Peace4Youth

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WHAT IS THIS PEACE?

An Examination of the Impact and Legacy of Conflict, Theory and Practice of Peacebuilding

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Introduction

The EU PEACE IV funded Peace4Youth Programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) uses a youth work approach to address some of the most entrenched insecurities, inequalities and instability in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland, targeting 7600 young people aged 14-24 over a 4 year period (2017-2021) who are disadvantaged, excluded or marginalised, have deep social and emotional needs and are at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour, violence or dissident activity.

YouthPact, the Quality and Impact Body for the Peace4Youth element of the Programme works with the funded projects to promote and support a culture of continuous improvement and to provide training and resources that enhance the impact of the work for participating young people.

The focus of the work is on good relations, personal development and citizenship, which will bring about a positive change in the form of clear, meaningful and sustainable 'distance travelled' for those young people who participate.

The overall Peace4Youth programme aims to enhance the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background and make a positive contribution to building a cohesive society. It will result in an increase in the percentage of 16 year olds, who socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community; who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better than they were five years ago; and who think relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in five years' time.[1]

This paper reviews the literature on peacebuilding, community relations and youth work, interrogating the many concepts and approaches in these complex areas, with special regard for the influence of conflict on the lives of young people. The intention here is to highlight theory and practice perspectives from writers and thinkers, in order to extract ideas to enhance the peacebuilding content and approaches used across the Peace4Youth workforce and stakeholders.

[1] Northern Ireland Young Life and Times Survey (2015)

Chapter 1
A youth work approach to peacebuilding

A Youth Work Approach

Youth work is at the intersection of art and applied science, occupying a space that is creative, innovative and adaptable. Youth workers employ tried and tested methodologies underpinned by common principles. The adaptability and flexibility of the youth work profession is both its strength and its weakness. Harrison and Wise note,

> *"...youth workers are not specialists, they are the last of the generalists and they should be proud of this. Educational establishments such as schools, colleges and universities offer fixed curriculum and a system that takes the learners through it. Youth work is different, youth work starts where young people are at..."*
>
> **(Harrison and Wise, 2005: 14).**

Youth work as an educational intervention is often realised through informal, conversational and critical approaches (Batsleer and Davies, 2010). Wylie (2016) emphasises that while youth work has an educational purpose this is primarily about learning – such as learning to grow up. Such educational approaches refute the 'banking model' of education whereby learning is poured into 'an empty vessel' (Freire, 1972). Rather educational approaches can adopt a critical conversational education and problem-solving approach between young people and 'teachers' as equals with unique insights and perspectives. This is significant in how youth work initiates conversations pertinent to on-going community divisions and sectarian attitudes and behaviours. Such a perspective is best described by Freire (1972) who adopts interventions which encourage questioning and critical pedagogy to advance social change (Batsleer and Davies, 2010:35). In this way Jeffs and Smith (2010) emphasise the role of the youth worker in assisting with the process of 'conscientization' where young people enter a historical process critically and develop confidence for collective action. This is relevant in how young people form part of a collective change process in Northern Ireland.

Since the beginnings of the profession there have been varied ideologies that have driven individuals to engage in the emerging profession of youth work. The purposeful interventions both from individuals and the formation of organisations with a focus on responding to 'oppressive and destructive conditions of existence', places youth work in the professional histories of social work and education. (Gilchrist, Jeffs and Spence 2003 p11) While these histories are relatable and important, what is more important are the distinct features of youth work and the approaches used to work with young people. Young, describes youth work,

> *"Education is the business of youth work. Enabling and supporting young people, at a critical moment in their lives, to learn and develop the capacities to reflect, to reason and to act as social beings in the social world. Not in any way they choose, but in accordance with the state of 'good faith' to which all human beings aspire. That state of living a life true to oneself."*
>
> **(Young, 1999:1).**

Young's definition is interesting for its acknowledgement that young people are social agents, not just individuals inhabiting a particular moment of the lifespan, and that the educational perspective of youth work involves invoking a set of ideals that transcend personal 'needs'.

The Peace4Youth programme provides the opportunity for young people to explore their values, make reasoned choices and take action on matters that are important to them, through the vehicle of the youth work approach.

Historically, the development of youth work in Northern Ireland has necessarily been responsive to the troubles, at times keeping young people safe in a potentially life-threatening situation and giving young people an alternative to pressures in their communities to become involved in paramilitary groups. Since the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement and the relative peace since 1998, this commitment has changed shape to adapt to this new reality, with peacebuilding and good relations as the new focus.

The literature presented will outline and explore the complexities of the current context in which young people and youth workers operate.

Three themes for change in Peace4Youth

In order to bring about the desired change three outcome areas with associated indicators are used in achieving the overall objective for Peace4Youth.[2]

There are three foundational outcome areas:

- Personal Development
- Good Relations
- Citizenship

It is worth stating from the outset that while there are three themes each is interdependent and the delivery of the work in relation to each outcome area does not take place in a silo, Davies and Merton (2009) make the point in relation to the distinctiveness of practice that although outcomes may be discussed as a separate entity the strength is in the way in which they are used together, they state:

> *"in the realities of everyday practice, each of course is closely inter-connected and interdependent within a holistic style of work: that is, it is their operation as a configuration which makes the practice distinctive."*
>
> **(Davies and Merton 2009: 11)**

Arguably, having preset outcome areas could undermine the value and potential impact of the youth work approach. Indeed Taylor (2017) challenges us to ensure that within the constraints of preset outcome areas the fidelity to informal education approaches is maintained.

> *"When the power to define the priorities of youth work is located outside the setting of everyday practice, non-formal education is promoted because it provides a framework to facilitate processes of accountability evidenced through targets, strategies and outcomes.*
>
> *"However, non-formal education relies upon the informality of youth work relationship building for its success, especially with those young people who are targeted because of exclusion or disaffection."*

(Taylor, 2017: 24)

For change to be accelerated and explicit for young people, a balance of support and challenge provides a secure learning environment. Informality coupled with clarity of purpose offers youth workers a clear approach which fits within the ethics of youth work practice. Essentially, youth-led practices can build a greater sense of collective and individual ownership of the process and the project; with greater potential for transformative outcomes. The interplay of this youth work approach with these three core outcome areas are the foundation for the Peace4Youth model.

[2] An increase in the percentage of 16 year olds, who socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community; who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better than they were five years ago; and who think relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in five years' time. Northern Ireland Young Life and Times Survey 2015.

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Personal Development

Personal development is a broad term to identify activities which enhances or reveals a person's talents, build greater self-awareness, enhance skills and to identify and achieve personal goals. Personal and social development is a concept that youth workers in Northern Ireland are familiar with given that it is the central theme in the Youth Work Curriculum, Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice (2003).

The nature of personal development places the individual young person at the centre of the process that values the individual for who they are and not just what they can do. As well as holding the intrinsic value of the young person and their starting point there is also a commitment to 'going beyond' the starting point, Davies and Merton (2009). The youth work approach with skilled workers creates an environment where each young person can value themselves and others, acknowledging differences and strengths. The antithesis of this work is sameness. The philosopher Gadamer (1979) talks about the limit of our own horizons and that to grow we must be able to recognise the horizons of others, different to our own. He argues that we each bring prejudices (or pre-judgments) to encounters. We have, what he calls, our own 'horizon of understanding'. This is 'the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point'. With these pre-judgments and understandings, we involve ourselves in what is being said.

Conversation is the medium through which we discover and understand other horizons in relation to our own. Through this we put our own prejudices and understandings to the test and have opportunities within talking and listening to adjust our own horizons to consider the vantage point of others. Gadamer proposes that:

> *"We seek to discover other peoples' standpoint and horizon. By so doing we understand other views without necessarily having to agree with them."*
>
> **(Gadamer 1979: 270)**

Personal development is not a solitary isolated pursuit, but, through conversation, in contact with some other, the potential for personal growth is enhanced.

Good Relations, Community Relations, Diversity and Difference

The genesis of the concept of good relations has grown from community relations practices. Good relations considers the changing demographics across the island of Ireland and the need to develop new languages and approaches that consider how new ethnicities and communities are being embraced, accepted or rejected by indigenous communities.

Community relations is used here initially as an umbrella term housing many other concepts such as reconciliation, contact, cross-community and integration.

Community relations, as a term, rose to prominence as the intensity of the conflict and community division in Northern Ireland became more apparent in the 1970's. At this time communities were becoming more polarised from one another, with relations between the Catholic and Protestant communities being at an all-time low. This divided and unstable society presented a particular challenge to youth work which, through its inception, valued principles such as tolerance, diversity and understanding. Hughes and Knox (1997) highlight that the aim of community relations is ultimately to

> *'promote meaningful interaction between Protestants and Catholics at the inter-group level.'*
>
> **(Hughes and Knox, 1997:354)**

As the realities of a divided society became more apparent, community relations became more fore-fronted in both formal education and youth work. For example, in 1987 the publication of 'Policy for the Youth Service in Northern Ireland' placed community relations firmly on the youth work agenda where promoting greater understanding of diverse traditions and encouraging cross-community involvement were central to the core curriculum. Community relations moved from being a marginal activity to a core component within the youth work curriculum (Milliken, 2015).

The approach of community relations is influenced by the hypothesis that cross-community contact can assist in improving relations and a respect for cultural diversity (Hughes and Knox, 1997). Originally the view was accepted that inter-group hostility and consisted largely because each group (Protestant and Catholic) held inaccurate negative stereotypes or prejudiced attitudes toward the other group (ibid, 1997). By coming together through 'contact' it was assumed that individuals would recognise that they are essentially the same. However, they also suggest that this contact should not only be about similarities, but also recognising what divides them.

Hughes and Knox (1997) raise questions about this contact hypothesis as it is, firstly, based on the premise that prejudice is a lack of ignorance or understanding, and secondly, that individual impacts through 'contact' do not necessarily infiltrate back in the normative community. Thus, much of the challenge of peacebuilding work really demands a multi-layered approach involving all stakeholders within the society. Contact and integration are further explored in Chapter 3.

Since the first public statement in 1982, Community Relations policies have continued to develop and evolve in line with the changing political, economic and social environment within which education operates (both in formal and non-formal settings), as well as changes in the curriculum which offer more opportunities for children and young people to learn about difference. Throughout the 1990's and 2000's interchangeable terms with some slightly differing emphasis, also emerged in the education and youth work lexicon such as Good Relations; Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU); Equity Diversity and Interdependence (EDI); and most recently Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED).

Grattan affirms that,

> *"youth workers must engage in a real and meaningful way with how young people make sense of their world, society and community, as well as their emotions of fear, anger and hatred."*
>
> **(Grattan, 2009: 83)**

Hughes and Mc Candless (2006:162) argue, though, that much of the problem of the community relations approach is that it is often left to be solved by local communities, while the state distance itself ***'from the contribution it may have made to the perpetuation of the conflict.'*** In this way some can see it as a way of the government relinquishing its responsibility.

That said, the commitments from the Northern Ireland, British and Irish governments to promoting reconciliation and mutual trust have been well evidenced in the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement, including Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 which recognises the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance. The St Andrews Agreement (2006) further committed to continue to actively promote the advancement of human rights, equality and mutual respect (Department of Education: Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education consultation, 2010).

Wilson proposes that youth work which uses an assets-based approach, offers a method to embrace different identities:

> *"It (youth work) does not corral them (young people) into competing and often partisan political, cultural and religious traditions, especially when these same traditions promote exclusive, excluding and judgmental behaviours that work against securing a diverse and plural society."*
>
> **(2018: Essence of Youth Work Conference)**

Clement and Jones (2008) propose that a useful starting point in this process, is a recognition that difference is a reality and should not and must not be ignored. Different does not equate to 'difficult' and 'problem' and using this perspective practice can be about embracing new identities rather than tolerating difference.

In contrast to being conscious and deliberate in recognising and celebrating diversity Clement and Jones (2008) point to some difficulties for society in general, whereby continually thinking about 'difference' may detract from social cohesion and shared values.

In contrast to these ideas, Wilson's work (2015: 6) emphasises the need to 'unambiguously promote a shared society' and in doing so, the youth worker is tasked with making the values of this shared society explicit and upfront in their practices with young people and communities. These values of respect, humility and non-violence are the cornerstone towards finding space for difference in a shared society. This is best described by Van Ness & Johnstone (cited in Wilson,2015:7)

Humility includes, but is more than, the idea of not taking more credit than one should, it means having a profound awareness of the limitations of one's knowledge and understanding that it is possible to remain open to the truth that other's lives are not the same as one's own and that therefore they may have insights one does not yet possess. (Van Ness & Johnstone, 2007:19)

The practicing of these core values can open up space whereby change is felt possible. Wilson (2017) proposes the need for hope and an unshakeable belief in the possibility of a diverse and interdependent society:

"In quality community youth work practice in Northern Ireland people have learned that the slender strand of learning together, across lines of inter communal fear in the midst of conflict, is an experience to value."

(Wilson, 2017:5)

Citizenship

Drawing on the understanding of youth work that places young people as active moral agents within the communities and beyond, it is not surprising that citizenship is a core outcome in the delivery of the Peace4Youth programme.

Zeldon (2004) stresses the importance of young people being empowered and supported in undertaking new youth-adult partnerships that work to experience and realize that possibilities for change are real and realizable. He proposes that through civic engagements, adults and young people are enabled to advocate for change and to understand the complexity of social change.

In a similar vein, Wilson (2017) suggests working 'as if' change were possible in individuals, groups and societal structures, whereby he proposes 'integrating the work across relationships, supporting structural change, engaging politically and challenging civil society cultures.' The approach herein proposed is to build restorative practices and restorative communities to realise these changes:

"The restorative task requires work within adult and youth cultures that engages people with the reality of the political, public and civic spheres. This requires people to articulate the importance of building a more open society secured by the values of fairness, diversity and interdependence.

"The restorative task is about promoting and supporting any willingness to meet and engage openly and robustly. It is to never lose sight of the human cost of the recent conflict and be committed to ensuring that we never return there.

"The restorative task is to ensure that children and young people are equipped, through the governance cultures of formal and informal educational organisations, to experience being at ease with different others and, through a more restorative culture, be encouraged to put relationships right in a restorative manner rather than let relationships and grievances fester for too long."

Wilson's view is of citizenship not as an action, project or way of viewing individual identity, but of a collective way of being together, interdependent while separate, building civic communities with democracy and fairness as a guiding principle.

An appetite for peacebuilding work amongst youth workers

Wylie (2016) notes that youth work practices can provide safe spaces for experiential learning among young people. In this way young people can have new experiences which they might not otherwise have, especially with those from the 'other' community. Wylie suggests that young people, firstly, need to have relationships with other people beyond the localised community. Secondly, young people should have a relationship with a trusted adult who can push them and prompt exploratory questions such as 'why' and 'who'.

Bell et al (2010) note, that there have been a number of difficulties identified at times with some youth workers' roles in educating children and young people. A survey on 'Teenage Religion and Values' found that some youth workers, who were often volunteers with little formal training and support, felt ill-prepared to tackle issues and potential controversies.

