality, creativity, relatedness, belonging, loss, fortitude, resilience, growth & MUCH MORE			Family, friends, community
				Home /garden /environs
Outer Environment	Work/professional life/practice	43	Hobbies/interests/leisure activities	15
	Family, friends, community	32	Virtual / technological	10
	Home /garden / environs	28	Travel / other cultures	06
	Hobbies/interests/leisure activities	15	Formal study	01
	Virtual / technological	10		

The magical ability to transcend a physical environment

The vignettes reveal that we can be physically present in an experiential domain (for example taking a walk in the countryside) but be cognitively and psychologically engaged in thinking about experiences in an entirely different part of our life, either in the present, future or past. In other words our capacity to think and imagine is not constrained by a particular physical environment.

The magical ability to extend ourselves into our environments using tools

The vignettes reveal that we are able to extend ourselves into and interact with our environment using tools and technologies we have made. This includes physical tools like screw drivers, technological tools like computers, internet and conceptual aids that enable us to think. Furthermore, the making of tools (like the tool being developed and piloted here) is an important site for learning.

The making of artefacts

We can extend this reasoning to the making of artefacts. Making something embodies what a person knows. The vignettes are an artefact that every participant made during the Learning Lives inquiry. Furthermore several of the vignettes describe the making of artefacts (V4,7 & 9).

The outcomes and means of learning are inseparable

Marton (1988) argues that what is learned (the outcome or the result) and how it is learned (the act or the process) are two inseparable aspects of learning. A person’s ways of learning and understanding of what their learning means is bound up in the relationships between themselves and certain aspects of the world around them and any attempt to understand learning has to focus on these relationships as a whole and not on the individuals alone (see discussion on contexts). This relational view of learning opens up the possibilities of viewing learning as an ecological (relational, interactional and interdependent phenomenon) which will be considered later.

The will to learn grows out of the will to respond to or interact with the world

The vignettes show that the desire to learn often does not proceed action in the lifewide learning context. Rather, what emerges is a need to do or accomplish something, for example cook a meal, fix a broken electrical tool or a computer that isn’t working, work out how to use a piece of software, or try to form a professional relationship. Decisions are taken on how to act and learning is a consequence of actions that were motivated by the perception of need and recognition of opportunity, or perhaps expressed another way by the realisation that there is affordance in a situation for learning. The learning that is revealed in the vignette is bound up with the individual’s relationships with aspects of their world and themselves, and their sense of what will or might change as a result of their interactions.

Learning by doing or trying to do

Clearly, these vignettes place us in the practical and conceptual territory of learning by doing, which connects us to educational theorist John Dewey. For Dewey experience is always a dynamic two-way process. He referred to this process as a 'transaction': 'An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between the individual and, what at the time, constitutes the environment' (Dewey, 1938: 43).

"When we experience something we act upon it, we do something; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing and then it does something to us in return: such is the peculiar combination. The connection of these two phases of experience measures the fruitfulness of experience. Mere activity does not constitute experience." (Dewey, 1916: 104).

