Column 3, Section 7

Drawing, metaphors, reflection and teacher identity

Pass the drawing

It was a great smell! I had brought along warm muffins today just out of the oven. This established a relaxed feeling and created an atmosphere of meeting after school for afternoon tea with some work. The room had several glassed doors that looked out to gardens away from the student areas within the school grounds. We sat around a conference room table with a large piece of paper spread between us. We each drew on the space immediately in front of ourselves for one minute. We could draw whatever we wished. "*Just start doodling*" I instructed the others. Then on a signal, I shifted the paper one space to the right and each mentor proceeded to enhance their neighbour's drawing for the next minute and so on (Virshup, 1975).

"*Like Chinese whispers but in drawing, a visual version*" they said (Joanna and Julianne, personal communication May 26, 2011). I had sat between the two participants which initially created some tension, but the mentors warmed up very quickly as we engaged in the game. Unlike the first PAR, I drew with the mentors. I felt last time I was watching too much, like a teacher overseeing students (E. C. Betlem, personal communication June 27, 2011). This is not what *friends* do (Gibbs & Angelides, 2008)! While drawing I became quite mindful of the fact that, "*I can draw and would this intimidate the others*" (E. C.

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Betlem, personal communication, May 26, 2011)? I deliberately limited my standard of drawing to match the mentors' drawing technique. I knew that adults untrained in art were often reluctant to draw (Gladding, 1998; Gladding & Newsome, 2003; Kearney & Hyle, 2004) and I did not wish to discourage them from doing the activity. Julianne later confessed; *"it can be nerve racking...* [I was thinking] *what do you think of my drawing?* However Joanna felt that "*drawing can be quite relaxing after a big day... you think, but it is a fun thinking: What do I do with this? Play around with that ... no pressure...*" (personal communication, May 26, 2011).

Passing the drawing around the group, the original image we each created was quickly lost as others added to it during the game. "*I tried to give things faces. I wanted to make it pretty, gave it earrings... it sort of looks like the person drawing it, but not really, sort of, in a way...*" said one and the other added the person leaning against the tree (see *Figure 34.* "Pass the drawing" done by Joanna, Julianne and Myself) because *"the tree looked really welcoming and warm and relaxing"* (Joanna and Julianne respectively, personal communication, May 26, 2011).

This drawing game, I called "Pass the drawing" was done at our first PLT session at Matisse C H. There was a rapid acceptance of each other into the group (Bottery, 2003), as the drawing game acted as a vehicle for cultivating trust in our relationship. It quickly opened the space and dialogue between the members of our new group (Eisner, 2006; Finley, 2005). Our discussion in this first PLT revolved around experiences we had in building relationships with colleagues, Joanna as a new teacher and Julianne as a new coordinator.

Entering a new community of practice

Joining the staff a few years earlier, Joanna had arrived mid-year and was left to "sink or swim". "*I didn't know anyone and rapport was very hard to build up, hardly anyone*

Figure 34. "Pass the drawing" done by Joanna, Julianne and Myself.

spoke to me for a number of months" (personal communication, May 4, 2011). The faculty at

the time did not have a coordinator and she felt that she would have benefited from an

assigned mentor to support her.

> *As a mentee I would like to develop a relationship ... [with] people like Julianne's*
>
> *role,* [or] *like a HoD* [Head of Department] *you may never ever work with or speak*
>
> *with. As a Special Ed* [ucation] *teacher you are quite singular. How do* [I] *as a*
>
> *mentee feel confident to approach a HoD? A HoD should be open to be approached*
>
> *by anyone ... because they are at a certain level their door should always be open.*
>
> *How do you make someone feel approachable? When commonly and possibly they*
>
> *are unfamiliar to you?* (Joanna, personal communication May 26, 2011)

Moving from one school to another required Joanna as a newcomer to get a sense of

how the school operated (explained in *Figure 35*. Entering a new community of practice -

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the school). She had to engage with new people, develop new relationships that were mutually beneficial and establish who is in what role within the school. She also had to learn and make use of the shared repertoire already established at the school, such as: school ethos, established routines, ways of doing things, tools used, concepts and beliefs held at the school (Wenger, 1998). *"I often say to the kids, a new teacher to a school is like a new student to the school, they have so many hurdles to get over ... to learn ... It would be good if that ice was easily broken"* (Joanna, personal communication May 26, 2011).