Milliken highlights that,

> *"neutrality is an illusion and dangerous myth. Not to challenge sectarianism by neutral silence is to endorse and allow it to continue and even flourish. Silence supports sectarianism and is a pro-sectarian stance".*
>
> **(Milliken, 2015:17)**

The legacy of the conflict is arguably the most prominent feature that affects Northern Ireland, and yet the relevance, legacy and impact can at times be hard to detect at first sight. Smith and Magill (2009) affirm the need for young people to have greater awareness and sharing about multiple perspectives on the conflict. They emphasise the role and responsibility of educators to contribute to this reconciliation and believe this is a legitimate task as young people demand it.

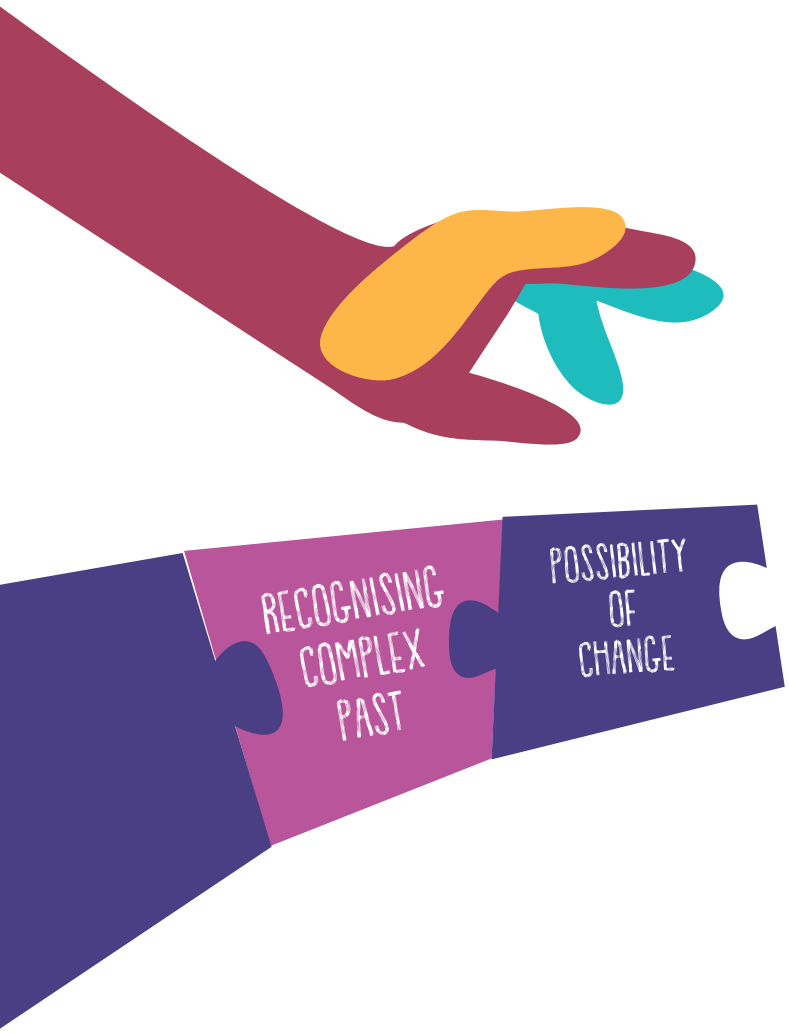
The work of Smith and Magill (2009) make it clear that young people do not want the past to be ignored, nor do they want to dwell on negative aspects of the past. Instead, they want to understand what happened and why, and how to create a more positive future. The alternative is to advocate silence and avoidance. Wilson (2015) emphasises that within a peaceful and equal society that there is no place for breeding hatred and violence towards others and that,

> *"this means that each of us, as practitioners, does not work in a manner that ignores such actions between young people or airbrushes their link to our violent past".*
>
> **(Wilson, 2015:10)**

Mc Cully (2004:27, cited in Bell et al, 2010) acknowledges that dialogue in an informal setting, however, can actually become embroiled in never–ending ***'circular arguments'.*** Harland (2011) argues that, youth workers require skills to support young people to elaborate in an un-leading way and to help young people remove the 'fuzziness' and cyclical debates on conflict and sectarianism. In this way young people can be supported to become co-investigators alongside youth workers in the search for improved understandings. Further, by meeting with young people from other communities they can move beyond circular discussion to more interaction, which provides a new basis of perception and insight. Kinesthetic models of learning, such as visiting interface divisions and wall murals, can provoke new and additional perspectives which provide a more informed understanding of the conflict.

The challenge for all education providers would appear to be finding ways to broaden young people's understanding of recent Northern Irish history. Bell et al (2010) suggest that this should be carried out in a way that encourages greater recognition of the complex ways that past events unfolded, and how they continue to play a significant part in current day society.

Through peace education interventions, youth work can support young people's collective conscience and action as a contagious behaviour which others find difficult to resist (YouthAction, 2011). It is educative in that young people's experiences, knowledge, understanding and skills development form a crucial component in the possibility of change. It operates at the individual, interpersonal, community and policy level (Lederach, 2005). By such collectivity, energy emerges which can transcend conflict to stimulate social action and change (YouthAction 2011).



"this means that each of us, as practitioners, does not work in a manner that ignores such actions between young people or airbrushes their link to our violent past".

(Wilson, 2015:10)

Youth work: a contributor to peacebuilding in Northern Ireland

Batsleer and Davies (2010) highlight that youth workers can create possibilities for transformation, such as breaking down borders between young people in Northern Ireland. Coupled with critical dialogue and reflection, educators can collaborate with young people in creating conditions for 'border-crossing'. Reflecting on the EU Youth for Europe programme within Scotland, Batsleer and Davies (2010) note,

> *"by creating conditions for young people to learn about difference, they become border crossers, in that crossing social and cultural boundaries through the youth exchange facilitated their understanding of other perspectives".*
>
> **(Batsleer and Davies, 2010:38)**

Elements of 'bridging and linking' are crucial for peacebuilding in which genuine engagement can alleviate barriers and help to build bridges. O' Sullivan et al (2008), emphasise that there must be the potential for real, or genuine acquaintance, if genuine benefits are to come about. They particularly note the centrality of interaction and getting to know each other as individuals.

Various examples exist of young people from different communities being together in activities and shared initiatives. These are often spaces such as music, drama, sports or generic youth participation and decision-making. These can be noted as peace-keeping activities as opposed to peace-making or peacebuilding Smyth, (2007).

Mc Alister et al (2009) have indicated the inadequacies of some youth work initiatives addressing community relations. While children and young people were often critical of cross-community projects, this related particularly to trips, activity based initiatives and specific events. These had been done with minimal preparatory work, involved little integration between young people and had no follow-up for further contact. According to those interviewed, such projects had limited opportunities to learn about cultural differences and similarities and had limited impact in building links or good relations with 'the other community'. Mc Alister et al (2009), subsequently, have the view that one-off events or short-term projects have had no discernible change in communities, based on their research findings.

Such perspectives might imply that a more purposeful contact, based on dialogue, understanding, sharing and learning is needed rather than superficial 'contact' in which actual prejudices are heightened rather than lessened. Young people are keen to build relationships across different backgrounds, with this taking place in either fun social mixed environments, or through facilitated educational learning environments (Community Relations Council/YouthAction, 2014). Young people generally feel that some initial work and exploration is needed before being 'thrown into' meetings with different groups and cultures. However, they have also noted that integrated approaches are important as this ***'helps build friendships and relationships and helps understanding"*** (YouthAction, 2013). Many favour an enhancement of inter-community relationships which act as a bridge for understanding and creating new bonds between young people of difference (YouthAction, 2013). Morrow (2017) emphasises the 'spirit of the encounter' in which openness and respect are paramount when 'being alongside others.'

Youth work contributing to social change

Birch proposes that,
'true leadership requires a muscled heart for equality. Wise leadership never takes refuge in silence'.

(Birch, 2000)

Youth and community work advocates social change as core to its approach, requiring students, trainees, practitioners and managers to continue a process of critical questioning. Wyn and White (1997) encourage the profession to re-evaluate its role in promoting social justice or in entrenching social division. To best approach social change, Beck and Purcell (2011) note that genuine community development and empowerment within practice should reflect four core principles, embracing personal and collective change, as shown below:

Figure 1: Four Component Community Development Model

Firstly, the top left quadrants indicate 'need' which can reflect structural influences impacting upon communities, while the lower quadrants indicate processes for action and transformation. Beck and Purcell (2011) challenge youth workers to intentionally pause and question their daily rituals and assumed common sense ways of looking at the world. This requires youth workers in their training to embrace more sociological, political and philosophical levels of enquiry to their repertoire.

Youth workers, it can be argued, need to read the political and policy landscape. Referring to the writings of Freire (1968), notes that when the oppressed can reflect upon the extent of their oppression '***they commit themselves to the action of transforming their world.***' Harland (2009:13). This is where youth workers can embrace a wider critical consciousness, and where youth work can be a conduit for transformation and hope.

Milliken notes that,

> *"youth work should not only forge links between communities, but also create an environment within which dialogue could take place around difficult sensitive and contentious issues".*
>
> **(Milliken, 2015)**

Grattan and Morgan (2007) further emphasise the need for youth work to be more aspirational in its philosophy, policy-making, training and practice in order to contribute to or address local and global issues.

"youth work should not only forge links between communities, but also create an environment within which dialogue could take place around difficult sensitive and contentious issues".

Milliken (2015)

Chapter 2 – Understanding the nature of a post-conflict society

Peacebuilding in a post-conflict society

Bell notes that reaching a peace agreement is a *'beginning and not an end',* Bell (2000:1), especially in moving beyond the use of conflict to a democratic society – a process rather than an end in itself. The Northern Ireland peace process and agreement of 1998 is often regarded as a negotiated settlement by the international observatories on peace and conflict. According to the Peace Research Institute Oslo, this has become a growing trend, noting that in 1989 only 10% of civil wars ended with a peace accord, but that this has since increased to 40% (Nolan, 2014).

Lederach and Maiese (2003) define the current thinking on peacebuilding as conflict transformation rather than conflict resolution. They emphasise that it is about going beyond the resolution of particular problems to having a fundamental respect for human rights and non-violence in all aspects of life. Conflict transformation also recognises two core common ideas: firstly, that conflict is normal in human relationships and, secondly, that conflict is also a motor of change. In this way people can use their experience of conflict to collaborate on transformational journeys towards peace.

Fitzduff (2006), in considering a post-conflict society, also refers to conflict transformation and reconciliation, in which she identifies 3 core reconciliation elements.

Firstly, **'equality of opportunity'**, whereby everybody has access to education, training and learning. This must be an active promotion to ensure people from high levels of deprivation from 'other' communities all have similar opportunities to improve their life chances. Poverty, poor health and inter-generational unemployment restrict the life opportunities and chances for many young people in Northern Ireland, particularly interface areas and areas of multiple deprivations. These areas have been impacted most significantly by the conflict and tend to experience a more habitual daily experience of separation and restricted mobility. This 'equality of opportunity' reflects a liberalist political philosophy where writers such as Rousseau would advocate the need to take charge of your life, often through self-development and education Heywood, (2007). However, social contexts and deep-rooted social issues often create barriers to such individualised ambition Perkins, (2016).

Fitzduff, secondly, notes **'improved mobility'** in which people have the ability to move around to work, socialise and benefit from infrastructural services and support. This also reflects a liberalist perspective in which people can celebrate moral, cultural and political diversity. As noted in the literature, this presents a key challenge to such communities living in 'bubble syndromes' Hargie et al, (2006) or in areas of 'bounded contentment' Roche, (2008) where the prospect of being more mobile and crossing into new areas is not the norm.

Finally, Fitzduff emphasises **'safety'**, highlighting the importance of safety at the destination point as well as through the journey there. Many people do not feel safe beyond their defined zones or sectarian parameters. Mobility often comes with careful and well considered personal, relational and community safety implications. Smiley

(1992) citing Harris (1974) highlights how harm and hurt are not necessarily caused by natural forces but rather the result of 'human agency.' Where harm exists, society cannot flourish.

The sectarian parameters noted by Fitzduff (2006) limit real movement to avail new friendships, and opportunities such as murder, violence, bullying and intimidation remain a reality for those who do. Writers such as Harris (1974), highlight how such harm and hurt can indeed be prevented, and how humanity has a moral responsibility to resist applying suffering to others. However, Smiley (1992) in discussing 'preventability' recognises that this is not always a personal characteristic or behaviour but something that is influenced by social and political norms. Freedom from harm has been challenging in Northern Ireland when the region was in a sustained conflict where harm and hurt were commonplace and normalised.

The framework presented by Fitzduff for conflict transformation and reconciliation indicate the challenging factors which preside over any interventions. They further provide recommendations for inter-sectoral approaches which confront structural separation and the limitations this brings with it. ibid (2006)

The lasting impact of the conflict

Separation and segregation affect everyday life, including the choices and consequences for young people. The trans-generational issues, which remain because of the conflict, including poverty and unemployment, are tricky to unravel. More contemporary literature on the impact of conflict illuminates the intricacies faced daily by young people in local communities across Northern Ireland and the border regions.

The impact on the lives of young people

Mc Grellis (2010) draws attention to the significant impact of sectarianism and conflict on the lives of young people, particularly those living in working class areas. Mc Alister et al (2009), noting priorities by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, highlights core concerns, such as a lack of safe and social spaces, leisure facilities and in providing safe communities. Roche (2008:74) further highlights that young people from communities of high and multiple deprivation who are also restricted by sectarian divides, are actually experiencing a ***'double sentence'*** or ***'double penalty.'***

As a result of the conflict and on-going community tensions, it is unsurprising that reports also often indicate high levels of young people involved in interface tensions and violence. These young people, often, form an alliance with other young people from periphery communities, but with a shared identity, to present a joined force of aggression and provocation to the opposing community identity. The Terry Enright Foundation (2010) note that 44% of young people aged 12-25 years within an urban interface, admitted to

> *'being involved in some form of rioting or stone throwing at interface areas with 33% also being engaged in vandalism.'*
>
> **(Terry Enright Foundation, 2010:14).**

The Community Relations Council (2009) remains convinced that division can be exploited, and some, especially young people, used as the catalyst for unrest. While it is often assumed that the longer 'peace' sustains a new constructive younger generation will emerge to maintain this, the influences and changing context of society might challenge the commitment of young people to do this.

Structural separation

Grattan et al (2006) emphasised the concept whereby young people assess a variety of situations often unconsciously, in an attempt to ensure a sense of safety. The feeling of *'just in case'* (Morrow 2007:2), is paramount in the Northern Ireland psyche whereby people, for example, tend to avoid mixed housing, avoid confrontation of issues in the work environment, avoid socialising in areas where they may be in the minority, and avoid travelling to areas of unfamiliarity 'just in case'. Grattan (2009) further highlights how in-group members seek connection and security through a 'protective shell' with intra-group members, which subsequently reduces the potential for confrontation or antagonism with the out-group. This firmly presents a challenge for interventions such as youth work in supporting safe contact, interaction and integration.