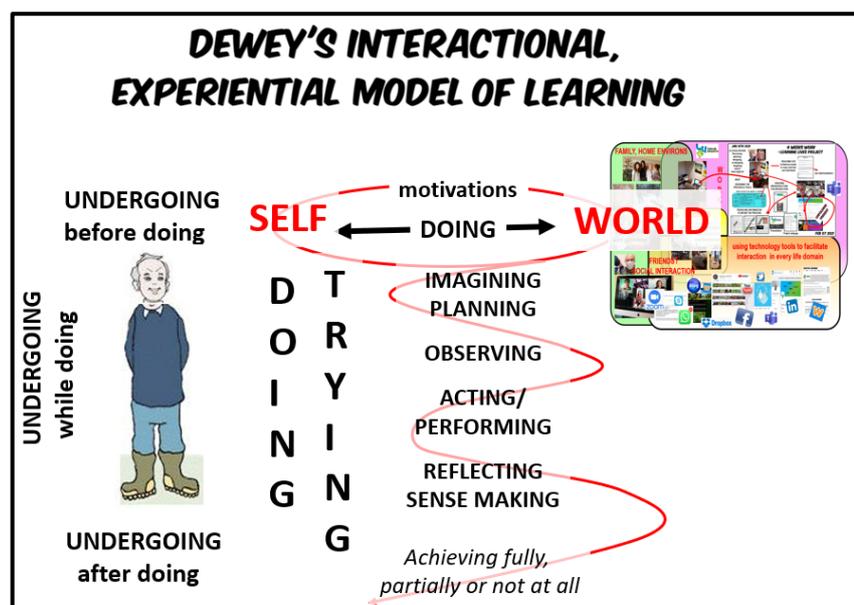
Dewey elaborates on this two-way process, suggesting that experience involves both 'trying' and 'undergoing' (Dewey, 1916: 104). 'Trying' refers to the outward expression of intention or action. It is the purposeful engagement of the individual with their environment or in Dewey's words, "doing becomes trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like" (ibid). Through action an attempt is made to have an impact on the world. 'Undergoing', the other aspect of the 'transaction' in experience, refers to the consequences of experience on the individual. In turn, in attempting to have an impact, the experience also impacts on us. 'Undergoing' refers to the consequences of the experience for us (Ord 2012 p60).

But what constitutes experience? Garforth (1966) argues that Dewey comprehends experience in its most holistic way.

"He [Dewey] does not mean by this [experience] the stored up product of the past; nor does he mean simply the immediacy of the experienced present; nor the mere acceptance of environmental impact by a passive recipient; nor does he contrast experience with thought or reason. Experience is continuous from past through present to future; it is not static but dynamic, moving, in process." (Garforth, 1966: 13).

A visual representation of Dewey's transactional / interactional model of human experience is shown in Figure 5, using myself and my experiential domains as the subject (self) and the world that has meaning to me.

Figure 5 Summary of Dewey's transactional / interactional model of human experience within which learning emerges as we try to do something and undergo in the process.



An ecological perspective on learning

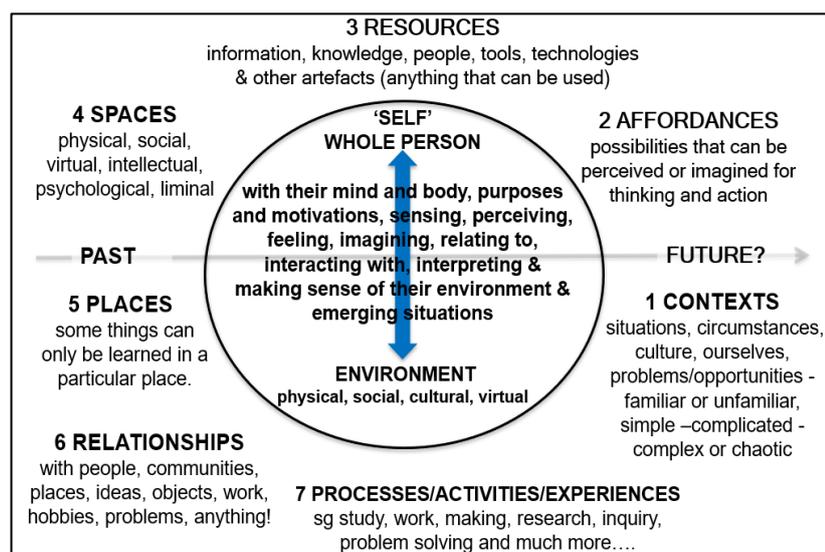
The inquiry has reinforced the view that learning across the whole of a person's life is a situated and relational phenomenon. We are related to the environment and contexts in which we are learning through the spaces and places we inhabit, to the situations we encounter or create and to our reasons for being in these situations. We may have particular relationships with particular people or things in our environment and we may search for, find and use particular information or things to achieve something we or others value. We, our environment and our purposes are interdependent and once we start interacting with our environment our need or opportunity to learn simply emerges through our actions and interactions. As anthropologist Tim Ingold says, "organism plus environment' should denote not a compound of two things, but one indivisible totality" (Ingold 2000 p.16). However, our ability to perceive an opportunity for learning as it emerges is related to our past experiences and learning and our awareness, but whether we act on such affordances is a matter of will - without will, there can be no learning (Barnett 2007). But inquiry has shown that in the first instance will is directed to action in order to satisfy needs, desires, ambitions, interests, curiosity, self-esteem, a sense of relatedness or belonging and all manner of things and the will to learn grows out of and is embedded in these motives and actions

