

Focus for human thinking and action

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In the space lies our freedom and power to choose our response. In those choices lie our growth and our happiness.'

Stephen Covey 8th Habit of Highly Effective People

What people do in this space - Michael Eraut (1997)

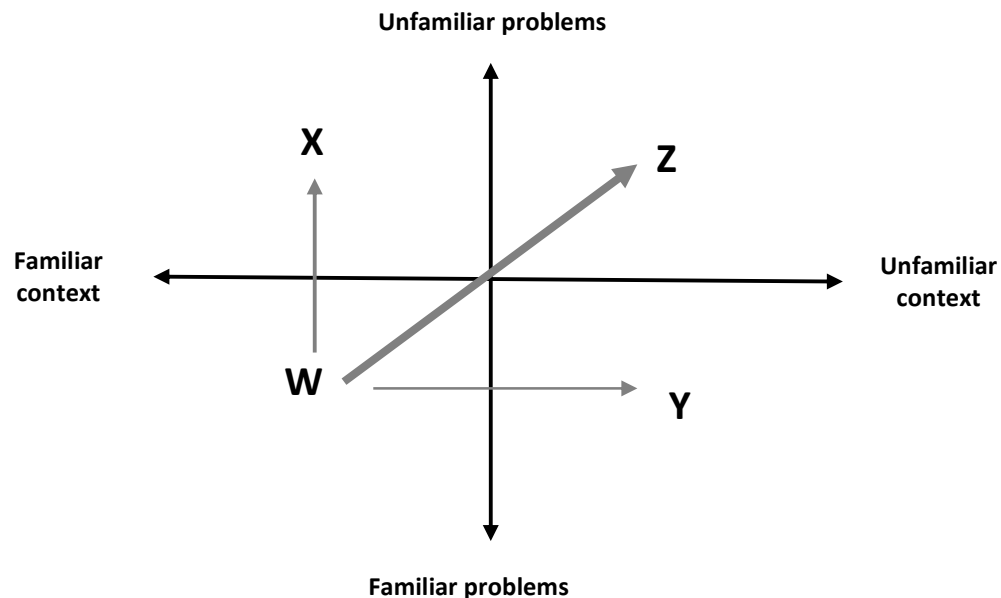
- Assess situations
- Decide what, if any, action to take
- Pursue an agreed course of action reassessing when necessary
- Metacognitive monitoring of situation; and reflect on experience and outcomes

What people need to function in this space is capability to think and act *Michael Eraut (1997)*

Capability - what individuals bring to a situation that enables them to think, act and perform

Capability is a set of functionings reflecting the person's freedom to lead one type of life or another.. Our capability represents 'the real opportunity that we have to accomplish what we value' *Amartya Sen (1992)*

Fig 1 Relationship between capability and context (adapted from Stephenson 1998:5). Letters indicate possible scenarios.



DISCUSSION 1 Personal transformative learning

THINKING 5 mins individually

Think of a time/situation where you have been in a situation where the contexts and problems/challenges/ opportunities were unfamiliar.

In the space below describe the situation and what personal changes you had to make—what sorts of things did you have to learn/unlearn

DISCUSSION 5mins in pairs

Briefly describe your situations and see if you can identify anything that was common to your experiences of personal transformation. **One person to record these points below.**

Life Space/Place Map : Opportunities and choices for learning & development

Take a few minutes to think about your life and identify the spaces/places you inhabit. 1) name them 2) record who you share those spaces with (significant others) and 3) briefly describe what you do in each space/place

Work *What I do, who I do it with, how much time I spend, how I am learning and developing*



Home/family *What I do, who I do it with, how much time I spend, how I am learning and developing*

Other

Other

Other

Other

other

Appreciative enquiry

Narrator briefly describes spaces he or she occupies in their life and what they do in that space and who they relate to in that space

Interviewer - as each space is described the interviewer asks these questions and records answers in the appropriate field

- What do you need to know and be able to do to be effective/successful/fulfilled in that space/place?
- How do you develop the knowledge and capability that is necessary to be effective, successful and fulfilled?

Work *What I do, who I do it with, how much time I spend, how I am learning and developing*

Home/family
What I do, who I do it with, how much time I spend, how I am learning and developing



Other

other

Other

Other

other

Is self-authorship an appropriate concept for effective PDP/employability practice?

To be successful and fulfilled in life we have to develop ourselves so that we are able 'to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others' (Mezirow 2000:8). This requires 'a shift from uncritical acceptance of external authority to critical analysis of authority in order to establish one's own internal authority. This internal authority is what developmental theorists call self-authorship, or the capacity to define one's beliefs, identity, and social relations (Baxter Magolda 2001, 2004, 2009; Kegan 1994).'

The development of self-authorship occurs across three dimensions and seeks to answer three related questions: How do I know? (Cognitive dimension), Who am I? [and who would I like to become?] (Intrapersonal dimension), and How am I in relationships with others? (Interpersonal dimension). Self-authorship balances the understanding that knowledge is contextual and changing rather than received and permanent, with an internally defined sense of self as the creator and user of personal knowledge, and a set of developing relationships that have the potential to influence and change the individual.

Most students entering university directly from school of college use meaning-making strategies related to following external formulas provided by their teachers for who and how they ought to be in the world. The very ideas of a discipline – requires submission to learning and being in a particular way. Becoming an independent and autonomous learner requires embarking on a journey towards self-authorship.

The Learning Partnerships Model (Baxter Magolda, 2004) has been shown to be an effective way of helping students move toward developing self-authorship. It is based on three principles: 1) Validate learner's capacity as knowledge constructors, 2) Situate learning in learner's experience, and 3) Define learning as mutually constructing meaning. With an appropriate pedagogic framework, a teacher, mentor or other guide who meets with students can 1) validate their ability to construct their own knowledge 2) help them understand the wealth of learning that has already been situated in their past experiences and identities and 3) help them understand their role in learning with others.

Selected references

- Baxter Magolda, M. B. 2001. *Making their own way: Narratives for transforming higher education to promote self-development*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Baxter Magolda, M. B. (2004) Learning Partnerships Model: A framework for promoting self-authorship. In *Learning partnerships: Theory and models of practice to educate for self-authorship*, eds. M. B. Baxter Magolda and P. M. King, 37–62. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Baxter Magolda, M. B (2009) *Authoring your life: Developing an internal voice to navigate life's challenges*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Hodge D. C., Baxter Magolda, M. B. and Haynes C. A. (2010) Engaged Learning: Enabling Self-Authorship and Effective Practice *Liberal Education*, Vol. 95, No. 4
- Available on-line at: http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/le-fa09/le-fa09_EngagedLearn.cfm
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In 4's x 10mins

1) Do you recognise your own journey to self-authorship?

2) Is self-authorship a useful concept for PDP? YES/NO Why?

3) To what extent do our PDP frameworks and practices encourage, enable and empower learners to appreciate and move towards self-authorship? What would need to be changed for our practice to become even more effective to achieve this objective?

Principles to support self-authorship:

- 1) Validate learner's capacity as knowledge constructors,
- 2) Situate learning in learner's experience,
- 3) Define learning as mutually constructing meaning.

With an appropriate pedagogic framework, a teacher, mentor or other guide who meets with students can 1) validate their ability to construct their own knowledge 2) help them understand the wealth of learning that has already been situated in their past experiences and identities and 3) help them understand their role in learning with others.