However, it has also been noted that this separation is not solely based on a lack of social interaction, but rather more deliberate conflict management and avoidance. Milliken (2015), refers to Gallagher's (2003) concept of 'social grammar,' where people in Northern Ireland tend to avoid talking about religion or politics in mixed religious settings, as this would be considered 'impolite'. Bell et al (2010) also refer to rural examples of how people avoid interaction with each other in a 'ritualised and systemic fashion.' They explain that segregation became an extreme way of avoiding forms of contact with the 'other', which in turn reinforced perceptions of hostility and 'otherness' through a lack of contact or understanding of the 'other's' interests and concerns. Bell et al (2010) note that this deliberate and selective everyday activity takes place through accessing separate *'shops, bars, doctors, health centres, places of employment and leisure centres.'*

Segregation: limiting opportunities

Roche (2008) emphasises the realities of the extent of the segregation. She notes the difficulties and limitations in being able to meet, never mind build relationships, with other communities. In her research, she found that young people demonstrated limited exposure to the opposite community. The young people mostly lived in areas where they not only interacted with members of their own communities, but, they also had little desire for mixing with the other community. Roche's research (2008) further noted that just under two thirds of young people were isolated to such an extent that they expressed being *'unaffected' or 'untouched'* by sectarianism, suggesting that a *"cocooning' between communities has occurred, where 'separate' but 'content' was acceptable for many of the participants.'* Only when their relative isolation was discussed with them did they begin to consider the segregated circumstances in which they live. Freire also refers to 'Boundary Situations' emphasising the need for people to be aware and critical of the boundaries which limit their opportunities Beck and Purcell (2011). Roche's research also echoes that of Hargie, Dickson and O Donnell (2006) noting that three quarters of young people stated that they would be concerned or fearful if they went into an area of the opposite community Roche (2008).

Avoiding the 'other' to maintain a sense of safety can be theorised within the 'ethnic boundary' framework developed by Fredrik Barth cited in Jørgenson (1997). These ethnic boundaries are deeply embedded cognitive and mental maps or boundaries where markers signify the 'us' and 'them' or the 'insider' and 'outsider' (Jørgenson 1997). Tajfel & Turner's social identity theory (1979) emphasises how the world is divided into 'them' and 'us,' based on a process of social categorization where people are put into social groups.

Mc Grellis (2010) claims that the fear of being identified as 'them', the 'other', or as an 'outsider', limits young people's movement and ultimately their opportunities and choices. In Mc Grellis' research (2004) young people talked about a variety of identity markers or identifiers which included accent, mannerisms, dress codes, social style, hair colour, and 'the look'. In this way young people assess the potential threat of the other whilst maintaining self-preservation through particular identifiers. Mc Alister et al (2007) also make an argument that such 'sussing' out of the other tends to not only restrict inter-group connections, but rather that in-group identification often creates strong out-group antagonism.

Hargie et al (2006) and Roche (2008) note the impact that both physical and mental barriers have in restricting the movement and subsequently options available to young people, especially those in interface areas. Hargie et al (2006:10) referring to the 'Bubble Syndrome' and Roche (2008:27) to a process of 'Bounded Contentment' reflect how young people limit their life choices in part as a result of perceived, and indeed, real barriers they face and their 'fear' of entering into the domain of the 'other' community to access shops, services, schools and employment. Within a rural context it can be less obvious and blurred, and referred to as 'Fuzzy Frontiers' Donnan (2006), cited in Bell et al (2010A:18), particularly to the outsider. Bell et al (2010A) further note how numerous small villages and rural communities have interfaces whereby visible division is less obvious, but in which an individual's behaviour, movement and sense of safety may be informed by a 'sectarian' knowledge of who, where and what to avoid. Subconscious and inherited patterns of everyday routines reinforce the separation and lack of opportunity to move outside of the 'known'.

'Bubble Syndromes' Hargie et al (2006:10), 'Bounded Contentment' Roche (2008:27), 'Cocooning' Roche (2008) and 'Fuzzy Frontiers' Donnan (2006), cited in Bell et al, (2010A:18) all describe the restrictions as a result of separation in Northern Ireland. Cultural identity and restricted movements often mean that young people, in particular, are likely to remain close to family and friends, subsequently limiting their options and opportunities Mc Alister et al (2007).

Alongside the commonplace sectarian outlooks there can also be concurrent rejections to any new 'outsider.' For example, increased racists attacks on the Polish and Romanian communities in Northern Ireland have validated the perspective that closed-minded and inward-looking attitudes can still prevail. PSNI statistics (2014:9), while noting the most commonly reported hate crime in 2013/14 as sectarianism (48%), further, indicate that this is closely followed by racism, accounting for 36%.

Within Northern Ireland young people can often have limited exposure to the other community. This exclusion illustrates how levels of sectarianism and separation can influence the options, opportunities and behaviours of young people. This has implications for education and youth work in which young people can be encouraged to develop a sense of curiosity, be open to attitudinal change and have meaningful experiences through sustained social contact.

The Impact of Conflict on Socio-economic Issues

The legacy of conflict, sectarianism and separation goes beyond that of killings, shootings and bombings. The structural sectarianism has left a plethora of wider social issues. The Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring report Nolan (2014) affirms that inequalities exist along poverty and life expectancy lines, noting that Catholics are still more likely to experience significant economic and social disadvantage than Protestants. The report further refers to the Labour Force Survey, which notes that Catholics are more likely to be unemployed and, more likely to be in poor health and, according to the Family Resources Survey out-score Protestants on almost every measure of deprivation. This would indicate that the hangover of the conflict has left a wake of wider social issues which will require a long term investment as part of the peace development process.

In a presentation to the Northern Ireland Assembly, Professor Mike Tomlinson (cited in Nolan 2014:111) of Queen's University Belfast, emphasised that the highest concentrations of suicide were in the constituencies of North and West Belfast, areas highly associated with poverty and violence. He suggests a link between the increase in suicide from 2000 and extreme traumas experienced by young people during the turbulent year of the conflict, such as the 1970's. This again would inform strategic policy development and service provision that longitudinal issues may require a significant period to repair, never mind flourish. These insights are significant not only considering the contribution of youth work to directly addressing conflict specific issues, but, also in addressing those issues, and targeting those communities which continue to experience the most significant hardships as a result of the conflict.

The Community Relations Council annual review 2008/2009, citing Mc Alister et al (2009), note that beyond economic investment and child poverty, that high levels of mental ill-health have further impacted upon people, such as impairing employment opportunities. Wilson (2017) describes how an insecure adult society, such as the current austerity climate, infiltrates its way down to young people, thus creating insecurities and higher levels of negative health and well-being among young people. Ironically, 'happiness surveys' show Northern Ireland to be the most content region within the United Kingdom (Office for National Statistics, 2014), yet figures for suicide, self-harm and mental health suggest that, for some, the reality is quite different. The notion, then, that Northern Ireland is one of the happiest places may be surprising as its capital city, Belfast, scores as the place with the highest anxiety levels.

The conflict has undoubtedly contributed to deep structural inequalities. These can include inequalities based on class (poverty and economic marginalisation); based on culture and religion (sectarianism); and based on gender and sexuality. Scraton (2011) notes how the inter-play between these inequalities is regular and complex.

Sectarianism

The legacy of colonialism and divided territory has left such a deep mark whereby division, mistrust, suspicion and anxiety remain a part of everyday life for many. These attitudes and behaviours are labelled as 'sectarianism' which can adopt both an active and passive stance.

Sectarianism in Northern Ireland is very much about the intersection of politics and religion, often more aligned to ethnicity. The conflict that took place was not religion as such but the social, historical and political divisions which religion signified. Geoghegan (2008:14) quotes Mc Veigh (1999) when he describes the tendency to try and explain the Northern Irish conflict in terms of doctrinal difference as ***'the theological fallacy.'*** That said, religion gained precedence throughout periods in history, such as between 1912-1916, in which many churches fed into the propaganda war, mobilising opinions and instigating campaigns and actions among its peoples (Mac Garry, 2014, presentation).

Morrow (2006) defines the actions of being sectarian as ***'hostility and separateness around politics and religion.'*** Geoghegan (2008) further refers to sectarianism in Northern Ireland as a,

> *"complex social and political phenomenon that is constituted by specific sets of discourses and practices that (re)produce sectarian narratives and identities in social space."*

A sectarian attitude or belief is one that discriminates against another person or group, or excludes them, on the basis of their actual (or imagined) belonging to a different community, aligned to a religious, ethno-national identification.

Identity, tradition and culture

This section highlights the significance of identity development and cultural influence in Northern Ireland, and how this impacts on normalised attitudes and behaviours. It emphasises how the legacy of the conflict has resulted in strong 'in-group' identification among many communities, coupled with an oppositional and defensive stance towards 'out-group' identities. This identity formation has become a cultural war for many in proclaiming either an Irish or British identity, as opposed to a Protestant or Catholic identity. It is, in fact, all entangled. The section further considers how young people often feel a sense of loyalty to maintaining in-group culture, particularly considering wider community pressures.

The significance of national identity

A number of workers in the Peace4Youth programme to date have reported an initial reluctance amongst young people, to identify themselves as being Protestant or Catholic. However upon further examination of this position, young people begin to notice and acknowledge the impact and significance of national identity on their everyday lives.

As well as wider global influences impacting upon localised cultural revivals, one of the most overarching pre-occupations in Northern Ireland has been the demographic of Catholics and Protestants. This majority-minority dynamic was highlighted by Buckley and Kenney (1995, cited in Bell et al), who referred to Poole's work in relation to the ***'double minority'*** and ***'double majority'*** theory, whereby both Catholics and Protestants are minorities in relation to two different territorial units (Poole 1983). Therefore, in Northern Ireland,

> *Catholics are a minority but they form a majority in Ireland as a whole. Protestants, conversely, are in a majority in the north, but would form a minority in any future united Ireland*
>
> **(Bell et al, 2010A:18).**

In Northern Ireland the Protestant/Unionist community has maintained a dominant representation, all the while, the numbers within the Catholic community have been increasing. Nolan (2014) referring to the 2011 census cites the narrowing of the gap between Catholics (45.1%) and Protestants (48.4%). While Protestants predominate in the older age cohorts, Catholics prevail in the younger. Catholics are in the majority up to and including 35-39yrs. This shift in demographic balance is significant, and may have later consequences for the constitutional framework of Northern Ireland in future years. A view of one side making gains, coupled with loss among the 'in-group,' can further enhance unease and anxiety among community identities. For example, a notion of 'tipping the balance' is prevalent in some people's views whereby Catholics are gaining in numbers through Polish incomers (who tend to be Catholic). As noted by Mc Alister et al (2009) such perceptions can exacerbate fears about the potential dilution of cultural identity within communities.

One of the most significant factors at play is not necessarily the identification of either Catholic or Protestant, but rather the ethno-political national identification. In the 2011 Northern Ireland census a question on national identity was included for the first time. The three main categories showed that 40% of the population identified as British (40%), 25% as Irish and 21% as Northern Irish. Many younger people were aligning with this Northern Irish identity, but since the 2011 census, a more traditional identification of old loyalties has begun to re-emerge. Of the Catholic respondents to the 2012 BBC-Ipsos/Mori poll, a larger majority (62%) chose to identify as Irish than in the 2011 census, and fewer Catholics (25%) identified as Northern Irish. In this poll there was also a decline in Protestants aligning with a Northern Irish identity, but rather favouring identity based on Britishness (Nolan, 2014:137).

These two mutually exclusive positions create a polarity which has ramifications throughout Northern Irish society. Mc Alister et al (2009) note that while concessions have been made on both sides within political power-sharing, such concessions however, in reality are often perceived with a feeling of loss and threat which overpowers the sentiment of compromise and shared space. Many view the questioning of and challenge to cultural habits as ***'a concerted attempt to weaken their culture and to advance the culture of Catholics'*** (Mc Alister et al, 2009:98).

The obvious and subliminal messages that young people receive about identity restrict much progression beyond the confines of their lived community. Consequences and repercussions influence young people to refrain from inter-community friendships and opportunities.

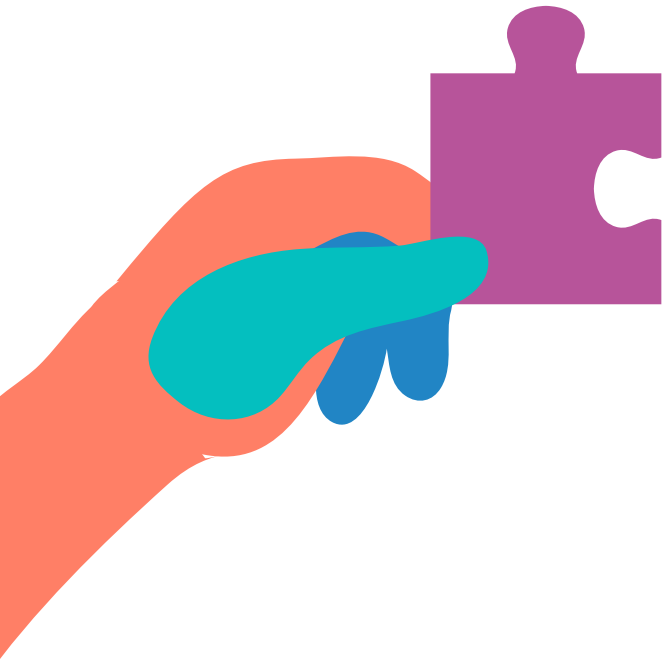
Competing identities: us and them

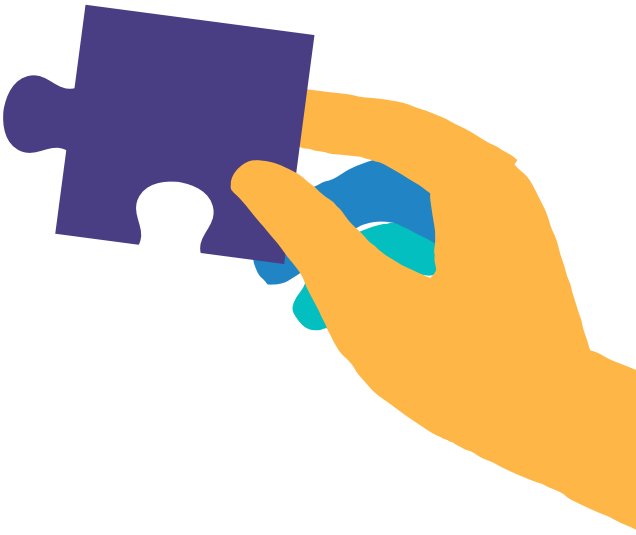
At first glance young people can display an unwillingness to engage in the games of them and us and wish to distance themselves from attitudes and behaviours associated with previous generations. However attention must be paid to the reality of how we separate and make judgments about ourselves and others. According to Tajfel (1978 and 1982), people divide the social world they live in into two categories: 'us' and 'them', or 'in-groups' and 'out-groups'. As a consequence of this process, people develop social identities which make them distinguishable from others (Devine & Schubotz, 2010). The 'out-groups' that people do not belong to, can be seen more negatively or approached with caution and suspicion. In addition to marking differences, Tajfel's theory also signifies how the 'in-group' also creates good feelings about their own group identity (Devine & Schubotz, 2010). Connolly (2002), further, notes how children and young people learn cultural and political allegiances to their own community by the age of three, with one in six 6-year-olds making sectarian comments. Ethnocentric romantic ideals and loyalties to a particular culture of country do not reflect the diverse ethnic mix of many modern day societies. Wilson (2013) notes how this 'local essentialism closes people to difference' (2013:7) thus enforcing assimilation rather than inclusive citizenship based on difference and diversity. In such situations, within-group similarities and between-group differences are often overstated, rather than within-group differences and between-group similarities. In either case the promotion of sameness, and resistance to difference and diversity, can often maintain conservative outlooks and perspectives. In this way young people and adults alike, rather than embracing difference as an asset and virtue within civil society can often overstate the notion of sameness. This illuminates a potential danger, where societal sameness can produce a negative assimilation in which diversity has little ground.