Seeing learning as an interactional phenomenon in which emerges as people interact with their environments lends itself to the idea that learning is an ecological phenomenon. The ecological perspective on learning sees learning and practice (or actions) that results in learning, as a consequence of individuals and groups of people relating to and interacting with their environment in purposeful/ intentional ways. Figure 6 attempts to synthesise the elements contained in an ecology for learning (or of practice or action that requires learning) (Jackson 2016,2019,2020) and create a model that can be used to interpret a significant learning experience.

Figure 6 Learning and practice ecology (Jackson 2016, 2019, 2020). The labels (1–7) explain the key dimensions of the ecology as a person senses, perceives and interacts with their environment.

This model of an ecology for learning embraces all three themes in the ecological world view of life - wholeness, relationships and continual formation. It relates a whole thinking, feeling, acting, caring person to their environments.

It includes the person's needs, interests, desires, perplexities and curiosities and what they are trying to achieve in the particular contexts and situations in which they are acting. Learning and achievement emerge through meaningful interaction.

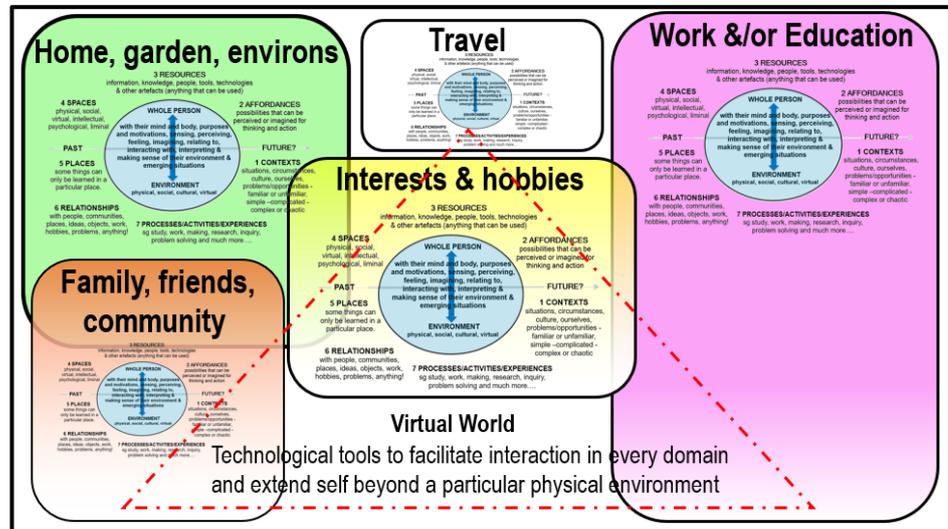


We are the orchestrators, facilitators and integrators of our own learning life

The ecological world view is an expression of wholeness and relatedness. Ecologies for learning and practice have both temporal and spatial dimensions. They enable whole people to connect and integrate different spaces, resources, tools, situations, relationships, activities, and themselves in ways that they find meaningful and effect various transformations (personal, material, and virtual). They also enable people to connect and integrate their past, present, and future, and connect thoughts and actions experienced in a moment and organise them into more significant experiences of thinking and action. They are the means by which people weave their moments into the fabric of a whole meaningful life. The components of an ecology for learning, summarised in the diagram, are woven together by the maker in a part deliberate, part opportunistic act of

trying to achieve something and learning in the process. Learning emerges through this act of weaving and making sense of what it emerges.

Figure 7 Representation of the way our ecologies for learning and practice are embedded in any significant project that involves learning regardless of the experiential domain we are inhabiting.



