



Advocacy and Social Mobilisation

Our pre-class reading of Rebecca Solnit's 'Hope In The Dark' set the groundwork for generating inspirational tools, strategies and creative responses to the variety of prejudice's the class, and the world at large, face.

The key elements of the programme involved

- 1. Why activism? Why direct action?** - How to grow an effective campaign – creative tools, media engagement and imaginative stunts
- 2. Organisation development exercises** - to map out their organisations / movements 'aims, activities, outcomes' using the Specific Measured Achievable Realistic Time-bound (SMART) strategy.
- 3. Visioning Exercises** – to encourage a forward-thinking approach to achieving full potential. Using role-plays participants imagined what an interview on the evening news would look like after their movement or organisation hit the headlines for achieving a successful campaign. *'Imagine your standing outside your press conference after you have made the headlines - tell us what your organisation is about.'* From this the participants then created action plans to meet these dreams.
- 4. Media role play exercises** - to help participants focus on 3 key messages using the ABC approach 'Acknowledge, Bridge, Communicate.'



[Picture - anti-Iraq war March in London in 2003]

What can we do?

Political engagement is more more than just ticking a box once every 4 years (16 times in your life). **There are advantages and limitations of mainstream tactics (demonstrations, marches, petitions).** They are open and accessible, lots of people can get involved and they are good for drawing people into a wider movement. BUT marches can be (but not always) passive, ignored, disempowering and easily accommodated by the status quo





Direct Action throughout History

Direct Action - 'the use of strikes, demonstrations, or other public forms of protest rather than negotiation to achieve one's demands.'

Direct Action throughout History - Ghandi, the civil rights independence, suffragettes and more...



'There is an imperative to a higher law and it is our duty to defend them' Ghandi

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'When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty' Adam Kokesh

"You don't fight racism with racism, the best way to fight racism is with solidarity." Bobby Seale, Black Panther Party

If I can't dance it's not my revolution' Emma Goldman

Why direct action?

People take direct action when they find the prescribed system of 'democracy' fails them.

Direct action is about acting out of necessity - we see what is wrong and that it is necessary and justified to act for our personal safety, that of others, or indeed for the future of the planet.

It can equally be about creating what you want, as acting to stop what you disagree with.

It is about taking responsibility, and not deferring power.





Direct Action as Storytelling

Direct Action as Storytelling [Smartmeme]



In many ways the defining manifestation of a movement is the emergence of a common story that allows people to express their shared values and create a common vision of the change they want to see.

Framing: Action Logic

The way the action embodies the narrative and speaks for itself as a story.

Characters: The Messenger is the Message

Messengers are often times just as important if not more important than the message, because they embody the message by putting human faces on the conflict, and putting the story in context.

Towards New Stories

Around the world, battle lines are drawn between forces that exploit, destroy and conquer versus those that stand for life, justice and hope. Inspiring campaigns of resistance and transformation are underway, and social movements are quite literally changing the stories that structure our lives, and changing the story of our future. I



Show Don't Tell: Engage with Values

As the writer's expression says a good storyteller doesn't just tell the story – they show you the story. A picture is worth a thousand words!

Foreshadow: Tell The Future

When we forecast the future we desire through our messaging and our images, we bring people with us towards being able to imagine and embrace a visionary solution.

[Two examples were used as 'codes' for the participants to explore the values. These are taken from a British context (the facilitators background). The participants were then asked to share examples of effective and imaginative direct actions from their communities and then unpack the reasons for their effectiveness. Sticking it to the Prime Minister and the recent film 'Pride']



Why take direct action?

Why take direct action? [Plane Stupid]

Direct action works. History has shown us that when there is a need for radical social change, asking those in power nicely to relinquish some control doesn't get us very far. There would be no trade unions without the Tolpuddle martyrs, nor marches and rallies without Peterloo.

Women wouldn't be voting without the suffragettes. Mandela would still be in jail if it wasn't for direct action against apartheid. India would still be a British colony and Rosa Park's grandkids would be at the back of the bus. Britain would be covered in new motorways and GM crops. Even if you don't agree with our methods and aims you can't really deny that the world is a better place because of people taking direct action.

Direct action gets straight to the point. Sometimes you're left with no choice but to take action. Developers want to bulldoze your house to build an airport. Your family will be on the streets because the banks won't re-mortgage your house. An old lady is getting mugged in front of you at the bus stop. Your boss plans to fire loads of staff to protect his bonus. The biosphere is collapsing because industrial growth keeps consuming our dwindling resources.

These aren't times to write your politician a nice letter asking whether he saw the petition you signed. There's no time to go to the police or the courts (even if you could afford it), and there's no betting they'd support you if you did. These are all times to take action with friends, co-workers, neighbours and complete strangers. When systems fail you, don't fail yourself.

Representative democracy is failing. These days we don't trust politicians to fill in expenses forms so why should we trust them with the most important aspects of our lives? Businesses spend millions every year on fancy dinners and seats on the board, which gives them more of a say in how our country is run than we have. Voting once every four years is not enough: we need to regain control over our own food supplies, our jobs, our shelter, our transport systems and our futures.