Chapter 3

Key concepts and responses for peacebuilding

Understanding the issues associated with the conflict is the first piece of the jigsaw; the second piece is how this analysis is used to inform appropriate responses. This section presents a series of theories, models and concepts that have resonance with youth work practice that responds to the impact of the conflict. These models offer food for thought, in auditing the effectiveness of current practice and to consider and re-consider community relations concepts, new and old.





Meaningful Contact

The Peace IV programme (2016) refers to various theories of change and note two specific theories aligned to its priorities for peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. These are 'individual change theory' where transformation from conflict to peace occurs through a critical mass of individual minds, attitudes, behaviours and skills. Secondly, they note 'healthy relationships and connections theory' which focuses more on the removal of physical separation, division and isolation as well as eradicating prejudice and discrimination between polarised groups (Cooperation Programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal, 2016:9).

Hewstone and Straube (2001) have indicated some caution to assumed changes in attitudes through the contact hypothesis, especially noting limitations to other members of the groups. However, the extended contact effect (Wright, Aron, Mc Laughlin-Volpe and Ropp, 1997) has emerged to show that intergroup attitudes and relationships can be less negative even when there has been no contact between the groups. The argument proposes that,

> *"(when) one's fellow in-group members have close friendships with out-group members (this) can help to reduce prejudice towards the out-group."*
> **(Hewstone and Starube, 2001:509).**

Christ et al (2010) highlight research by Wright and colleagues (1997) which demonstrates how extended contact can improve out-group attitudes. Wright et al highlight that by even observing a positive relationship between members of the in-group and out-group should reduce negative expectations about future interactions with members of the out-group. They further note how this lack of interaction or contact also reduces any possible intergroup anxiety. Importantly they acknowledge how, in many cases, inter-group contact is challenging or limited due to there being no avenues or opportunities for such contact. They note,

> *"although this segregation limits direct face-to-face contact to being low, or even non-existent, residents of all neighbourhoods can still experience extended cross-group friendship."*
>
> **(Christ et al, 2010:1663).**

In their study of Germany and Northern Ireland, Christ et al (2010) found that Catholics and Protestants, who had no or only little direct contact with members of the other religious group profited more from extended contact than did those who had a larger amount of direct contact. They concluded that,

> *"both extended and direct contact can lead to stronger out-group attitudes"*
>
> **(Christ et al, 2010:1670).**

Salmond cited in Cohen (2012) advocates for inter-mingling across ethnicities and identities in which the 'joy of difference' and the 'gift of the other' is emphasised (Cohen, 2012). This can potentially reflect an act of embrace, an exchange of presents or simply attending an event of 'difference'. In short, this represents people emerging from their cocoons to inter-mingle and feel joy, learn about and appreciate each other. Such a 'joy of difference', it can be argued, reassures those who fear cultural dilution. Wilson (2013:9) notes that,

> *"an openness to the different other as a gift is a reality for some but not yet a societal norm".*
>
> **(Wilson 2013:9)**

However, many people in Northern Ireland do, in real terms, fear an erosion of culture and hence resist coming together for any inter-cultural contact. In fact, many cultures within Northern Ireland are more likely to interact with cultures outside of the Northern Ireland jurisdiction such as Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales, as this is deemed less threatening and more acceptable within the local community. This has arguably been the case for much youth work practices in cross-community or cross-border work.

Inter-contact and integration

Contact theory is one thing, but the realities and impact of such contact is another. Aspirations and realities can remain poles apart. For example, Dr Peter Shirlow's research revealed that 68% of 18-25year olds in Belfast had never had ***'a meaningful conversation'*** with anyone from the 'other' community (Breen, ***Sunday Tribune***, 2005). The Newry Mourne and Down Youth Work Plan (2017-2019) further indicates that 47% of young people have never been involved in cross-community contact or peacebuilding work (2017:2). This provides an indication of the challenge remaining to promote integration, meaningful contact and shared dialogue among young people.

In terms of contact through the formal education system, Mc Grellis (2004:20) notes from her longitudinal research, that those who attended integrated schools (the majority of whom were from middle class backgrounds), had a positive experience in which they could meet and make friends with their peers from other communities and backgrounds. Some, however, felt that the system was not very effective in addressing issues around difference and division. Issues pertinent to conflict, identity and contention were often 'glossed over'. Wilson (2015) referred to this as 'air-brushing'. In a study of university students in Northern Ireland, Hargie, Dickson and Nelson (2003, cited in Mc Grellis, 2004:21), found similar evidence as that of post primary integration where, inter-group friendships were made, but again there was a significant 'consolidating patterns of in-group socialising' and polite avoidance of 'potentially divisive topics.'

Reconciliation – Encountering 'the other'

Reconciliation is frequently referred to in the literature and practice of peacebuilding.

To experience 'others' is at the very root of the Greek word for reconciliation, "allos", "the other" (Wilson, 2016:3). Wilson further notes how reconciliation is about overcoming hostile otherness and ***'carries with it both relational and structural dimensions.'*** Morrow (2007A) notes that reconciliation is when people make decisions and work together on issues of politics, economics and culture. He notes,

> *"but the critical and vital element, which makes all the difference, is that, it is something we do together.'*
>
> **(Morrow, 2007A:4)**

Throughout the conflict, and following the Peace Agreement of 1998 and subsequent agreements, many people were not necessarily active in galvanising action for peace, but rather standing aside for others to take up the mantle. Corrymeela Community (2013) have remarked that many people, if not most, acted as bystanders, not doing anything particularly good or particularly bad. Social psychologists have assessed this bystander phenomenon among human behaviour and have noted of particular importance three core elements.

Firstly, people can **withhold from intervening** due to the presence of others, thus adopting a bystander approach – a diffusion of responsibility. Many people in Northern Ireland have been cautious of intervention due to potential repercussions. In fact many peace activists such as Mary Healy who voluntarily organised a peace march as part of the wider 'Peace People' movement in 1976, was subsequently presented with life-threatening warnings. Power of the social influence can be immense as individuals monitor the behaviour of those around them to determine whether or not and how they should act.

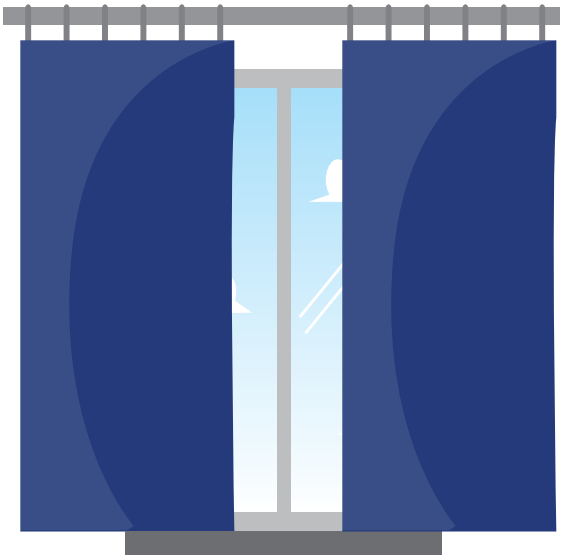
Secondly, **people tend not to help the outsider**, but are much more likely to help people within the in-group. To be seen as helping the 'other' can be seen as a betrayal to your community.

Thirdly, **many people are frightened of not behaving in a correct and socially acceptable way**. At the other end of the spectrum of inactivity many activists work as cultural-separators and possibly exploit and rekindle many of the sectarian issues. Wilson (2013:4) affirms the importance of promoting actions which project a message that change is possible.

Reconciliation requires an acknowledgement that there has been a rift that needs attention. However, there are many different community viewpoints on the existence or extent of the conflict, which are worthy of further investigation. Using the imagery of a non-Aboriginal house in Australia looking out on the world, Veena Das (cited in Cohen (2012), describes four windows on different people's perspectives: ***'the window of indifference; the window of denial, hostility; a window of acceptance; and another window of acceptance.'*** The curtains of window 1 (indifference) are probably never fully drawn, with small amounts of light for people to develop generalised perceptions. He emphasises that this indifference should be distinguished from mere ignorance, but rather a controlled denial or deliberate blindness. While window 1 presents passivity about that kind of denial, the denial through window 2 is deliberate and directed. It is a denial in that the actual onlooker may have contributed to the problem. In fact the analogy would imply that the people looking out the window view themselves as the original settler, and thus, morally right in their views and actions. Windows 3 and 4 (acceptance) on the other hand, display a more fully drawn curtain and opening of windows, in which people start to see, and feel, a different perspective. They start to

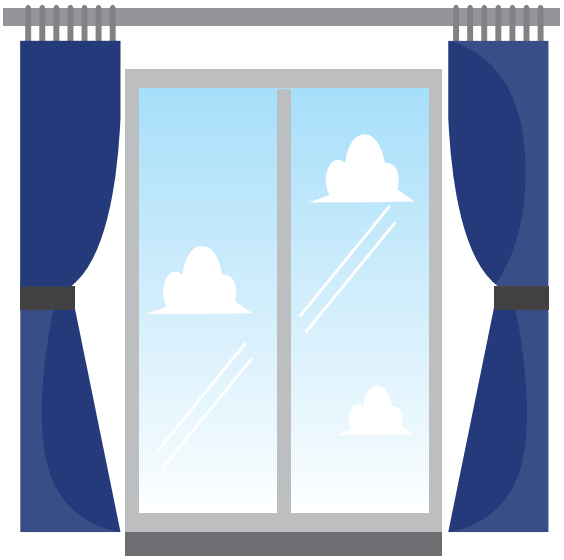
understand the experience of the other and to reach out to make connections, rather than maintaining a distance (cited in Cohen, 2012:62-92). The legacy of the conflict in Northern Ireland can be considered through this analogy whereby curtains being fully drawn are essential for a purposeful investment in creating and sustaining peace. Wilson (2013) argues that building relational spaces and places for discussion and possibilities are minimal when people live with separation, silence and avoidance. He emphasises the need for young people in particular to be,

> *"brought into experiences where new relationships with those different to them bring them into a more open and hopeful way of living."*
>
> **(Wilson, 2013)**

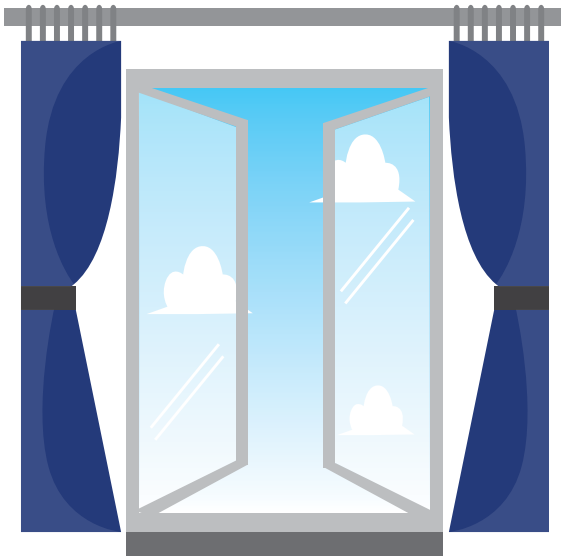


1. Window of Indifference

2. Window of Denial/hostility



3. Window of Acceptance



4. Window of Acceptance

'Working as partners' and 'doing things together' (Morrow, 2007A:4) requires a level of trust and co-operative relationships. The building of such relationships would appear to be central to the reconciliation and peacebuilding process. For example, Lederach (2005) refers to 'webs of relationships' which can stimulate social energy with a purposeful direction. Lederach and Maiese (2003) in exploring conflict transformation and reconciliation prioritise face-to-face relationships across the full spectrum of society including social, political, economic, and cultural relationships. Relationship-building is not solely about polite engagement and encounter, but also about a healthy and vibrant clash of differences carried out in a non-threatening manner (Maddison, 2011). In this way relationships embark on an understanding of other perspectives which recognize individual and collective hurt, pain and suffering. Such processes further provide a space for deeper investigation into root causes or contributing factors. Central to any understanding of reconciliation appears to be that it is a process, rather than an end outcome.

However, dealing with the past in Northern Ireland remains one of the most contentious and unresolved issues. The importance of creating new connections and experiencing the 'other' is a fundamental component of the restorative task so that people can be at ease with different others (Wilson, 2013:4). Building positive relationships with the out-group can require an acknowledgement of hurt and suffering while taking a risk to bridge the divide. Within any reconciliation process (between individuals, groups or communities) there needs to be, firstly, recognition of the problem or the conflict that has existed and/or emerged. This requires an acceptance that violence and conflict has taken place and continues to affect everyday opinions, attitudes and behaviours (passive and active). By firstly naming the issues, people can begin to understand the formation of their interpretations of the 'problem'. Beyers (2009:49) highlights the notion of ***'dealing with the past'*** as being seen as reflecting a ***'Pandora's box'***. Many people can be resistant to acknowledging and dealing with the past, believing that discussions on the 'past' will do no good for the present or indeed the future. Scrutiny, 'finger-pointing' and blame may emerge as history is unpacked with truth recovery revealing levels of police/army/paramilitary collusion and possibly unlawful and inhumane government tactics. The complexity of truths, facts and popular versions of history make the process of reconciliation a sensitive and painful process.

Hamber and Kelly (2004) defined five core elements of reconciliation which, together, support the reconciliation and transformation process.

These are:

- *building positive relations;*
- *working towards substantial social, political and economic change;*
- *acknowledging and dealing with the past;*
- *developing a shared vision of an independent and fair society;*
- *and achieving significant cultural and attitudinal change within society. (Cooperation programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal, 2016:10).*

In defining reconciliation processes, concepts of healing and acknowledgement have also come to the fore, with complementary concepts of truth, justice and mercy inherent within reconciliation (Lederach, 1995). Maddison has noted the importance of such acknowledgement as a catalyst to progression, noting that,

> *"Our willingness to admit that we 'are a part of, rather than apart from, the woundedness of our world' opens up the capacity for us ...to learn and grow."*
>
> **(Maddison, 2011:179)**

Such a sentiment involves compassion, forgiveness and a new start which all form part of Lederach's concept of 'mercy.' This is further supplemented by the pursuit of restoration, of rectifying wrongs, though justice and judicial inquiries for truth. Lederach (1995) emphasises that transformative peace-making and reconciliation embrace both mercy and justice. Herein reconciliation can begin to take place.

