

NARRATIVE THERAPY

Re-membering Practices

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Re-membering Practices



...a special type of recollection

- Attention to figures who belong to one's life story
- Deliberate re-organising of memberships of one's club of life
- Not remembering or recalling history but a *context to revise or re-organise* memberships

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a person can decide

- whose voices are to be **recognized** (on matters of their own identity)
- Who is **authorized** to speak on such matters
- Status of **existing** memberships
- Selection of **new** memberships

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Maybe some of the views we hold of ourselves may be views or ideas from **someone else**



and we can **explore** and **rearrange** them

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Thinking behind re-membering practices

- "Identities formed through relationship" (Post-structuralist)
- identities multi-voiced rather than structuralist identity with self as the centre of ones' being
- interconnected web of relationships rather than individual self

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- can be used as an antidote to negative identity conclusions that have pervaded a person's sense of their own identity

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RE-MEMBERING QUESTIONS

WHEN A SIGNIFICANT PERSON HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED there are 2 sets of inquiry:

1.

- What is it that _____ contributed to your life? What did she/he/it do that made a difference to your life?
- How did these actions of _____ make a difference in how you understood yourself and your life? How did they make you feel and think about yourself?

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RE-MEMBERING QUESTIONS

2.

- Why do you think _____ showed this interest in you? What was it that you did that contributed to his/her/its life?
- What do you think your relationship with _____ meant to him/her/it? What difference do you think you may have made to how he/she/it thought about his/her/itself and own life?

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WHAT DID YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE **2** SETS OF INQUIRY?

1. Questions about what ***others contributed*** to the person
2. Questions about what the ***person contributed*** to others

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Uses for practice

- De-centres the practitioner and elicits support from the community in which the person is located – sustainability
- Reduces isolation
- Identifies others who would support the person's changes or developments – stand with them

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- Useful at critical points in therapeutic work when the person wishes to move ahead but is constrained by negative identity conclusions from others
- Inversions of power – the person considers the contribution they have made to the lives of others
- Revises notions of victim to one of personal agency

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Reflection

- Think about how you might use remembering practices in your work
- Write down your ideas
- Spend 10 minutes sharing your ideas with someone else – take turns

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Ref:

White, M, 2007, *Maps of Narrative Practice*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York.

Myerhoff, B. 1986: 'Life not death in Venice: Its second life'. In Turner, V. and Bruner, E. (eds). 1986: *The Anthropology of Experience*, University of Illinois Press, Chicago.