Julianne "*found* [the school] *to be a very nurturing school*". She had a long association with the school first as a parent and later as a teacher. "*It* [the school] *was a really good fit for me, actually my personality, which is probably why I was comfortable sending my daughters here"* (personal communication April 29, 2011). Julianne commenced
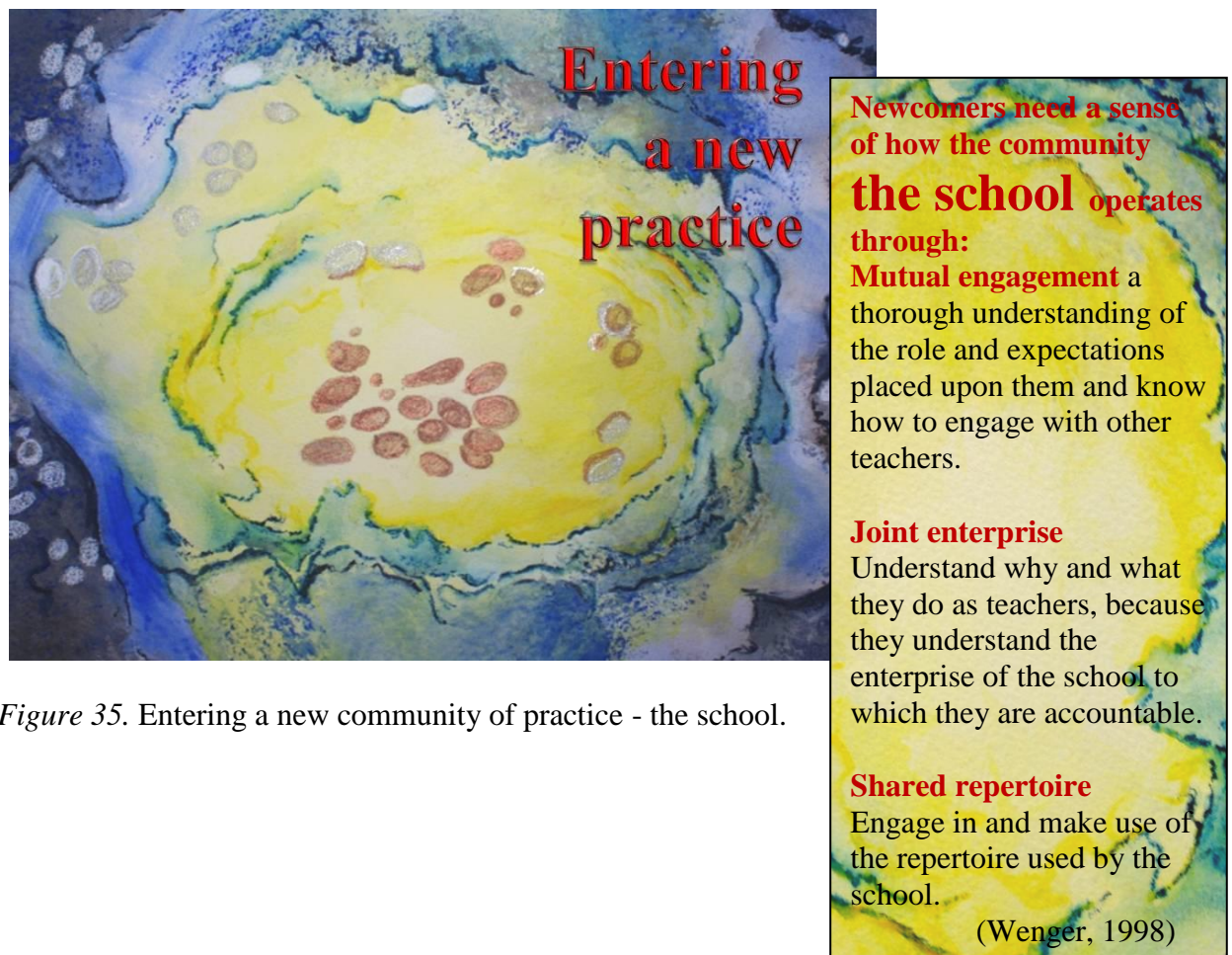

Figure 35. Entering a new community of practice - the school.

Newcomers need a sense of how the community **the school** operates through:
Mutual engagement a thorough understanding of the role and expectations placed upon them and know how to engage with other teachers.

Joint enterprise
Understand why and what they do as teachers, because they understand the enterprise of the school to which they are accountable.

Shared repertoire
Engage in and make use of the repertoire used by the school.
(Wenger, 1998)

as a Pastoral care coordinator that same year of our PAR, which required her to mentor and supervise a number of colleagues. Questioning whether she had the team's trust and respect *"... they can come to me and say whatever is on their mind which they haven't, and I don't know why that is and I'm nervous to ask them, I don't know if it's a thing of trust or respect, I just feel they don't respect me"* (Julianne, personal communication, April 29, 2011). Julianne was also concerned that she had been prejudged and this raised some challenges. Furthermore Julianne received limited PD for her new position and wished *"to develop ... skills in talking with ... a section of the college or students who are resistant to taking on another point of view ... they are entrenched in their point of view ... on the whole"* (personal communication May 26, 2011).

Joanna and Julianne had both ventured into "unfamiliar territory" (Wenger, 1998, p. 153). Entering a new community of practice they had to transform their past experiences to realign themselves with a new regime of competence (Wenger, 1998, p. 138). We see ourselves in the terms of belonging to a community which Wenger (1998) explained as "modes of belonging" (p. 173) (see *Figure 36.* Modes of Belonging - defined). Joanna had trouble finding where she fitted within the school, *"how do I make myself belong... sometimes it is easier not to belong"*. She saw herself as a "*subordinate*", "*stigmatised*" and "*isolated*" (personal communication May 26, 2011). A few (from her perspective major) mistakes had destabilised her identity as a teacher (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006). *" I've been thinking because of some experiences that I've gained here at this school that I am probably better off looking outside of education"* (Joanna, personal experience, May 4, 2011). Joanna was not aligned with her school's practice. Conversely Julianne was well aligned however her new role was not part of her current repertoire as a teacher and with limited access to opportunities that allowed her to make sense of this new role, Julianne, "lacked competence [in how to] engage" (Wenger, 1998, p. 153) in action
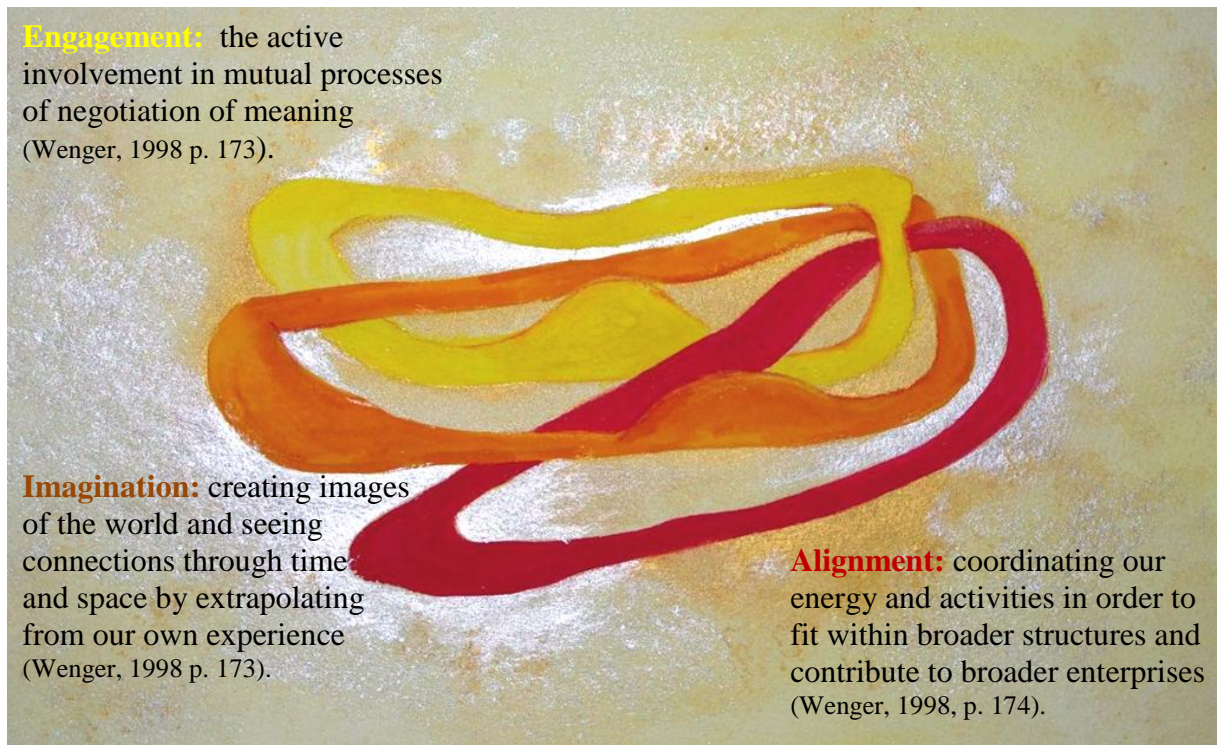
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Engagement: the active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning (Wenger, 1998 p. 173).