Lederach, thus, argues that reconciliation involves the identification and acknowledgment of what happened (truth), an effort to right the wrongs that occurred (justice) and forgiveness for the perpetrators (mercy). The end result is not only reconciliation, but peace. Nolan (2014) notes that for some, the need for justice is paramount; for others the main quest is to discover the truth of what happened to their loved ones. Wilson (2013:2) warns that each side must acknowledge their part as opposed to sole demands on the 'others' to acknowledge theirs.

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (Todd & Ruane, 2010) challenges much of the current Northern Ireland policy in the area of reconciliation and sharing. They accuse politicians and aligned policy of side-stepping reconciliation issues in favour of broader equality of opportunity and inclusion issues. They believe that the process of reconciliation is abandoned in favour of 'mutual accommodation' and 'intercultural society' (Ganiel 2010). While these are admirable goals, they, do however, dilute or ignore the realities of a divided society based on structural sectarianism and separation. Ganiel (2010) has subsequently warned of a potential 'benign' apartheid. At the heart of much policy, including the most recent 'Together Building a United Community' (TBUC, 2013) is a move from separation to 'sharing' with a more questionable commitment to integration. Such policy direction has implications for what is prioritised and, hence, funded in youth work. Equally, such mixed messages at policy and political level do little to reassure civil society about commitments to addressing structural sectarianism and separation. The work of community and youth organisations, for example, may struggle to implement ground-level interventions which focus on sharing and integration without support and investment at a policy and political level. Wilson (2013:2) suggests that grounded practices and relational work is made much easier when supported by wider institutional structures. In this way civil society and political institutions promote trust as a 'societal imperative.'

Building trust

The concepts of contact, integration and reconciliation all require strong foundations upon which to develop – with trust as a cornerstone of each of these processes.

However, specific attention to the topic of trust and mechanisms to build trust or to demonstrate trustworthiness is generally under-theorised within the peacebuilding literature - a surprising omission given its pertinence to post -conflict societies. Stanton (2018) gives some attention to this issue, as a key concept in interpersonal relationships and as a central process for healthy democratic institutions and structures to emerge from conflict.

The close relationship between relational trust and institutional trust is noted by Stiefel, thus:

> *"Societies emerging from war face a range of problems, all connected and urgent. But one overshadows and affects all the others: the destruction of relationships and the loss of trust, confidence, dignity and faith…If people do not trust each other and lack trust and confidence in government and in the rebuilding process in general, then the best rebuilding strategies are likely to fail"*
>
> **(Stiefel, 2001 pp 255-56).**

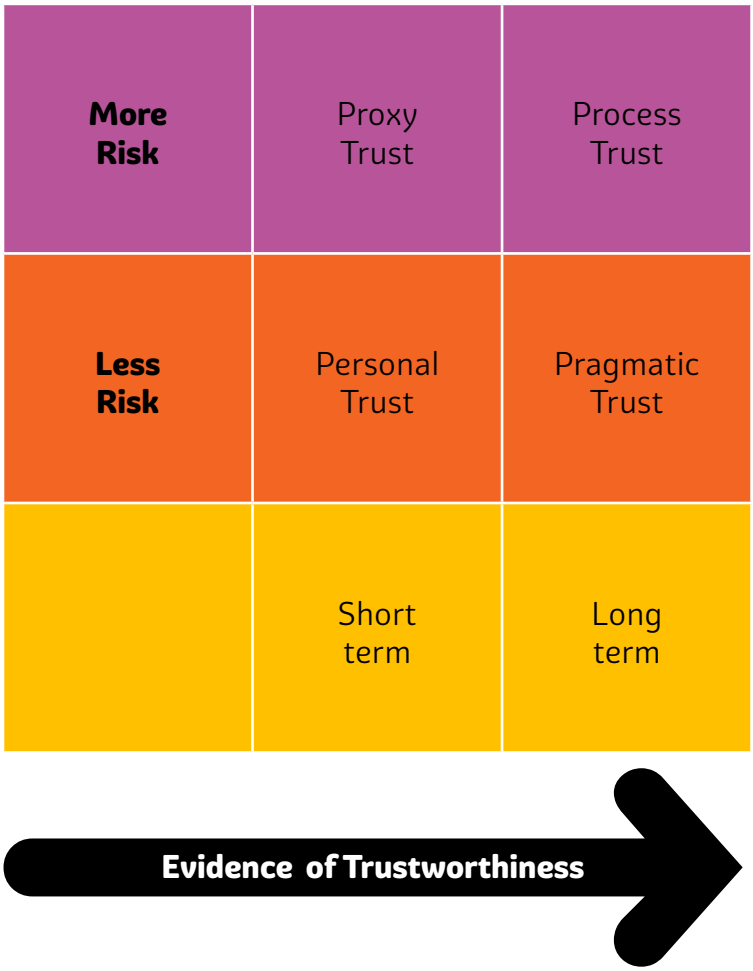
Stanton (2018), as part of her research, interviewed grassroots and civil society peace-builders and used their insights to construct a framework for their work. Two inter-related models on trust-building were co-created through these interviews, and presented here to consider how workers can work with this intangible yet critical concept. The first, Figure 2, is a graphic which theorises how trust and trustworthiness is understood and managed by practitioners . The second, Figure 3, is a model which identifies 12 different dimensions related to trust, which can be used as an audit tool to analyse how to move individuals and systems from mistrust into trust.

Stanton (2018) proposes that when peacebuilding had been deemed 'successful' by interviewees, engagement had necessitated a degree of trust built and/or trustworthiness demonstrated. For example, establishment of trustworthiness through credibility (one concept linked to trustworthiness) was considered important both for the particular practitioner and any process of intervention. In tracking and mapping the locations of trust and distrust from practitioners, Stanton (ibid) identified the pervasive nature of distrust at all levels of society and points to the high priority given to trust and trustworthiness in peacebuilding work. The model identifies four different types of trust which are present at different stages of the relationship.

These are: personal trust; proxy-trust; pragmatic trust and process trust. See figure 2.

- **Personal Trust** refers to individual credibility or legitimacy. Sources of distrust in point of entry need to be overcome (such as different identity to one's own, or untrusted/unfamiliar networks)
- **Proxy Trust** is trust built through piggybacking on an established trusted relationship. Where the trusted relationship is tainted, then the credibility of this new relationship is threatened by a proxy mistrusted relationship.
- **Pragmatic Trust** is a sense that we can do business together, to yield material, symbolic or relational gain.
- **Process Trust** is built slowly with time and is the result of combining key elements of trust in action – e.g. Inclusivity, Transparency, Accountability, Taking Responsibility, Straight-forwardness and Honesty, Commitment, Ownership, Reliability and Empathy.

Figure 2: Different types of trust.

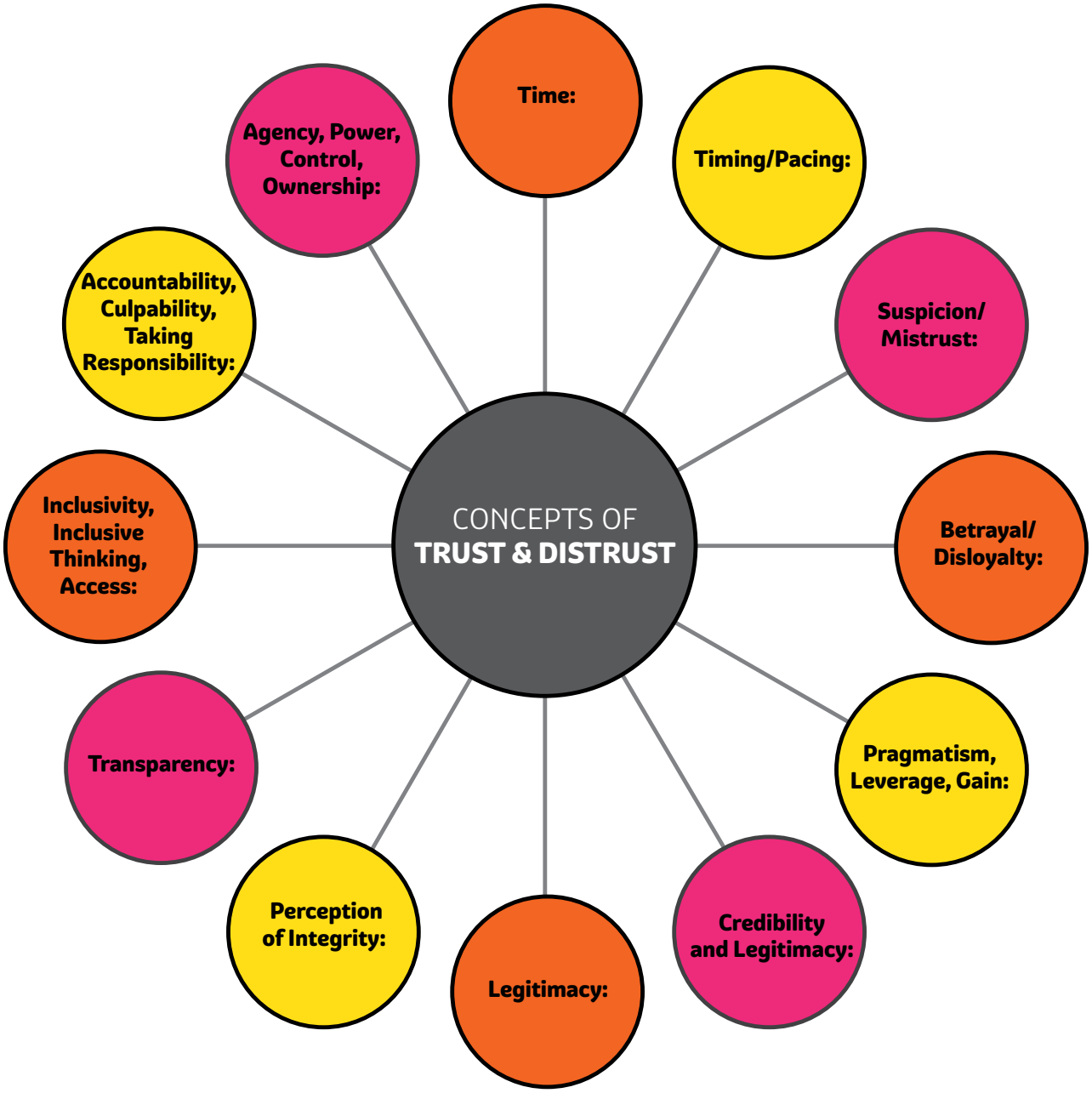


This model proposes the use of different trust processes, to lead to an outcome of higher levels of trust. For the practitioner, this practice involves a calculation of risk.

Variables such as gender, age, and locality are all factors into micro-calculations of particular risk levels and consequently, what level of trust is required. For example, if a credible leader (using proxy-trust) is involved in a peacebuilding project, the overall risk is mitigated as they have established bona fides in their context. Similarly, pragmatic trust is used to establish a conditional basis for joint inter-communal projects with tangible and material gain such as employment, regeneration, safer areas, or financial investment; therefore the risk of engagement was mitigated. Practitioners reflected that when the risk level increases, the space for engagement retracted (Stanton, 2018:265).

Figure 3: Concepts of Trust and Distrust

Stanton (2018:266) provides more detail for practitioners in her second model whereby the concepts of trust and mistrust are understood by examining 12 related dimensions:



Time: Time, Commitment: Reflections on the length of time involved in building trust and get to know the parties involved, time and commitment over time often expressed together.

Timing/Pacing: Refers to differences in timing of different parts of the system to engage. Recognition that a range of factors - internal and external - influence when each group feels comfortable engaging. This makes it difficult to manage and maintain the willingness to engage at same sequencing point/concurrent pacing with groups. Under the radar may be component of timing.

Suspicion/Mistrust: A perception that there is a default wariness or suspicion that presents when presenting new ideas or new people, or embarking on change processes.

Betrayal/Disloyalty: A perception that fear of being perceived to betray "your side" acts as a barrier to change processes. Applicable to both institutions and people.

Pragmatism, Leverage, Gain: Practitioners refer to reflections that initially change processes are sometimes aided when there is a pragmatic reason to do so. This may involve anything from money, gaining more of, access to, or consolidation of, resources. Likewise, also involvement is perceived to have the ability to leverage other sets of relationships.

Credibility and Legitimacy: Perception of Credibility (including and/of Change Leadership): Someone in community who holds power either through their status or role or due to their personal characteristics (Pied Piper) or values which have established them as someone worthy of trust.

Legitimacy: Practitioners spoke about organisations gaining legitimacy as trustworthy. Access and inclusion (often by governmental bodies) were evidence of trust being extended from these bodies to other institutions. Perception that proving over time organizational credibility and integrity has been key in gaining that trust.

Perception of Integrity: Practitioners speak about the importance of being perceived as having integrity. Associated with an individual mostly but referred to process having integrity as well. A very important element spoken about by many practitioners was "doing what you say you are going to do."

