

Proposal Title: (Re)Centering as a Way of Being and Becoming

Format: Critical Dialogue PechaKucha

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Knowledge is not enough, but rather that the professional ways of being needs to have 'becoming' at the center (Dall'Alba, 2009). Situated in the Centre for Learning Teaching and Development (CLTD) at Wits University, we, the Curriculum and Teaching team understand that offering professional learning opportunities to academic teachers is a process that involves knowing, doing and being. We, further understand that this by necessity entails being and becoming reflexive, critical, and authentic practitioners ourselves.

We use the notion of 'being' and 'becoming' as advocated by Barnett (2009) to reflect on recentring the Being and Becoming of the team as well as the individual self during lockdown and how that shaped (or could possibly shape) our professional becoming beyond the pandemic. In capturing the waves of our stories, we use the PechaKucha (visual storytelling) method. As a team we had to work with our individual and collective emotions, insecurities, and fears in relation to the unexpected changing roles that COVID 19 surfaced. This began to include shifts to consultations on online course design and the increased need to become Ulwazi (LMS) experts. In that process, our being (as individuals within the team) took a hard knock as some of us tested covid positive and others had to deal with fears and concerns about their own health. The deep insecurity, fragility, ill health and loss of lives and livelihoods that followed the covid-19 lockdown left us feeling vulnerable and exhausted. Despite being fatigued and traumatised, we came together stronger as the collective and strategically responded by recentring our focus, goals, and aspirations to raise the value of the academic development project carried out by the team. We forged ahead, becoming responsive professionals ready to embrace ever changing contexts, disciplines and curricula that are, what Dube (2021) would call, "more epistemologically and ontologically open".

With re-centering playing a major role in our personal and professional shifts as individuals and a collective, we engage in Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to uncover some of the tensions that hampered our work, so that we transform to new ways of doing and being. We invite you to theorise some of the remaining tensions that we continue to grapple with, viz;

1. How do we plan for uncertainty in our approaches and practices in the AD space?
2. If flexibility in terms of learning offerings were required, how would we build flexibility into curriculum design, given increased workloads, large class size and support needs?
3. What would learning pathways look like for AD practitioners?

We propose to engage in a critical dialogue with participants to share their being and becoming shifts during these COVID moments.

Keywords: covid-19 lockdown, curriculum and teaching, professional learning, recentering being and becoming

References

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