Imagination: creating images of the world and seeing connections through time and space by extrapolating from our own experience (Wenger, 1998 p. 173).

Alignment: coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures and contribute to broader enterprises (Wenger, 1998, p. 174).

Figure 36. Modes of Belonging – defined.

with others as a coordinator.

Joanna's personal set of events

"We have shared goals, ultimately we have respect for one another, positive personal attributes, listening, empathy, sense of humour, [but also] *being let down, pushiness, taken for granted"* (Joanna, personal communication, August 15, 2011). There had been a break down in the relationship with a supervisory colleague and the words Joanna had selected from the "Work relationships data collection sheet" (see Appendix E) reflected both a successful time in their relationship compared to one she was currently experiencing. "*Ultimately she is all of that, but I just feel that I am being pulled, it has had a negative ... I feel let down"* (Joanna, personal communication, August 15, 2011).

Conflicting interests regarding a response to a situation with a student resulted in a confrontation between Joanna and her colleague. One that Joanna had taken personally. The

colleague had been a good friend and she was feeling let down. *"I am an honest person who was not seen for what she was trying to say and do"* She felt that *"... there's a concern that the teachers voice is validated equally to that* [of the] *child's"* (Joanna, personal communication, May 4, 2011). *"So you don't feel you have an adequate voice in this school"* (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, May 4, 2011)*? "I didn't, that may have changed* [a new Principal had commenced recently at the school] *but I'm also keeping a distance. I'm ensuring that nothing happens, any more"* (Joanna, personal communication, May 4, 2011).

Joanna and her supervising colleague no longer collaborated, the colleague communicated via email and this has further strained the relationship. *"It stems from the inequality of* [my teachers'] *loading ... I thought, yet another thing to do*! *I was disappointed and she got a reaction straight away* [by email]... *because of her response, I thought ... I'll just do it"!* The unresolved issues in their relationship left Joanna feeling powerless and compliant (Wenger, 1998) *"... rise to the challenge, just do it"* Joanna had said (personal communication, August 15, 2011). I pointed out to her that the email under discussion had not been addressed to her in person, it had been sent to her and a different colleague; whom interestingly had been named (see Appendix F for email analysis done for Joanna). I asked her *"who did the work"? "I just did it"* she responded firmly. As *"a subordinate"* to the supervisory colleague she had later said in the same session, *"no but from that level ... comes an element of respect. That is why I just did the* [work]*, hence, why I just do it, I've done it and it cannot be said that ..."* (E. C. Betlem and Joanna, personal communication, August 15, 2011).

Julianne's personal set of events

Julianne's mentor team rarely met as a group and we were well into the third term of a four term academic school year. Communication with the mentor team had been largely by

email and informal one-to-one chats as they passed each other in the corridor. Julianne was concerned that *"I tend not to hear anything from them unless it's something negative"* (personal communication, April 29, 2011).

"You need to get [others] *to come to the party"* Julianne said in frustration when I suggested *"we try to get other*s *to join you on your journey"* (personal communication, August 15, 2011). Julianne had organised a year group meeting of students and teachers and we were discussing that some of the team members had contradicted her expectations with regards to the location of the meeting. One member of the group challenged (via email) these expectations *"dug her heals in"* (Julianne, personal communication, August 15, 2011) and laid blame on the students where in fact this member, herself had not come to the required location. The person had *"...wanted me to get them* [the students] *into trouble ... and that was the standoff really in the end"* (Julianne, personal communication, August 15, 2011). *"What other strategies could you have taken with your initial response"?* I asked. *"Well I think I was very conciliatory"* said Julianne*, "yes",* I agreed. With a nervous giggle she said *"not sure if there was another way of doing it"* (E. C Betlem and Julianne, personal communication, August 15, 2011).

To put it into Julianne's own words *"I poked her"* (personal communication, November 14, 2011)*, "I think you were too conciliatory"* (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, August 15, 2011). I had been a Pastoral care coordinator myself for several years and thus understood Julianne's dilemma. Her 'buffer' role had come into play (see *Figure 38.* Julianne's metaphor image), the teacher was unchanging in her stance and Julianne did not wish the students to be punished (Appendix G for email analysis done for Julianne). *"I could have gone, actually you are wrong ... but that is not really my style ... I do it to kids sometimes but I find it hard to do ... to my colleague"* (Julianne, personal communication, August 15, 2011). I redirected the conversation to Joanna, asking her what

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she thought. Julianne quickly interjected, *"I should have said, I have told you"!* Joanna then freely suggested, *"Don't be so gentle ... you're in a position of authority she is a subordinate, like I am. I am a subordinate"* Julianne, without hesitation interrupts "*and that was it, she keeps trying to be like this to me"* pushing her thumb down as if squashing something onto the table (personal communication, August 15, 2011).