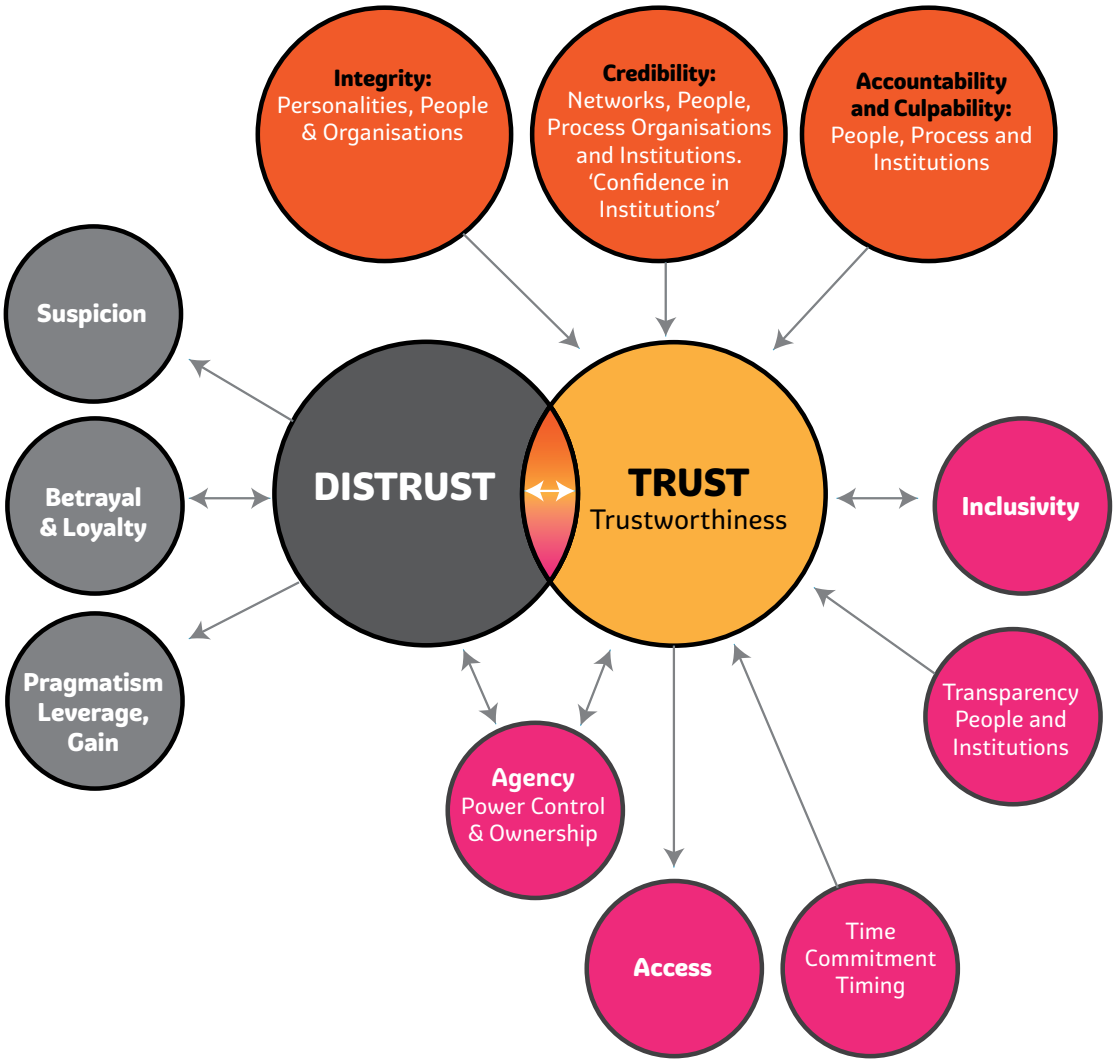
Transparency: Refers to openness with people about processes. Paradoxically, a theme emerged that at times work needs to be "coming in the back door" or quieter, without drawing attention to itself. When being referred to in micro-contexts it was referred to as straightforwardness, being upfront, not promising what could not being delivered, and a perception that there was "no agenda."

Inclusivity, Inclusive Thinking, Access: Themes emerged that processes that were inclusive of a range of people, without excluding those who potentially might be seen as spoilers was important in building trust (credibility) in change process. Being given access to key people was interpreted as evidence of trust and of having gained legitimacy (see Legitimacy).

Accountability, Culpability, Taking Responsibility: Measures taken to formalize practices, clarify responsibilities, admit mistakes, and challenge inter and intra group norms. .

Agency, Power, Control, Ownership: Power utilized in processes or by people in order to facilitate ownership as expression of trustworthiness or to increase or maintain control in context of distrust.

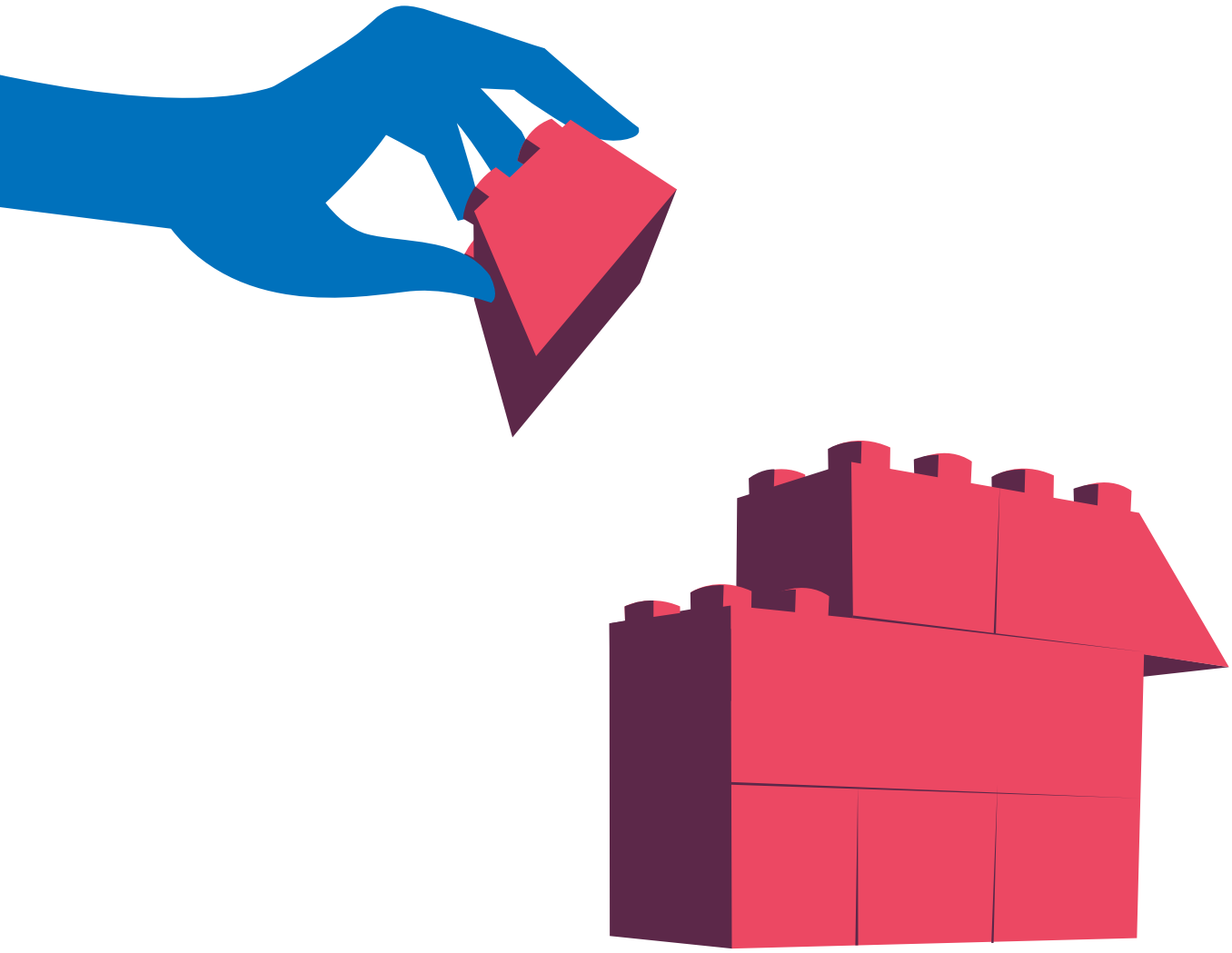
Figure 4: Mechanisms of trustworthiness to manage and decrease distrust.



Through this exploration of self, situation and context, workers can make judgements on the most appropriate approaches to build trustworthiness, for *a given moment and given circumstance*.

Chapter 4
Models of peace practices

The following four models of peacebuilding are presented here as directly transferrable and applicable to the youth work setting in Northern Ireland. Some explicitly stipulate approaches for overcoming division and separation which involve full community approaches, while others provide a more psychological change in the 'state of mind' and attitude of those living in Northern Ireland. These models provide a framework for workers to build on, in developing a complementary model for their Peace4Youth project work.



MODEL 1 - Smyth

Smyth (2007) notes the emergence and coexistence of three distinct forms of peace related youth work in Northern Ireland which he defines as peace-keeping, peace-making and peacebuilding.

Smyth considers the **peace-keeping** stage to be particularly characterised by 'diversionary' youth work which he suggests has a tendency to lead to cross-community contact, exemplified by summer schemes, outings and sporting competitions with short term contact between youth clubs.

Peace-making youth work, it is suggested, requires a higher level of specific training for staff as it often features in depth, facilitated discussions of a difficult nature in programmes such as those with local history and cultural components to allow for a deeper understanding of diversity and sectarianism.

And, in the third point of his typological triangle, Smyth points to **peacebuilding** which he defines as democracy-building youth work.

MODEL 2 - Morrow

In Digging Deeper (A report into the Lurgan town collaborative youth project 2011-2013) Morrow (2013:12-13), noted the critical factors in developing a collaborative approach to peacebuilding:

- The clear demonstration of need by the articulation of young people and stakeholders and the evidence of public events **(Need and demand).**
- The drive, vision and commitment of individual leaders in youth work focussed primarily on the expressed needs of young people **(Vision and commitment).**
- The support and engagement of key strategic organisations and community leaders **(Buy-in).**
- The willingness of local youth workers to work with rather than against a collaborative project **(Co-operative and collaborative culture).**
- The alignment of the work with the priorities of a significant funding agency **(Opportunity and supply).**
- The willingness of people in Lurgan at this time to seize opportunities as they presented themselves in informal and formal settings **(Entrepreneuralism).**

This model is significant, firstly, due to need and demand being identified by the local community. Beck and Purcell (2011:8) have referred to a term called the *'administrative approach'* in which bureaucratic approaches have monopolised service interventions based on statistical analysis of need, rather than a combined and more organic needs identification.

Secondly, Mc Mullan (2018: 42-43) suggests the vision and commitment of youth work leaders to address such need has been deemed questionable, showing a 'minimalist' prioritisation of dealing with such contentious issues.

Morrow emphasises both the vision of leaders and the full engagement of all stakeholders within society. If the two components named above by Morrow are applied within the youth work setting, the other components of collaboration, opportunity and entrepreneurialism might follow more effectively.

MODEL 3 - Lederach

John Paul Lederach (2005:34-39) identifies four levels at which peacebuilding work should work:

- individual,
- interpersonal,
- community
- and policy.

The first 2 elements form part of a human capital investment, with the latter two an investment in social capital. The four levels, (individual, interpersonal, community and policy) are also significant to the space and way in which youth work functions.

Within this model Lederach also notes four core components that inter-link in supporting practices in peacebuilding, reconciliation and reconstruction. These are:

1. centrality of relationships (listening, understanding, appreciative enquiry);
2. practice of paradoxical curiosity (scratch beneath the surface);
3. provide a space for creative acts and;
4. the willingness to risk.

While youth work can be noted as primarily supporting the personal and social development of young people, a further challenge exists for youth work to operate at a social change level, which involves engaging with the wider community and at a policy level. In reviewing and assessing the contribution of youth work to addressing sectarianism and separation, this model presented by Lederach provides an indication of how youth work can impact beyond the individual and inter-contact opportunities. His approach provides a more complete civic education model.

MODEL 4 - Geoghegan

Geoghegan (2008:14) names and emphasises the concept of *'sectarianism'* at the heart of *'the Northern Ireland problem'.* He defines this as a complex interaction between religion and politics, and between theology and competing ethnic nationalisms, in which ideas about religious difference are used to infer political identities in Northern Ireland. He further notes three distinct levels at which sectarianism manifests and thus can be addressed.

- Firstly, at the level of ideas: such as stereotyping and negative feelings towards out-groups;
- Secondly, as individual or collective action where sectarianism is expressed through harassment, including verbal and/or physical abuse; and
- Thirdly, at a structural level, which involves discrimination and bias in areas such as employment and in the creation and conduct of political institutions.

From this perspective reconciliation and peacebuilding cut across personal, relational, structural and cultural modes. Hence, models of peace and reconciliation need to consider at which juncture they intervene and consider how they connect to the full picture. Becoming part of the solution requires a transparent commitment in which others can recognise a similar approach or intervention, and/ or recognise where clear gaps require an intervention.

Blending peacebuilding models

Bringing together the four models of Smyth (2007), Morrow (2013) Lederach (2005) and Geoghegan (2008) alongside key components from literature McMullan (2018) has created a synthesis of where the core emphasis may lie. This brings into play the reflective 'plan, do, review' cycle to ensure that learning takes place and that action is ongoing and developmental. This echoes the perspective of Stanton and Kelly (2015) who advocate for more practice-theory reflexivity where practitioners,

> *"step outside their day-to-day delivery pressures ...to discern, reflect and consolidate their implicit knowledge about what has informed their judgements and deliberations."*
>
> **(Stanton and Kelly, 2015: 45)**

Mc Mullan (2018) proposes a new framework for workers to review and assess how their youth work addresses sectarianism and separation in Northern Ireland. Figure 5 below illustrates the priority concepts to consider for a nuanced assessment of how the youth work profession is addressing sectarianism and separation.

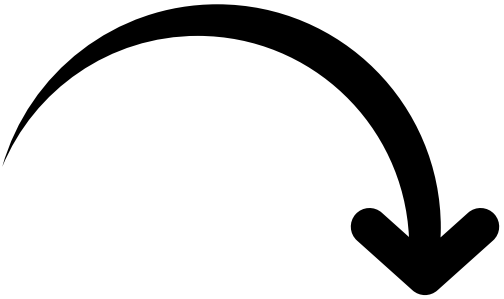


Figure 5:

PREPARING **Hybrid of local global input**	**ACTING** **Local indigenous actors**	**REFLECTING** **Hybrid of local and global input**
• Need (local) • Partnership • Commitment • Vision	• Contact (Interpersonal) • Exploration of these issues and ideas	• Practice reflection • Policy reflection • Review of emerging or dormant needs • Constructing local peacebuilding theory • Shared learning

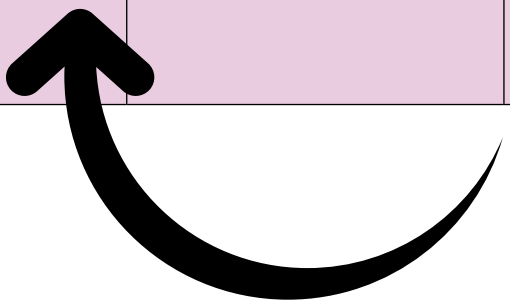
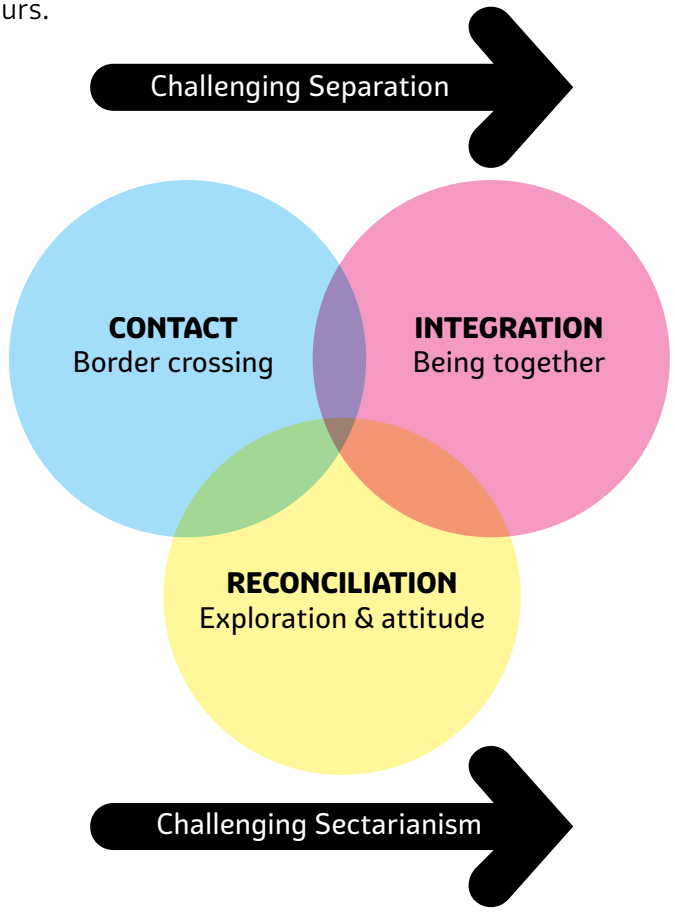


Figure 6: Priority concepts

Mc Mullan (2018) has chosen these three specific concepts as they reflect perspectives he has focused on from the youth work profession in addressing sectarianism and separation. 'Contact' specifically relates to first encounters between young people from different religious and national identities; 'integration' refers to meaningful engagement in reducing separation; and 'reconciliation' reinforces the need to address prejudice and discrimination based on religious/political identities (sectarianism).