The inquiry has, for me, reinforced the idea that an ecological perspective is necessary in order to understand how we relate to and interact with the world that has meaning to us. Even though it was not the purpose of this inquiry to explore the relevance of the ecological model for lifewide learning, I conclude this initial working paper with Figure 7 which makes explicit the idea that whenever we are involved in any significant project or practise that involves learning, in any of the environmental domains we inhabit, we create an ecology for learning and action. This idea is perhaps something we can explore in a future inquiry which focuses on more deliberate and sustained forms of learning in the lifewide context.

Acknowledgements

I am truly grateful to everyone who participated in the Learning Lives Inquiry who generously shared their narratives about learning in and through their everyday experiences. It was an amazing experience to be amongst such a supportive, respectful and committed community. Quite apart from the wonderful experience of participating in the inquiry with people who care about these ideas and practices, it is only through such generous and sensitive collaboration that we can advance our understandings.

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Appendix 1 Key features of lifewide learning identified the first 10 vignettes.

Vignette	CS - Context & Situation ED – Environmental Domain I/S – Individual or social activity T/P/I Task, Project or Incidental KS – Knowledge source TS – Time Scale M= Motivation concrete/obvious ERG = Alderfer’s motivational model Existence, Relatedness, Growth	What does learning mean? What does it mean to learn in the contexts being described
#1	CS - Fixing something that isn’t working. ED – Home/Garden I/S – Individual T/P/I – Incidental KS – Past experience & from tinkering with the object TS – A few minutes M - Need – I need the tool to work M Self-esteem – feels good to be able to fix it ERG = Existence & relatedness	Having a rough idea of what to do. Doing it and discovering it worked. Learning was the biproduct of trying to fix the problem and was embodied in the act.
#2	CS – Pushing self to try new techniques ED – Work I/S – Individual & social T/P/I - Task KS – Coached by knowledgeable peers and in the act of trying to accomplish the task TS – A few hours M – Desire to develop self M – Self-esteem – it feels good to use this environment effectively and add to my professional capability ERG – Growth & relatedness	Being shown how to use technology but not feeling confident or competent. Then being thrown in at the deep end with things going wrong but being supported and eventually surviving. Learning was embodied in the act of trying to use the technology in both preparing for and delivering an online coaching session and reflecting on the experience.
#3	CS – Observing and interpreting the world ED – Home/Garden I/S – Individual T/P/I – Incidental KS – Observing others & connecting to personal knowledge TS – A few minutes M – Curiosity and interest ERG – Relatedness?	Watching and listening to a group of men at work and interpreting where they come from and their social order. Learning was embedded in the act of paying attention to the social interactions of the group of workmen and reflecting on what was seen and heard.
#4	CS – Advancing thinking through writing ED – Work I/S – Individual T/P/I – Project KS – Published UNESCO reports & book/journal articles TS - Several weeks M – Curiosity and desire to learn M – Desire to influence others & build relationships M – Esteem of self and organisation ERG – Growth & relatedness (ideas)	Background research and preparation of a White Paper on the theme of “Enriching and Vivifying the Concept of Lifelong Learning through lifewide learning and ecologies for learning & practice”. Learning was embedded in the process of seeking out new codified knowledge and connecting and integrating it with existing personal knowledge. It is embodied in the artifact which others can read.
#5	CS – Sustaining conversations with some school friends ED – Friends/technology assisted social interaction I/S – Individual T/P/I – Incidental KS – Video recording tacit knowledge of musician who played with a famous singer - interview on YouTube TS – An hour M – Remembering my past and improving my knowledge of the past – renewing self/identity ERG – Relatedness	Discovering new facts about musicians we enjoyed listening to in my youth. What was learnt was codified in the emails and links sent to my friends.
#6	CS – Fixing problems with computer software 1) for work context 2) in order to play music with friend ED - Home & Interests	Internet searching for and eventually finding solutions. Learning was embodied in the act of searching for new information relevant to problem and applying the knowledge