Julianne's mentor team, like her, were new to the practice of mentoring students of this particular year group (explained in *Figure 37.* Entering a new community of practice - the mentor team). Some of the members had been mentor teachers for many years at this school however six had recently joined the staff. Some of the new teachers had mentoring experience from other schools and others had limited experience (Julianne, personal communication, September 14, 2011). The members brought varied experiences and competences to the team however they did not have a sense of belonging to the team. Julianne provided limited opportunities for them to engage and interact together on an ongoing basis in order to develop a shared understanding of their mentoring practice and a sense of mutual commitment to the team (Wenger, 1998). Presenting ideas to the team Julianne found "*they just think its hard work ... and that's happened and then I've been sabotaged"* (personal communication, April 29, 2011).

"I don't think I will" said Julianne when I asked her about holding a meeting with her team. *"Why did you decide against that"* I probed (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, August 1, 2011). *"Umm ... because whenever I talk to people they are really rushed" ... they are pressured, there is no down time anywhere ... I have three meetings this week"* (Julianne, personal communication, August 1, 2011). *"To be honest I was surprised when you told me that you did not run meetings. I was use to either having to, run one or go to a* [pastoral care] *meeting"* (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, August

Entering a new practice

Newcomers need a sense of how the community,

the mentor team

operates through:

Mutual engagement a thorough understanding of the role and expectations placed upon them and know how to engage with other teachers.

Joint enterprise
Understand why and what they do as teachers, because they understand the enterprise of the mentor team to which they are accountable.

Shared repertoire
Engage in and make use of the repertoire used by the mentor team.
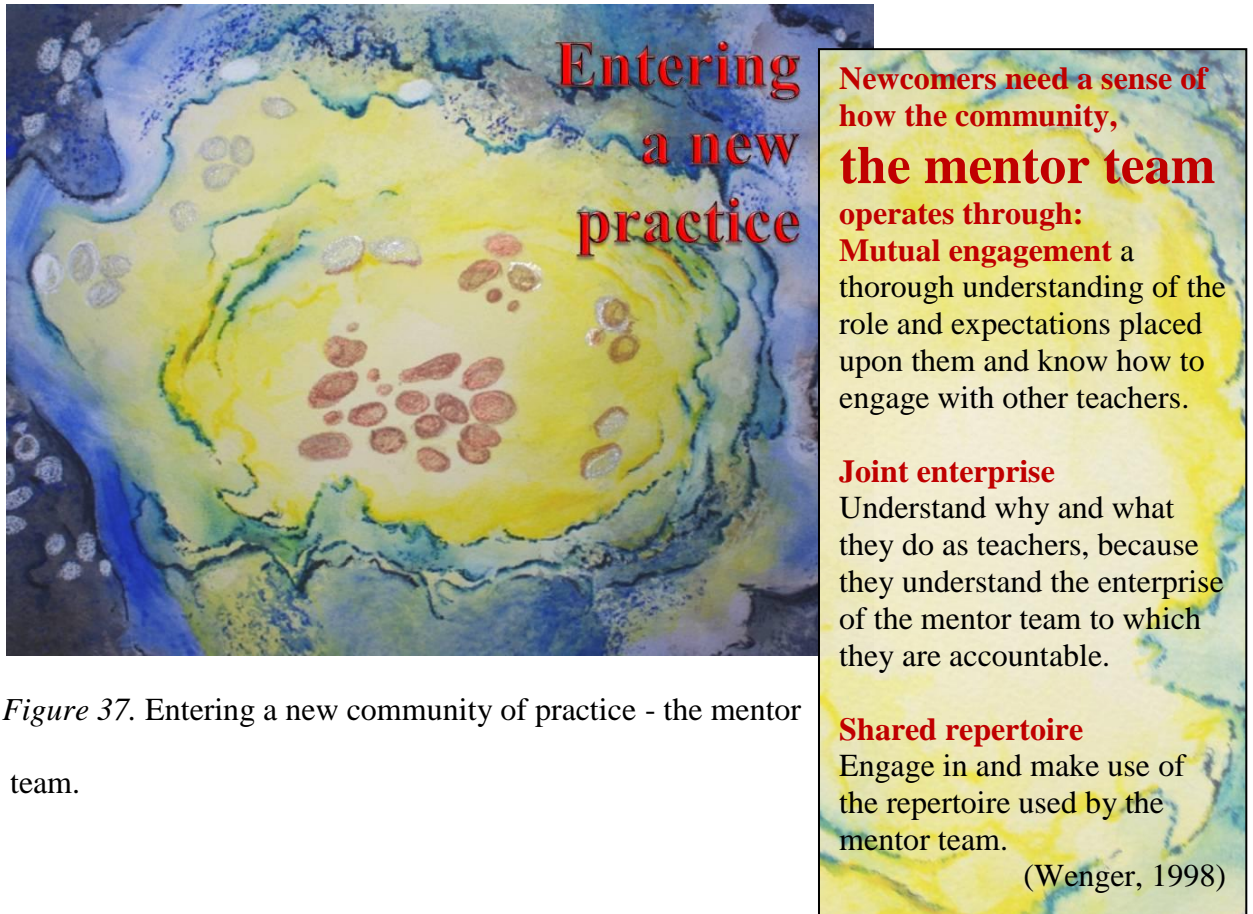
(Wenger, 1998)

Figure 37. Entering a new community of practice - the mentor

 team.

1, 2011). This disturbed me as I knew how valuable working with others in an ongoing basis

was for developing cohesion and trust within a group (Bottery, 2003). To allow the team

members to generate ideas and have a "voice" by working collaboratively sets up a

democratic process (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001; Kemmis, 2006; Kemmis & McTaggart,

2005) that would give the team members a sense of ownership of their mentoring practice

(Wenger, 1998). Julianne then explained how there was a coordinator who actually ran a

meeting every fortnight and by coincidence Joanna was on that team! *"I think it is good"*

contributed Joanna to the discussion. *"I think it is important Julianne and I think if you feel*

like doing it, it is worthy" she encouraged (Joanna, personal communication, August 1,

2011).