The concept of 'contact' helps to assess the level of interaction between the divided communities; 'integration' helps to understand what meaningful encounters and engagement take place to help break down 'separation'; and 'reconciliation' clarifies the need for past acknowledgements, a continued effort to deal with ongoing contentious issues and preparing for the future, altogether breaking down sectarian stereotypes, attitudes and behaviours.



Contact (border-crossing) has building effective relationships at its core. This emphasises the formation of positive and effective relationships with others from different backgrounds. These relationships are the catalyst to reduced mistrust and prejudice. The contact is carefully planned and managed. As discussed by Hewstone and Straube (2001) this direct contact can have a ripple effect on the attitudes and behaviours of others in the community who may not have exposure to such intergroup contact.

Integration (being together) focusses on shared spaces in which different others work as partners in a collaborative manner. The level of contact is regular, meaningful and sustained. Issues are collectively explored, and actions are put in place to support democracy-building youth work.

Reconciliation (exploration and attitude) centres the attitude and willingness of different others to want to come together and appreciate the gift of the other. The spirit of the encounter helps the process of understanding, making concessions and developing a shared vision through working as partners and doing things together.

Developing an AGENDA for peace through youth work

The 'Developing an AGENDA for peace through youth work' model in the first instance encompasses three key components as identified by Smyth (2007). The three key layers of the approach recognise an investment in peace-keeping, peace-making and peace -building.

The 'Developing an AGENDA for peace through youth work' has been established using the 'AGENDA' acronym which follows a process for effective youth work interventions. The acronym and the components of the model are described below in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Agenda for peace through youth work

A	**A**SSESSMENT OF NEED & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF NEED	This involves having an appetite to investigate need and to enact process for change. This need is both local and regional. It involves reconnaissence and understanding each individual local context and knowing the local influencers. It also requires skills to read beyond potential disinterest from young people. In creating actions to address need, attention must be given to the safety of both young people and workers. As one participant noted in his findings, "(it is the) responsibility of workers to be informed on issues (and to) know who the local influencers are."
G	**G**ETTING BUY-IN (YOUNG PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES, ORGANISATION)	This is about pitch and relevance that attract initial community engagement and motivates young people to participate. The hook may require creative intervention and initial small steps. It should support ownership of young people in the co-design to maintain relevance and engagement. Buy-in further requires a full community commitment that can provide challenges in negotiating with community gatekeepers who might provide resistance to such a peacebuilding agenda. Buy-in also requires underatanding betweeen funders and the practice development in which youth work principles should be retained.
E	**E**XPLORATION OF UNDISCUSSABLE OR CONTENTIOUS ISSUES (DEPTH)	Youth workers provide leadership which in advocating change and in prioritising peace. Rather than confrontation approaches this is about consensus or a vibrant and healthy clash of differences. Herein the challenge function of the youth worker comes to the fore in challenging prejudices etc. Through dialogue or creative expression, young people will experience 'light bulb' moments and awakenings in which they can identify personal actions for change. Where possible young people and adults in the community should have intergenerational sharing encounters. All of these learning experiences should take place without the fear of threat.
N	**N**EW RELATIONSHIPS AND CONTACTS ACROSS THE DIVIDE	Contact and inter-community engagement are essential to fostering good relations and reducing prejudicial attitudes and behaviour. While commonalties can support initial relationship building this should not overshadow differences which are needed for a more rich and diverse society. Herein young people can meet together and build lasting relationships.
D	**D**OCUMENTING THE LEARNING AND IMPACT WITHIN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND ACROSS THE SECTOR	Any intervention should note attitudinal or behavioural changes aligned to a more peaceful, diverse and stable society. Youth work should identify the impact at individual, community and wider society needs.
A	**A**LLIES FOR FURTHER ACTION	Citizenship and civil and social engagement are required to sustain momentum towards a more peaceful society. Young people should consider ways of connecting with others to further progress in this area. Youth work should recognise the triggers to youth activism and support a range of traditional and alternative mechanisms to affect change. Ultimately, this is about challenging separation and sectarianism. This component particularly recognises that many other young people remain disconnected to peace development and political engagement.

Chapter 5

Reactive, responsive and reflective practice

Phronesis as a form of knowledge

> *"for things that are of necessity in the unqualified sense are eternal; and things that are eternal are ungenerated and imperishable"*
>
> **(Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1139b 18-25).**

What have actors working at the grassroots and within civil society learned from 50 years of peacebuilding practice? This question rests on an argument that those with practical lived experience used to build peace and social change in Northern Ireland have valid and valuable, but currently underutilised, knowledge. Adopting Aristotle's term, 'phronesis,' or practical wisdom, this review holds that practical knowledge is both ***valid*** and ***valuable***, and that those holding 'phronetic' knowledge are uniquely equipped to contribute to knowledge production for peacebuilding.

Establishing the validity and value of phronesis is important in order to strengthen the argument that such knowledge be included and prioritised for knowledge production. Logic follows that if such knowledge is valued, practitioners may more readily be tasked with reflecting on their experience. While that proposition may sound intuitive, it does not always follow that those who engage in practical efforts and intervention in social change are tasked with reflecting on their work theoretically, or by such efforts make a contribution to the academic community. Practitioners are not only often overlooked by academia but also devalued, not only "excluded from the knowledge creation process... but assumed to suffer from knowledge deficiency" (Eraut, 1994 p.54). As a result theory and practice can operate in silos with little interaction. YouthPact is well placed in the Peace4Youth programme to provide the opportunity to create common space away from individual projects for staff to reflect on practice. Through practice studies, policy and practice papers and this paper, theory and practice are both valued and combined.

Aristotle, in the ***Nicomachean Ethics***, sets out a discussion on three forms of knowledge, which he describes as virtues, dividing them initially between what is invariable (what he calls scientific) and variable (what he calls calculative).

It is from **episteme** that the word epistemology (the study of knowledge) is derived. He contrasts this ***invariable*** universal scientific knowledge with the next two types of knowledge described as ***variable***, "things made and things done" (Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics 1140a). The first of these variable forms of knowledge, **techne**, is described as knowledge of how things are made such as the production of art, or craft. Techne is the root of the modern words technology and technique, and is understood as art, craft or skill-based knowledge.

> *"All art is concerned with coming into being, i.e. with contriving and considering how something may come into being which is capable of either being or not being, and whose origin is in the maker and not in the thing made"*
>
> **(Aristotle, Nic. Ethics, 1140a 11-14)**

Finally, Aristotle discusses a third virtue of knowledge which is also variable, what he calls **phronesis**, commonly understood as practical knowledge, or practical wisdom. It is also a form of variable knowledge, because it is context-dependent. Phronesis is knowledge needed for action and involves making judgements about what might be the right action to take in a particular context or situation. However what is considered the 'right' action to take, according to Aristotle, is action with an end towards what is good for one's self. Furthermore, not only are those using phronesis able to deliberate on what is good for their own well being, but "what sorts of things conduce to the good life in general" (Aristotle, Nic.Ethics, 1140a 26-27). In particular, according to Aristotle, this type of knowledge is needed for acting for the well-being of both individuals and for groups of people.

Those who are said to have practical wisdom are able to show good judgement and to deliberate well for the end result of well being, human flourishing and the good life, or (in Greek) ***eudemonia***. Phronesis is described by Aristotle as knowledge needed for good deliberation or what might be termed as judgment-in-context-for-action aimed towards a 'flourishing' life.

The reliance on a technical-rational approach to practice

Schön asserts that as positivism influenced the development of professional practice, it resulted in the dominance of what he terms, 'Technical-Rationality' within many professions (Schön, 1983). In the Technical-Rationality epistemology of practice, *"professional activity consists in instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and critique"* **(ibid:21)**. As a result, 'Technical Rationality' became the model of professional knowledge *"which has most powerfully shaped both our thinking about the professions and the institutional relations of research, education, and practice"*

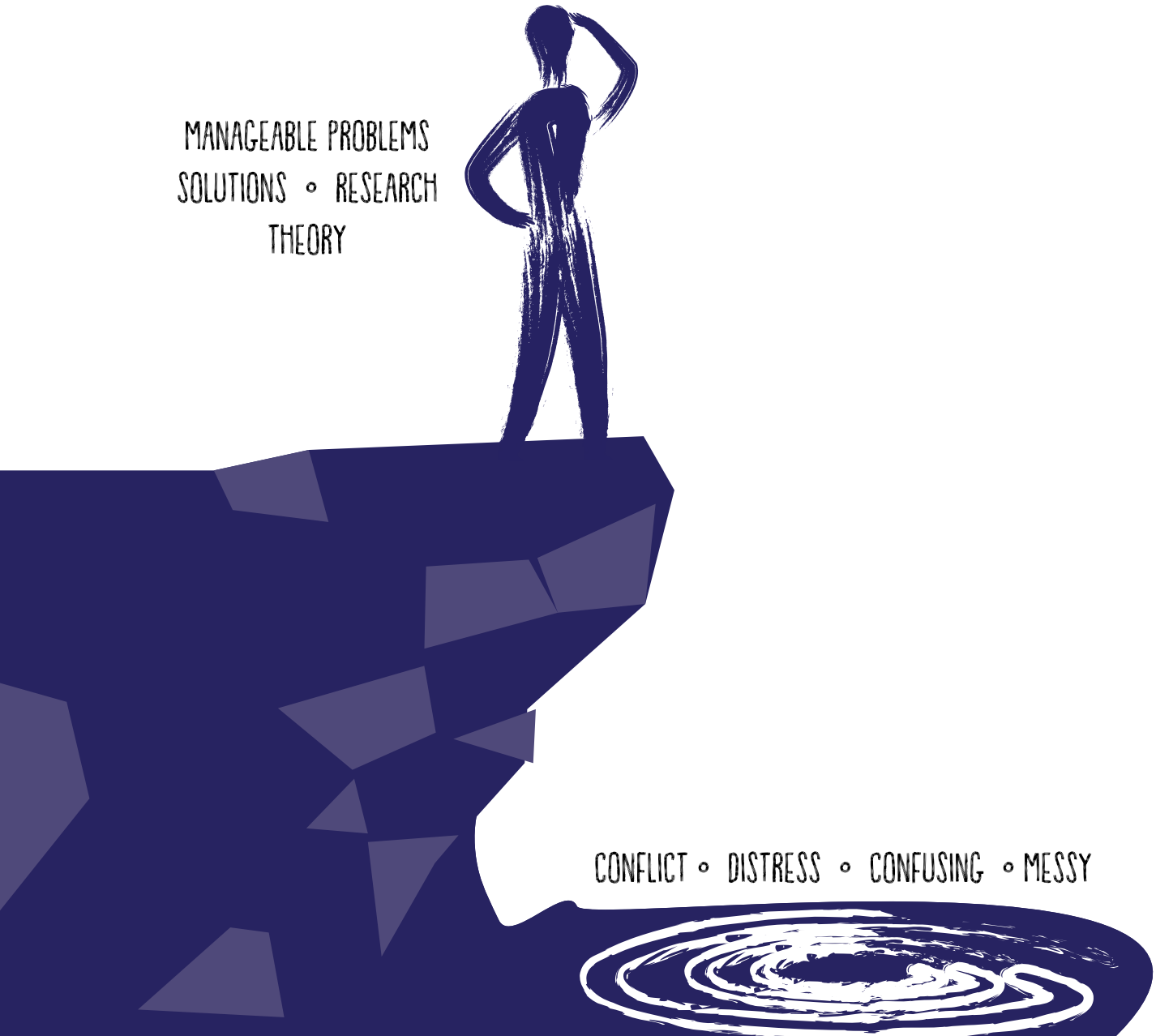
(Schön, 1983:21).

Schön's classic text, ***The Reflective Practitioner*** (1983) identified a growing distrust of, and waning confidence both within professions and of professionals. He attributes this distrust in part to the divorce between practice and theory, which he stated had left practitioners ill-equipped to handle an increasingly complex, multi-varied, unstable and unpredictable world of practice. These complexities defy the logic of the Technical-Rational problem-solving paradigm. Schön quoting Ackoff describes them as, "dynamic situations that consist of complex systems of changing problems that interact with each other. I call these situations messes" (ibid:16).

Schön ultimately argues that professions have become overly dependent on techniques (techne), but that their technical skills are letting them down as they cannot predict and account for the increasing complexity of practice. He suggests, however, that some practitioners have been able to navigate this dynamic environment by using ***different*** sources of knowledge, having acquired this ability to excel amidst complexity by reflecting on their own 'theories-in-use' and interrogating assumptions they bring to their practice. Drawing upon different sources of knowledge, these practitioners are willing to tackle problems that exist in the "swampy lowland where situations are confusing messes incapable of technical solution" (ibid:42-43) and in such places practitioners learn from "experience, trial and error, intuition and muddling through" (ibid).

However, a dilemma exists for practitioners who have operated effectively in the face of a complex and unstable environment when trying to describe ***how*** they knew ***what to do,*** because what counts as knowledge when judging a context does not count within an empirical Technical-Rational model of practice. Thus the very skills and abilities that are needed to practice well in complex, variable contexts, and which should be highlighted as important, are made invisible by the dominance of the Technical-Rational empirical model. While not naming it directly Schön's description of the type of knowledge practitioners' use, and their ability to make a judgment-in-context-for-action, suggests phronesis.

> *"Professionals have been disturbed to find that they cannot account for processes they have come to see as central to professional competence. It is difficult for them to imagine how to describe and teach what might be meant by making sense of uncertainty, performing artistically, setting problems, and choosing among competing professional paradigms, when these processes seem mysterious in the light of prevailing model of professional knowledge.... we are bound to an epistemology of practice which leaves us at a loss to explain, or even to describe, the competence to which we now give overriding importance"*
>
> **(Schön:19-20).**



Navigating the swampy low-land

While not naming phronesis per se, Schön's insights on implicit and tacit forms of knowledge to make "sense of uncertainty" (ibid:20), which he calls 'theories-in-use' and 'knowledge-in-action' gained through experience working in a "swampy lowland" (ibid:42) helps to shed further light on the type of practical implicit but usable knowledge which practitioners may hold. Given the instability and fluidity which permeate conflict settings, knowledge of how to navigate this type of context is exactly what Schön is referring to when he describes knowledge gained while working in complex and dynamic changing 'messes'.