	<p>I/S – Individual / social (youtube video by someone) T/P/I – Task KS – Videos showing how to solve problems YouTube TS – hours spread over days M – need to have a fully functioning computer and needing to connect to someone to play music together ERG- 1) Existence 2) Relatedness</p>	<p>to the problem and eventually discovering that the problem was solved.</p>
#7	<p>CS – Making a meal ED – Home/kitchen I/S – Individual T/P/I – Task KS -YouTube video TS - Minutes M - Need to learn something quickly (just in time) ERG – Existence</p>	<p>Finding and copying a recipe. Learning was embodied in the act of searching for new information relevant to problem and applying the knowledge to the problem, cooking the meal and discovering that the recipe worked.</p>
#8	<p>CS – Writing a post for a prestigious organisational blog ED – Home / work I/S – Social T/P/I – Incidental KS – Perspective of a family member TS - minutes M – Need for another perspective ERG – Relatedness</p>	<p>Gaining feedback from a family member to improve performance recognising the value in the advice and using the feedback. Learning was embedded in recognising the wisdom in the advice and applying it to the artefact that had been created.</p>
#9	<p>CS – Designing and facilitating a learning process ED – Work I/S – Individual & Social T/P/I- Project KS – Knowledge distributed between 3 members of team TS – Several weeks M – Need/desire/ambition to engage/promote ideas M Professional challenge (esteem) ERG – Relatedness & growth</p>	<p>Interactions within a small team, planning and designing a process together and learning how to facilitate a process to gain the desired results. Learning was embodied in the numerous social interactions and the artefacts that were produced to develop and share ideas. The result of learning how to do it were displayed in successful implementation.</p>
#10	<p>CS – Attending a family funeral ED – Family / ceremony I/S – Individual & social T/P/I – Incidental KS – Observing family interactions during funeral ceremony TS – Hours M – Need/desire to belong to and support family ERG – Relatedness & growth</p>	<p>Discovering more about the person who had died and marvelling at resilience and fortitude of the family. Learning was embedded in the act of paying attention (observing and listening) to the social interactions of the group of workmen and reflecting on and interpreting what was seen and heard.</p>

APPENDIX 2 ALDERFER'S ERG THEORY Extract from

Cheng-Liang Yang, Mark Hwang and Ya-Chien Chen (2011) An empirical study of the existence, relatedness, and growth (ERG) theory in consumer's selection of mobile value-added services. *African Journal of Business Management* Vol. 5(19), pp. 7885-7898,9 Available online at <http://www.academicjournals.org/AJBM>

Maslow (1954) proposed the hierarchy of human needs in five levels of basic needs as, physiological needs, safety needs, needs for love, affection and belonging, needs for esteem, and needs for self-actualization. Alderfer (1969) expanded Maslow's basic needs and refined them into existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs. Alderfer proposed the ERG theory based on results of empirical studies to explain the relationship between satisfaction of needs and human desires. His theory was backed by further empirical study (Robbins and Judge, 2008; Schneider and Alderfer, 1973).

Existence needs

Existence needs include various forms of safety, physiological and material needs. Safety needs mainly refer to the prevention from fear, anxiety, threat, danger, tension, and so on. Physiological needs refer to an individual's pursuit of satisfaction at the vitality level, such as leisure, exercise, sleep. Material needs refer to resources required for an individual's living, including food and clothing [and the maintenance of tools they need for their day to day existence or wellbeing].

Relatedness needs

Relatedness needs include senses of security, belonging, and respect. Sense of security involves the mutual trust of humanity. Sense of belonging refers to prevention from all forms of suffering, such as isolation, loneliness and distance. People normally wish to be accepted and become members of a . The needs for belongingness include love given to others or caring accepted from others. Sense of respect simply means feeling of respect from others, such as popularity, social status, superiority, importance and compliment. Such form of need gives people value to their existence.

Growth needs

Growth needs involve needs for self-esteem and self-actualization. The need for self-esteem refers to self-productive effects such as the ability to pursue, to seek knowledge, to achieve, to control, to build confidence, to be independent and to feel competent. Self-actualization refers to self-accomplishments including achieving an individual's goals and developing his or her personality. The abilities to realize one's potentials and to support the growth of others are also included. [Individuals' creativity projects are often included in this category].

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