Drawing metaphors

"I have to be cautious I am not a psychologist"... I reflected as I wrote in my Journal (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, September 9, 2011). I was worried about the subjective, personal path the mentors had taken in regards to professional relationship issues we explored in previous PLT sessions. I wished to redirect the focus back to their practice. As part of my own practice of teaching I had been using metaphor drawing with my first year education students to help them visualise their professional philosophy (Leavy, McSorley, & Boté, 2007; Martínez, Sauleda, & Huber, 2001). Crossing the boundary (Wenger, 1998) from my personal teaching to my work as a critical friend, I enquired from Joanna if she had *"done much work on drawing or writing metaphors in the past"?* She shook her head to indicate "no". *"Because you are a mentor teacher but first and foremost you are a teacher ... so I thought, if you could draw and/or write in as much detail as possible for me a metaphor that reflects how you view yourself as a teacher"* (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, September 14, 2011). To first stimulate and set Joanna into action I asked her, how do you see yourself as a teacher? How do you see yourself as a learner? What does teaching mean for you? What does learning mean for you? I also asked her to consider the role of the student and the teacher as well as her beliefs of teaching and learning in her metaphor. Joanna engaged herself for a good ten minutes drawing and writing her metaphor. A little later in the PLT session (the mentors were working at a different pace to each other) I gave Julianne a different focus, asking her to concentrate on her role as a coordinator of colleagues: How do you see yourself as a coordinator of mentor teachers? What does, coordinating mentor teachers mean for you? I also asked her to consider, her role, the role of her colleagues and her beliefs about mentoring.

"Metaphors help us to see things differently as we further our understanding of relationships and networks, influences and connections" (Sullivan, 2010, p. 112). Their

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ambiguous nature which allows us to understand and experience one kind of thing in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5; Morgan, 1986, p. 13) can be powerful in helping us to identify our beliefs and assumptions (Leavy, et al., 2007, p. 1231). In addition metaphors "enable others to understand how we feel and, indeed, enable us to recognize our own feelings" (Eisner, 2008, p. 8).
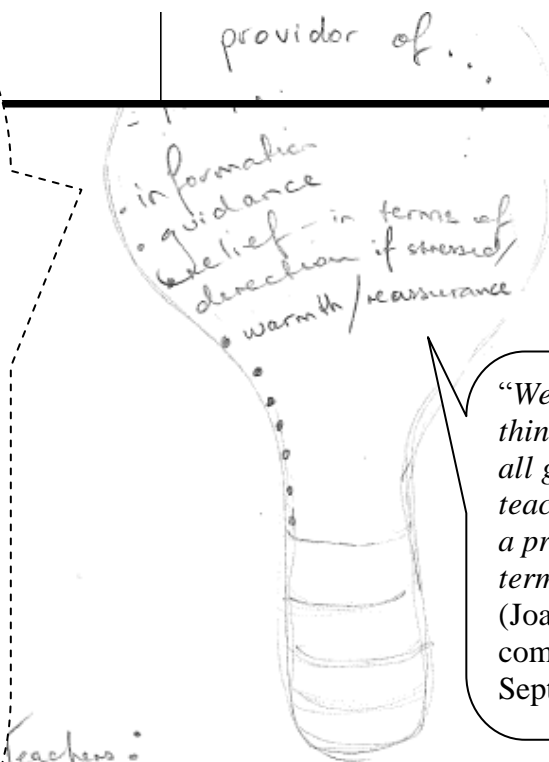
Although Julianne had revealed in our first session some uncertainty when asked to draw the "Pass the drawing" activity, both mentors constructed their personal metaphors by drawing and writing. This allowed the mentors to mediate their mentoring and/or teaching experiences into an image and annotations that could "speak back" (Eisner, 2002, p. 11) to them. To make public what was private (Eisner, 2002, p. 30; Hunt, 2006, p. 317) their personal perceptions of their role and investment as part of their identity as a mentor and/or teacher (Wenger, 1998). The resolved images, their writing and the conversation that followed, allowed me to understand how the mentors perceived and felt about their role and investment in their practice both as mentors and as teachers. It also allowed the mentors, through reflection to recognise how they perceived and felt about their own practice (Eisner, 2008).

As noted previously (see Column 2, Section 6), the use of art and/or images as a "way of seeing is also at the same time a way of not seeing" (Eisner, 2002, p. 11). The ambiguous nature of metaphors can be compounded when done as a drawing and may result in multiple meanings, obscuring some over others (Eisner, 2002; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Morgan, 2011). Thus asking the mentors to verbalise and clarify their intentions was important for gaining a fuller meaning of the mentors' personal metaphor image.

Joanna's metaphor

Joanna's "Light bulb" metaphor (*Figure 38.* Joanna's Light bulb metaphor drawing; annotated with verbalised statements) reveals her philopsphy as a teacher. In her position as

A light bulb "*a popular icon*"... *When you are in the dark you need someone to provide you light ... as soon as you have the light you are reassured, you can see where you are going, you feel safe ... you have clarity. Although it may not be clear around you the light bulb provides direction ...*" (Joanna, personal communication September 14, 2011)

providor of...

· information
· guidance
· belief — in terms of direction if stressed/
· warmth/reassurance

"*Well I was actually thinking of the sun... all going well ... teachers generally are a provider of light in terms of learning ...*" (Joanna, personal communication September 14, 2011)

Teachers:
A light bulb provides direction (& therefore) in terms of knowledge, filling their gaps, a light bulb provides one with light & therefore the capacity to see what they need/direction etc.

Students: As a light bulb, students are provided/reassured with direction (either positive/negative) in terms of their learning/their personal life (sometimes when it involves their parents, lights provide reassurance)

How do you see the students learn?
"*I think a student can learn from any form be it verbal, be it tangible, material, be it visual. Do not focus on the future but the here and now ... relate to the home environment, to friends ... to their social ... laptop environment*[s]" (Joanna, personal communication September 14, 2011).

Figure 38 Joanna's Light bulb metaphor drawing; annotated with verbalised statements.

a Special Education teacher she was a provider of learning experiences, she provided clarity, direction and safety (Joanna, personnal communication, October 24, 2011). I was concerned that Joanna had not included students in her first metaphor drawing as her image focused more on what teaching represented for herself as an individual (Leavy, et al., 2007, p. 1226). I challenged Joanna, *"how do you see the student's learn"* (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, September 14, 2011)? *"They need someone to get them on that platform. So from that platform they either, dive, sink, swim or* [do the] *necessary lap they need to ..."* (Joanna, personal communication September 14, 2011). *"The teacher as the platform is a scaffold for support?"* and *"your students would hopefully float?"* I contributed to her verbalised thoughts (E. C Betlem, personal communication, September 14, 2011) as I was wondering if she intended the metaphor to reflect a 'Behaviourist' or 'Constructivist' perspective of teaching (Leavy, et al., 2007). I then asked her to draw this second metaphor into her reflective journal (*Figure 39.* Joanna's Swimming metaphor drawing; annotated with verbalised statements). Once completed, Joanna's swimming metaphor revealed ideas not verbally expressed in our preceeding discussion. The swimmer, became a student who either appreciated knowledge, was indifferent or dismissed knowledge.