Direct action takes responsibility for the world we see around us. Dealing with climate change is our collective responsibility. We can't leave it up to the powerful to solve it: they got us into this mess in the first place, and the money they made doing so will make sure they're the last ones to be affected by it.

For many direct action is a preferred way of doing things through which we can take both responsibility and control: two sides of the same coin which we unwisely let fall into another's purse when we allow the powerful to dictate the terms of business. So while we're sorry that your flight was delayed because of what we did, we had to take action. I'll get all worthy and quote Martin Luther King here: "*Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.*" See you on the barricades?



What makes a good direct action?

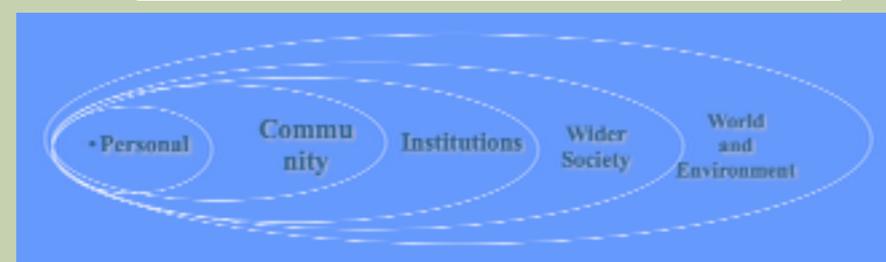
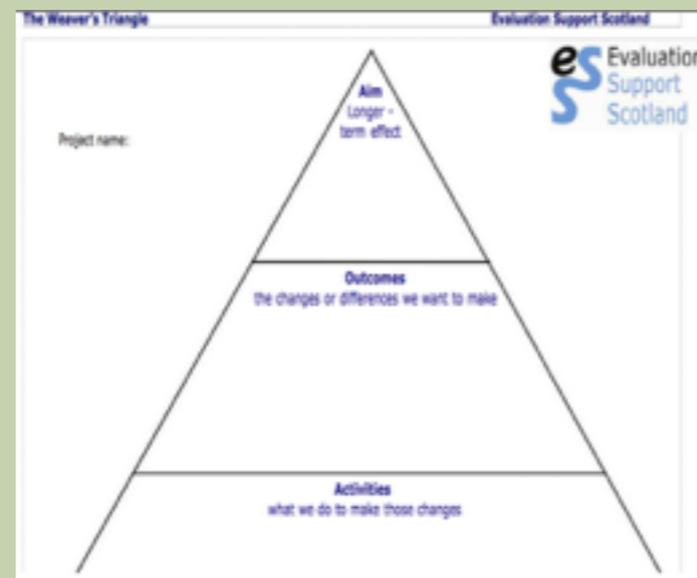
the **TARGET** e.g. corporation, government or the public

the **FORM** e.g. blockade, street party, disruption, monkey-wrenching, strike

the **AUDIENCE** e.g. investors, public government

the **MEDIA** e.g. leaflets, photos, video, press release, banners etc.

We finished this section of the class by developing action plans using tools such as Picture (1) the Weavers Triangle and (2) Spheres of Influence below to generate a series of actions, contextually specific to each participants movement, to achieve their goals. This included gender-sensitisation, mentoring and reflective practices throughout.





Education for Transformation



How does Popular Education fit within our journey into Gender Diversity and Social Transformation?

Throughout the programme we explored the meaning of Transformation Education, how to raise Critical Consciousness at Individual and Community levels (theory and practical examples) and each participants Practice or Vocation as a transformative educator. This was also our opportunity to explore and crystallise our understanding of the theories and mechanisms behind the methodologies used in the programme at large.

Raising Critical Consciousness at Individual and Community levels: an Introduction to Paulo Freire and the Popular Education movement.

Paulo Freire's Principles of Education

1. The aim of education is radical transformation;

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Education is for the **oppressed** to break the **culture of silence** and fulfil their **vocation** which is being **fully human**.



2. Education must be relevant

Starts from the here & now of people's history & experience of life; from their 'generative themes'.

Suppressed feelings contribute to a sense of powerlessness and apathy but if we tap into them, people can unearth new life for themselves and others.

Paulo Freire – founder of 'Popular Education' ideas

Adult Educator - worked with poor & illiterate communities in Brazil in the 50s

1964: Exiled to Chile

1967: "Education as the Practice of Freedom"

1969: "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"





Radical (Root) Approach to Community Transformation



1. Understanding the root causes of suffering – Structural analysis (power, global issues, political and economic analysis, gender and racial oppression etc.) All radical education that is aimed at radical transformation;

2. Listen

3. Practical community alternatives (organisational development, small successes to build confidence), based on values such as participation, inclusiveness (gender, race, disability etc.).

4. Participation - Start from people's experience and struggles/ real needs in relation to change.

5. Engage in a process of Action & Reflection

How to create Social Change...? adin

How does a shift in consciousness lead to social change? How is the energy released by the shift in consciousness canalised into action? How are the factors that will play a role in leading conscientised people into agents of change...?