In his scholarship on the topic, Polanyi's (1966) development of the concept of tacit knowledge is used to explain how practitioners may use judgment and knowledge implicitly (Schön and Argyris, 1974:10-11). Tacit knowledge underpins 'knowing-in-action' and 'theories-in-use' (Argyris and Schön, 1974:0-11; Schön 1983:49-51, Schön, 1987:22-25). As Schön puts it:

> *"In his day-to-day practice he [the professional] makes innumerable judgments of quality for which he cannot state adequate criteria, and he displays skills for which he cannot state the rules and procedures. Even when he makes conscious use of research-based theories and techniques, he is dependent on tacit recognitions, judgement and skillful performances"*
>
> **(Schön: 1983:50).**

For this reason, knowing-in-action and judgments made about practice are made ***even when a practitioner is unable to articulate why***. Striving to make what is tacitly known more explicit is, for Schön, a key to reflective practice.

Support for professional learning

Support for the development of workers and youth work practice can be found in the concept of reflective practice; as a way of rendering this tacit knowledge more tangible. Furthermore, the ability of workers to analyse specific contexts offers greater understanding of the most salient professional responses.

Michael Eraut, an educational scholar writing about professional learning, sheds further light on tacit knowledge in practice. Writing about the nature of work-based learning, Eraut reflects that the process of developing tacit knowledge is an important part of professional competency. He compares it to those entering into a new job, stating that much of workplace learning is informal and "occurs as a by-product of engaging in work processes and activities" (Eraut, 2009 p.1). Learning for practice, he writes, entails not only the importance of personal capabilities, but also how to read the context in order to be able to "do the right thing at the right time" (ibid). In order to do this he suggests, there is a need for the practitioner:

1. to understand both the general context and the specific situation you are expected to deal with,
2. to decide what needs to be done by yourself and possibly also by others, and
3. implement what you have decided, individually or as a group, through performing a series of actions (ibid).

Examining the first of these points primarily, Eraut expands on the ability to read the context more fluently in his discussion of how new professionals use informal learning to acquire tacit knowledge. To do so he highlights the work of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) who systematised the progression route of informal learning from experience in five levels (Eraut, 2009:3). The model is briefly summarised and paraphrased from Dreyfus (2004).

The Five-Stage Model of Adult Skill Acquisition
(Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2004)

Eraut emphasises that throughout all five levels, competency is developed in reading the context, but that at the latter stages, forms of judgment and deliberation begin to happen more intuitively, "based on the tacit application of tacit rules" (Eraut, 2000:127). Eraut describes the model as helpful for understanding the development of tacit knowledge, and in particular how, once tacit knowledge is developed, it can be difficult to unlearn (Eraut, 2009:4).

Polanyi (1966), the philosopher most directly associated with the development of the term tacit knowledge also sees it as something more innate and the source of human beings "highest creative powers" (Polanyi, 1966:15).

Level 1 Novice:	**Level 2 Advanced Beginner**:	**Level 3 Competent**:	**Level 4 Proficient**:	**Level 5 Expert**:
Adherence to taught rules or plans, the novice uses learned rules to guide action. Novice practitioner has little experience for understanding context for action.	With some gained experience, Advanced Beginner is able but still limited to distinguishing similarities in a similar context.	At competent stage, one is now able to prioritize as a mechanism to cope with crowded sets of choices. Goal planning implemented to organise action around prioritisation in given context.	Has now gained ability to see what is most important and able to grasp bigger picture, operating more holistically. Decisions come more easily as patterns built up from previous experiences and contexts begin to emerge. Greater intuitive decision used in conjunction with problem-solving.	Not reliant on guidelines or taught rules but on deep tacit level intuitive understanding. Expert is able to perform without conscious deliberation in holistic and embodied ways, utilising analytic reasoning only in more novel cases.

Building a conceptual frame for phronesis

Phronesis or practical wisdom, established here through insights grounded in Aristotelian philosophy but supported by a range of fields within social science, begins to take shape as an epistemology, that is a theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods, validity, and scope, and the distinction between justified belief and opinion. It emerges as a form of knowledge that draws heavily from lived experience. Using multiple forms of knowing which demonstrate an integration of both subjective and objective experience, phronesis draws on explicit but also tacitly held pattern recognition of context to guide action for the 'particular.'

Phronesis, is conceptualised by Stanton (2018:77) as both an embedded and embodied form of knowledge, with the following five dimensions:

- ***Experience:*** Practical wisdom draws heavily from and values knowledge gained from experience. Accumulated experiences allow the building up of patterns over time. The most trustworthy sources of knowledge within a phronetic epistemology are those who share common experiences, or who demonstrate embedded or context-knowledge. If experience is lacking, trustworthy exemplars are used as models of 'what to do.'
- ***Embodied*:** Uses multiple forms of 'knowing' which demonstrate an integration of both subjective and objective experiences. Gut instinct, bodily sensations and affective experiences are valued; phronesis resists mind-body dualism.
- ***Organically Developed through Experimentation***: Learning generated by navigating uncertain and complex contexts using trial and error approaches, recognises and acknowledges non-linearity in outcomes and attributes value to action even if outside of techno-rational paradigm or metrics of measurability.
- ***Tacit Recognition of Context Patterns***: Context is viewed as an ecology of relationships that form patterns in a given habitus. Patterns of context may be initially invisible, implicit or tacit, but capable of being drawn upon in reflection and recognised explicitly.
- ***Context-Relational Judgments***: Judgments about, 'what to do,' or to make sense of uncertain contexts are drawn from tacit recognition of accumulated patterns of 'particulars' gained from previous experiences. In cases where there is little experience, 'rules' for navigation are made through trial and error, or gained explicitly by others as exemplars. As experience accumulates, judgments are processed fluidly and intuitively against what may or may not be viewed as possible in the given 'habitus' or given the patterns of 'particular' contexts. As a result, judgments are viewed as context-dependent, given that abstract rules may be unable to generate or reflect navigational nuance.

Phronesis: local knowledge as an asset

Clearly, the view that context-knowledge can be reduced to a technique without any corollary lived experience is problematic. To recognise that both tacit and explicit forms of knowledge are necessary for ensuring peacebuilding and conflict transformation relevancy is not new. From as early as 1995, Lederach advocated strongly that in order for any intervention to be relevant it should tap into and use the implicitly held 'local' knowledge of context using an elicitive approach (Lederach, 1995). His first text, *Preparing for Peace* (1995), clearly adopted Freirian emancipatory perspectives on knowledge, power and intellectual hegemony. Lederach argued that training should be dialectical, viewing local people as primary resources of relevant knowledge. While covered in the literature review it is worthwhile to review his central ideas on this topic, he states:

a. People in setting are a key resource, not recipients.

b. Indigenous knowledge is a pipeline to discovery, meaning, and appropriate action.

c. Participation of local people in the process is central.

d. Building from available local resources fosters self-sufficiency and sustainability.

e. Empowerment involves a process that fosters awareness-of-self in context and validates discovery, naming and creation through reflection and action. **(Lederach, 1995:31).**

The philosophies proposed primarily by Mac Ginty, Lederach and Stanton reintroduce the ancient core concept of the integrity of indigenous wisdom and praxis. These philosophies present a challenge to the growing belief and development of a more technical approach to practice and the measurement of practice.

Committing to Stanton's model of peacebuilding requires a reconnection to the ancient concept of phronesis and the development of a language that can describe the outcomes and impact of this complex human process. To this end, it is worth giving consideration to the ways in which youth work is articulated and measured in contemporary practice and policy.

Chapter 6

The philosophy of measurement in youth work

Illustrating outcomes of youth work

Youth work is at crossroads in regard to communicating the impact of youth work. The narrative is changing, with a growing sense of pressure to minimize the organic, responsive and relational aspects of youth work. This has remarkable parallels to how the techne and episteme are more often valued more than tacit, phronetic knowledge. Two dominant narratives that have been present since the late 1970's – 'the need for stated outcomes' and 'outcomes as the antithesis' of the youth work process. The fact that both narratives still have breath is testament to the mixture of pragmatism and idealism present in many youth workers.

Jeffs and Smith (2010) note that tools and mechanisms for impact and quality measurement are generally underdeveloped within youth work. They further note that evidence of good youth work has been largely anecdotal, with occasional documented and evidenced external reviews and evaluations. This view validates the need for some intensive review in this area.

How to evidence the impact of youth work

The Peace4Youth programme has placed the youth work methodology at the centre of the programme. In advocating for this approach as a transformative one, YouthPact wishes to gather evidence from practice that illustrates this complex social phenomenon. Narrative approaches are used to capture the youth work processes and to demonstrate moments of learning and change.

Spence (2008) argues for the growing need to find theoretical frameworks and languages to describe this youth work process more clearly:

> *"An important task of building the discursive field of youth work and to communicate its meanings is to engage with the different theoretical dimensions of these related educational approaches."*
>
> **(Spence 2008:7)**

It is no longer a question as to whether the impact of youth work ***can*** be measured but rather by what means ***will*** it be measured. It is clear from the evidence presented earlier that the dominant narrative is towards a technical approach because of the high value placed on a scientific and objective approach. However to accept this approach is to undermine the tacit knowledge of practitioners who for years have used this to guide and shape their work. While traditional tried and tested methods measure tangible outcomes in relation to conventional standards, youth work also needs to be able to articulate inner strengths, personal accomplishments measured against the young person's own aims and goals.

Ord, highlights some of the main difficulties for outcomes focused youth work, he states,

> *"I would argue strongly that outcomes-focused practice is necessarily problematic for youth work, not least because outcomes themselves are problematic for youth. Not that I'm arguing youth work does not have significant outcomes for young people but that outcomes-focused practice tends to fail to comprehend how those outcomes are produced. Outcomes-focused practice tends to conceive of learning and the resulting outcomes in a linear fashion."*
>
> **(Ord, 2014:58)**

The tension remains in relation to outcomes and measurement whereby the emphashis is more often than not measuring how deficits have been 'fixed' rather than an assets based approach to measurement focusing on opportunity building strenghts and widening horizons.

The youth work approach is asset-based recognising the value of individuals and communities. Ord (2014) proposes the need for measurement tools that are fit for purpose to enable workers to better describe the impact for young people:

> *"The very notion of measurement asks the wrong kinds of questions and looks to provide the wrong kind of answers. We would be better off talking in terms of 'demonstrating changes' rather than 'measuring outcomes'. This would more accurately reflect and bring to life the process of youth work. Measurement is derived from technical and epistemic conceptions of the world where everything is quantifiable, rational and universal."*
>
> **(Ord, 2014:61)**

Spence (2008) underlines the need for youth workers to not only engage with young people through practice but also in the public discussion ***using the language of youth work practice.*** Spence proposes,

> *"If youth work is to thrive, it is essential that the public language of practice and the terms of reference informing policy at least complement the intrinsic nature of the processes of practice. This does not mean that there will be one way and one way only. Nor does it mean that priorities and concepts will be static. But it does suggest that discussion should revolve around a set of central reference points and that the boundaries of the youth work constituency should be recognisable. Mainly this implies developing a theoretical and policy language which is grounded in, emanates from and connects back to the realities of practice conditions."*
>
> **(Spence, 2008:6)**

In recent youth work policy and practice there has been a clear focus on demonstrating tangible and intangible outcomes for young people. Often this results in an overemphasis on the measurement tool, while under-recording the most transformative approaches and outcomes for young people.

Friedman (2009) suggests that getting the balance right between planning, measuring and delivering the intended work is an essential component in achieving change. Friedman (2009) further cautions that many planning processes are 'all talk and no action', suggesting two convergent deficiencies in planning processes.

> *"They are often far more complicated and time consuming than they need to be. And for many planning processes, creation of the plan document becomes the purpose of the work, instead of the intended benefits and the actions needed to get there."*
>
> **(Friedman, 2009: 3)**

Having a clear and specific goal is essential to ensuring the correct information is being gathered and measured. Friedman (2009) cautions that 'good practice in the use of data is surprisingly rare.'

Friedman (2009) provides reasons for this:

(1) Organizations do a poor job of setting priorities for what data is most important. If everything is important then nothing is important.

(2) Organizations have a poor understanding of the role of data. Data is not a good unto itself, but rather a tool that can help organizations change lives. It is only possible to set data priorities if data is seen as serving a higher purpose.

(3) The planning and management frameworks that organizations have adopted are unnecessarily complex and hard to use. In the face of this complexity, managers and executives often treat the development and use of data as a specialized technical matter detached from the day-to-day management of the organization.

In addition to the practice in terms of collecting data Friedman (2009) points to the need to be clear in the language of measurement to support the practice of data collection and measuring change, he argues,

> *"If we are not disciplined about language, then we are not disciplined about thought."*
>
> **(Friedman, 2009:2)**

Merton and Wylie (2002), commenting on the traditional educational goals of youth work have a more technical and linear approach to the outcomes of youth work:

> *"The more clearly we can specify the ends, the better we will be able to choose the means for achieving them."*
>
> **(Merton and Wylie 2002:2; and DfES 2002:11)**

To gather the full impact of the Peace4Youth programme there is a need to marry the measurement of planned outcomes, unintended outcomes and incidental outcomes.

Delivery partners are gathering quantitative and qualititaive data with QUB in their role as external evaluators. YouthPact are gathering data on interventions and approaches used by delivery agents. The different data collection methods make it possible to triangulate the data in a way that captures change for young people and crucially the processes that brought about the change. This approach addresses the warning by Bamber (2011 cited in NYCI/YouthNet 2011: 4) of a 'hierarchy of evidence'. That is, methods such as systematic reviews, randomised control trials and quasi-experimental studies being presented as robust, objective and more valuable than the methods many youth workers employ such as pre and post baseline tools, evaluations, practice papers and reflective practice, which may be deemed 'less valid' and more subjective.

Conclusion

The strength of combining a youth work approach with a clear and deep understanding of peacebuilding concepts offers a way of hidden or obscured ideas rising to the surface, the combination is the key. The concepts and models proposed here offer such combinations, with the potential to act as templates for future Peace4Youth work. To have a more considered explicit understanding of peacebuilding concepts will serve to elevate the project work and outcomes.

Context is the lens through which we make sense of life for individuals and the wider society. Understanding the context of a society emerging from conflict, and the individual perspectives of young people within this is the skill that drives responsive, reactive practice forward. Phronesis is herein presented as the learned wisdom of the experienced considered practitioner, who works up their approach and response in constant reference to the kinetic contexts of individuals and their circumstances. This regard for intuitive ways of knowing is not to disregard episteme and techne, but to value a balanced approach to practice. This approach equally values the analysis and exploration of knowledge and theory, beside the skills to implement, alongside phronesis. It is with this blended approach that the full palette of practitioner strength can be evident in practice and outcomes.

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youth pact QUALITY & IMPACT

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