Joanna's metaphor images, her verbalised intentions and interpretations along with previously shared dialogues allowed me to understand how she perceived and felt about her mentor role and investment in her practice as part of her identity as a teacher (Eisner, 2008; Wenger, 1998). Like the students who did not appreciate the knowledge she provided, Joanna's image within the context of the shared dialogues alluded back, to her feeling unappreciated by the supervisory colleague who had once been a friend. *"I do all of this work, extra stuff, and I am taken for granted"* (Joanna, personal communication, August 15, 2011).
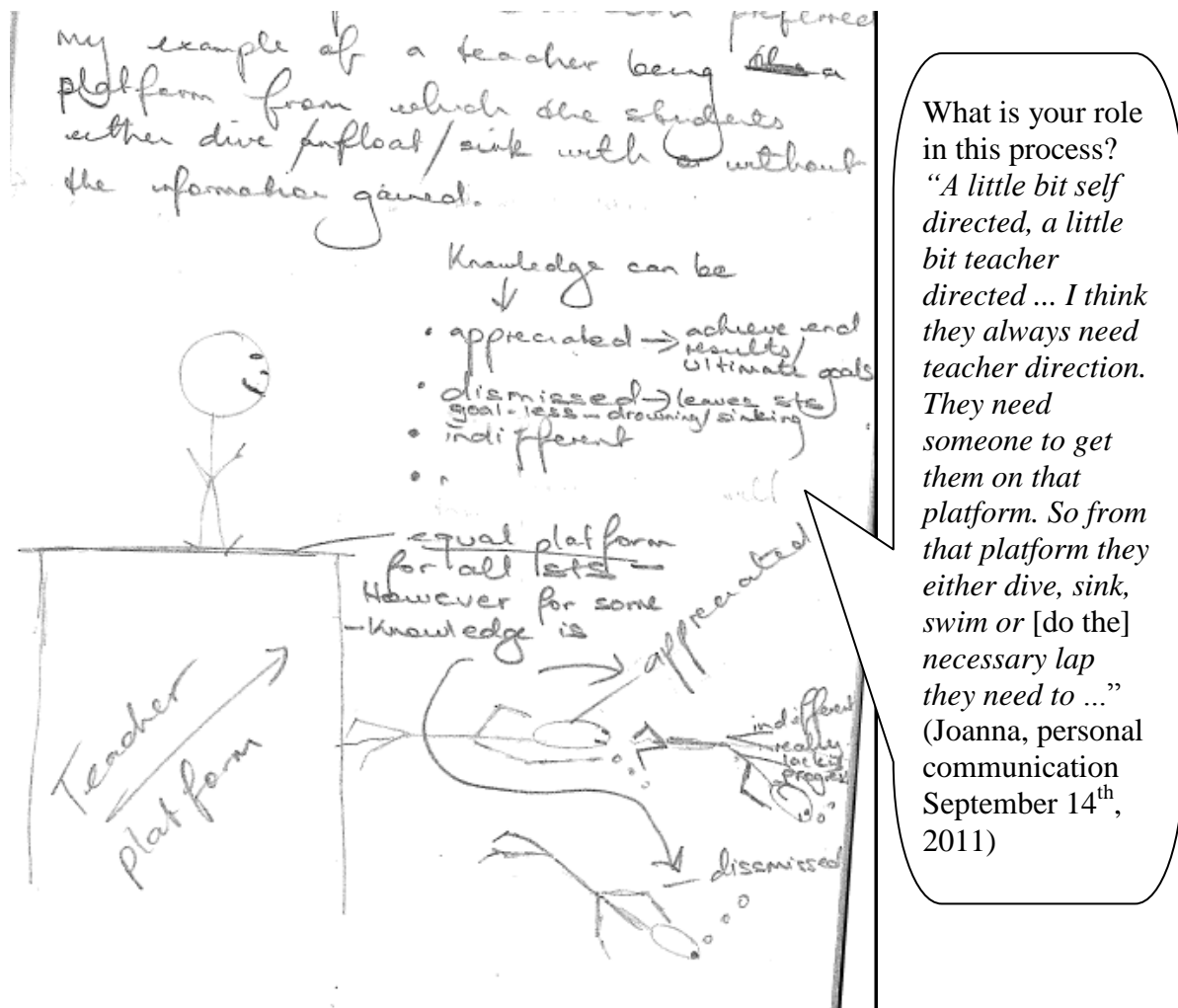
Figure 39. Joanna's Swimming metaphor drawing; annotated with verbalised statements.

Julianne's metaphor

Julianne's "Flower" metaphor (*Figure 40. Julianne's Flower metaphor drawing; annotated with verbalised statements*) is a representation of where she fits as a Pastoral care coordinator within the line of communication at the school. This she has articulated as hand written notes to the left of her drawn image. The ground under the flower represents the college's expectations with regards to the student Pastoral care programme. The stem connects her to the team. Julianne was responsible for passing these expectations onto the teachers in her mentor team and subsequently these teachers mentored the students. Julianne