Shift of Consciousness [used particularly in week 1's 'River of Life' exercise]

- Think of a time in your life when you had a major 'shift of consciousness' (e.g. River of Life);
- Explore what was 'involved' in it: what made this shift happen?
- What happened afterwards? Did you 'actualise' the shift i.e. did it lead to any change in your life? How did this happen and what was necessary for the transformation to happen?
- Shift in consciousness: how does it happen? - Dramatic events, *'More dramatic shifts occur as we experience and respond to radical or systemic transformations, such as economic recession, environmental degradation, or the effects of war'* (V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan)



Problem Posing Method

“Asking the proper question is the central action of transformation in fairy tales, in analysis and in individuation. The key question causes germination of consciousness. The properly shaped question always emanates from an essential curiosity about what stands behind. Questions are the keys that cause the secret doors of the psyche to swing open.” Clarissa Pinkola Estes, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*,



Dialogue as the Process and Practice of liberation

Through dialogue, popular education maintains fellowship and solidarity, and leads to fuller humanisation. Such dialogue requires a profound love for the world and people, humility, faith in people’s potential, hope and critical thinking which sees the potential for change and does not cut itself off from action.

Reflection and Action

Praxis = reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.

Praxis means the transformation of the world; genuine commitment to the people means change.



“Critical Consciousness” vs “Naïve Consciousness”

The purpose of transformative education is to enable a shift from 'Naive consciousness to 'Critical consciousness' [process – 'Levels of Awareness]. “Naïve consciousness” involves gaining insight into and becoming aware of one’s own problems, but without making connections with the world outside. “Critical Consciousness” grows in people who stop looking at problems as mostly individual accidents but see them more as structural problems.



'Listening Surveys' – a questioning tool to generate positive community change.

Key problem-posing questions to trigger community discussions can be enhanced both through the right process of questions (such as below) but also through active listening.



When you think of your personal life, work, friends, family etc., what makes you feel happy, energised, hopeful? And what makes you feel angry, frustrated, and worried?

When you think of your community, village, neighbourhood, what makes you feel happy, energised, hopeful? And what makes you feel angry, frustrated, worried?

When you think of the wider institutions, e.g. your local/ national government, the health and/or education systems, the world trade organisation etc., what makes you feel energised and hopeful? And what makes you feel angry, frustrated, fearful?

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The Wheel of Fundamental Human Needs

Chilean economist Max Neef created the fundamental wheel of human needs to enable societies to examine their needs, unmet needs, 'false satisfiers' and genuinely positive responses to unmet needs, resulting pathologies of unmet needs and how communities can gain insight into their needs to meet them and become 'fully alive'





Further Popular Education Readings and Resources

The tools were shared from Training for Transformation (TfT) – Website
- <http://www.grailprogrammes.org.za>

Training for Transformation (TfT) is based on a number of approaches to change. The core of this work is the development of critical consciousness and creativity. It was developed from Paulo Freire's radically different approach to adult education which helped people "to read their reality and write their own history", and motivates them to action that transforms their life situation. The uniqueness of Freire's approach challenges the traditional educational mould. The implementation of this theory is very practical with well trained teams analysing the macro and micro realities of each area, finding generative themes and developing programmes that aim to develop critical consciousness and action. TfT has nourished the belly of movements for justice all over the world. Anne Hope (co-founder of TfT along with the magnificent Sally Timmel) was a student with popular education founding father Paulo Friere and was approached by the late great Steve Biko to develop a programme in the context of anti-Apartheid. Steve Biko, founder of the Black Consciousness Movement was a pivotal force life-force in tearing down the evils of Apartheid and since then, TfT has inspired activists and communities all over the world. To mention just a few – the Centre for Human Ecology, Abahlali – the South African Shackdwellers Movement, Centre for Youth Resources Foundation Network (CRYfoNe), Mamelani, the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement (MST).

Further Popular Education Readings

9. Popular Education Summary - www.scribd.com/doc/118836544/Paulo-Freire-s-Pedagogy-of-the-Oppressed-1 \t "_blank

10. Building a Convivial Society – Insights from Nyerere and Freire – a speech by Anne Hope - www.theglassishalffull.co.uk/building-a-convivial-society-insights-from-nyerere-and-freire-a-speech-by-anne-hope/ \t "_blank

11. Building critical thinkers, educators and activists in our communities – the legacy of Gramsci and Freire

12. ShikShantar - [The People's Institute for Rethinking Education and Development](#)

13. Planning with Popular Education - Popular Education News





Designing a learning event

As the week drew to a close the participants went into groups to develop and facilitate action plans to take gender and diversity concerns forward-beyond the programme. Through using the 'problem-posing approach' as mentioned above each group developed codes to help a community unpack gender-based oppression, envisioning a gender equitable society and developing strategies to create change.



Examples of 'codes'

Skits, films, documentaries, testimonials, storytelling, river of life, charts, cartoons, debates, agree-disagree statements, posters, song, poetry, doll / puppet show, theatre, games and activities, web game, drawing. Others could be provocative questions, movie clips, proverbs and adverts.