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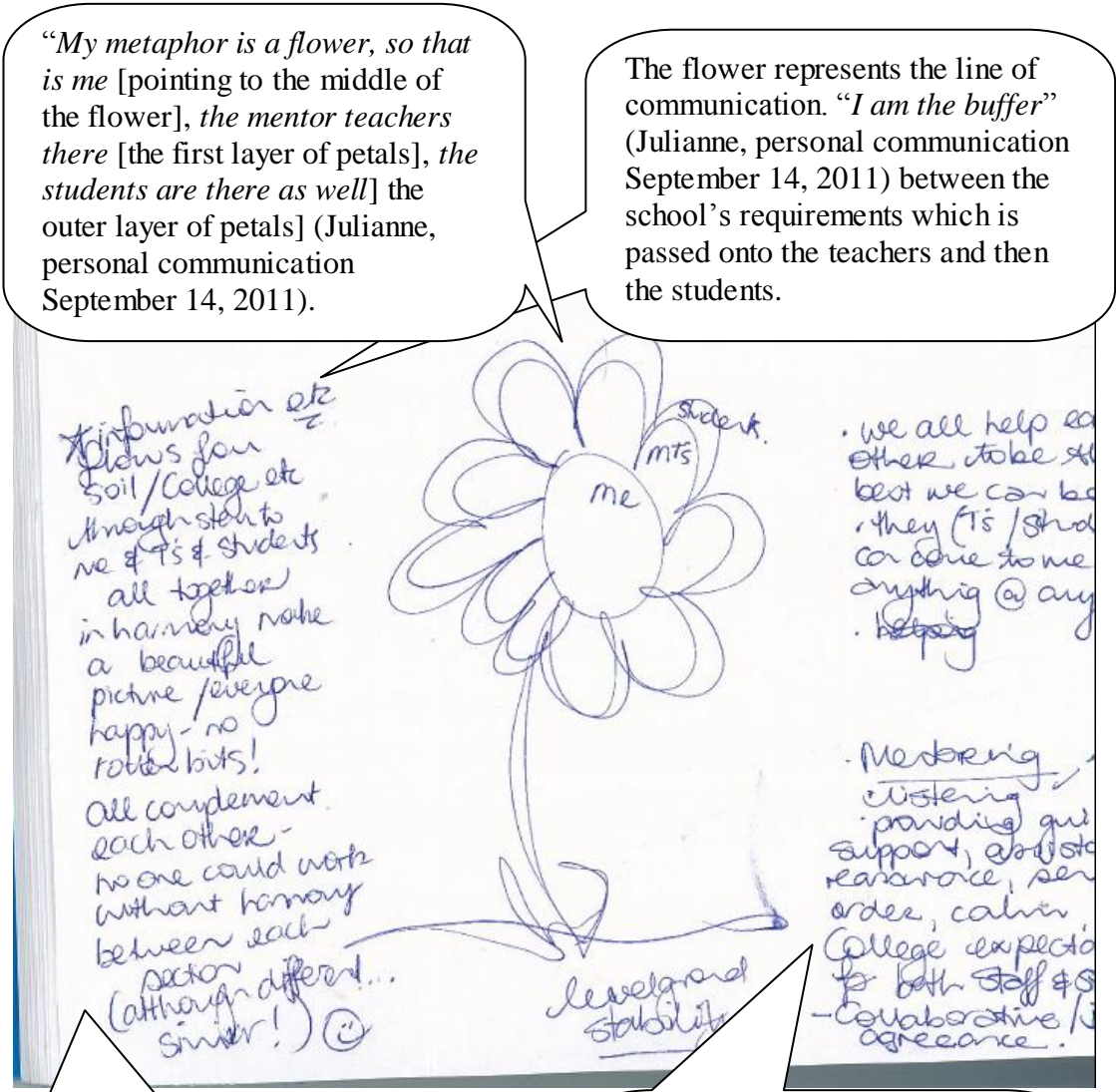
"*My metaphor is a flower, so that is me* [pointing to the middle of the flower], *the mentor teachers there* [the first layer of petals], *the students are there as well*] the outer layer of petals] (Julianne, personal communication September 14, 2011).

The flower represents the line of communication. "*I am the buffer*" (Julianne, personal communication September 14, 2011) between the school's requirements which is passed onto the teachers and then the students.

An image of harmony. "*We work together and we can bring [out] the best in each other, like as in a unit ... we all rely on each other to help each other*" (Julianne, personal communication September 14, 2011)

"*Mentoring is about listening and making the link ... I think it should be about collaboration and agree*[ment] *.. keep at* [an] *issue until you find level ground*" (Julianne, personal communication September 14, 2011).

The level ground is also about *"the knowledge of the growth, the meaning"* *"Is the flower the end product?* asked Joanna. *"This is a path, not the whole picture"* (Julianne and Joanna, personal communication September 14, 2011)

Figure 40. Julianne's Flower metaphor drawing; annotated with verbalised statements.

placed herself in the middle of the flower as she sees herself at the centre of the team and that the teachers and students are an extension, they are part of the flower and thus part of the team (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, November 28, 2011). Julianne gave the level ground additional meanings. It also symbolised "*developed stability*" within the group; that if you keep working at an issue through collaboration and agreement, you reach level ground and also "*knowledge of the growth*". The flower was not the whole picture but a path, as it grew out of the ground.

Julianne's desire for *"collaboration"* and *"agreement"*, for *"stability"* and to *"work together with her team and bring out the best in each other"*, were all articulated in her metaphor image (see *Figure 40*. Julianne's Metaphor drawing, annotated with verbalised statements). Within the context of the previously shared dialogues, the metaphor image and her verbalised intentions and interpretations of it; reflect her goals. They are a response to the challenges experienced by Julianne to engage her team and align them to her own constructivist philosophy as a Pastoral care coordinator.

> *My ideal relationship* [is] ... *more open and more honest I think, more trusting, more equal, I'm not the sort of person who likes to put myself above people I don't do that with my kids my classes or with anyone I try being more cooperative ... some in particular are my biggest challenge in terms of my connection with and making it meaningful for them* (Julianne, personal communication, April 29, 2011).

The metaphor drawing and subsequent dialogue allowed me to understand how Julianne perceived and felt about her coordinator role and investment in her practice as part of her identity as a mentor to colleagues (Eisner, 2008; Wenger, 1998).

Engaging in the drawing and/or writing of a metaphor images acted as a visual reflective tool which stimulated the mentor's imagination and allowed them to reach a greater depth of access to their experiences of how they aligned to their practice of

mentoring and/or teaching (Wenger, 1998) as symbolised in my artwork (see *Figure 41*.

Combining Engagement and Imagination results in a reflective practice, image from

animation titled "Communities of Practice - A social theory of learning developed by

Etienne Wenger"). The metaphor activity acted as a non-threatening visual method of

reflection, generating, reflective, open and honest communication (Eisner, 2006; Finley,

2005) between the members of the group. This permitted me as a critical friend to gain a

more complete understanding of some of the circumstances that contributed to the mentors'

past and present experiences of how the mentors' engaged in their practice, understood it and

related to others as part of their mentor and teaching practice within their school context

(Kemmis, 2009).

Figure 41. Combining Engagement and Imagination results in a reflective practice, image

from animation titled "Communities of Practice - A social theory of learning developed by

Etienne Wenger".

Tackling the issues... on an inbound trajectory of learning using participatory action research

To tackle the issue raised in the previous PLT sessions, Joanna and Julianne embarked on their own small scale PAR aiming to make a change to their current practice of mentoring (illustrated in *Figure 42*. PAR is a reflective practice – reshaping *relate*, the mentors' focus from Matisse CH). I used the cyclical structure of PAR to stimulate the mentors' "imagination" and to "engage" them in a reflective practice of learning (Wenger, 1998).

The metaphor drawing exercise had successfully re-directed Joanna's focus from her professional relationship issues with a colleague back to her teaching. Joanna felt the metaphor exercise "*allowed the participants to really direct ... their focus ... because I was a little bit lost as to where I wanted to go. You then guided me ... so that was an added benefit ... allowing the participant to actually feel comfortable in what they were to embrace* [their own PAR]*, was a good thing'* (personal communication, November 28, 2011). Joanna chose to work with the students from her mentor class as she was not currently mentoring colleagues (she joined my inquiry as she was interested in learning more about mentoring). Joanna aimed to increase collaboration and collegiality between the students in her mentor group (see *Figure 43*. Joanna's PAR summary).

Julianne aimed to improve collaboration between the teachers within her mentoring team and increase their ownership of their role with the students, as well as change the negative language from some of the team members. She reviewed this and decided to embark on a more do-able goal (Maxwell, 2003) to increase collaboration between the group members by introducing meetings with her team (see *Figure 44*. Julianne's PAR summary). These goals allowed the mentors to direct their energies and actions of how the they related to the students and/or colleagues they worked with at their school (Wenger, 1998).
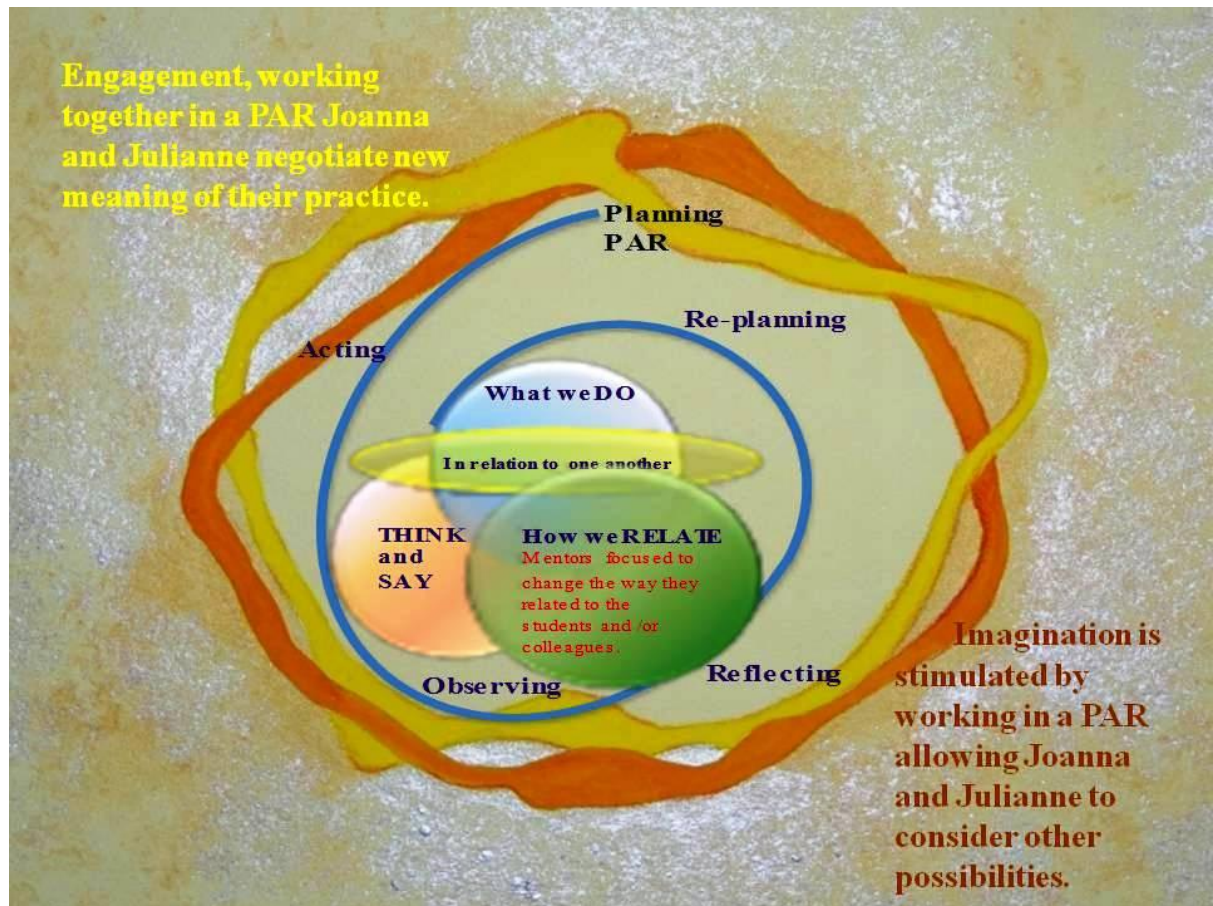
Figure 42. PAR is a reflective practice – reshaping *relate*, the mentors' focus from Matisse CH.

Joanna's learning

Joanna had quick success, increasing collegiality in her mentor group. Looking at her tutor group as an outsider, Joanna observed and reflected upon the dynamics of the peer groups that had formed in her class (Wenger, 1998). The students sat in small peer groups during tutor time. One student was often left to sit by herself and Joanna wished to encourage the group to be more inclusive and more collaborative during mentor time (see *Figure 43.* Joanna's PAR summary). She began to occasionally sit the students in a large circle along with structured and unstructured conversation activities. *"Still two"* ... she reported*, "did not participate ... I think that this is just them. They started to open up a bit*
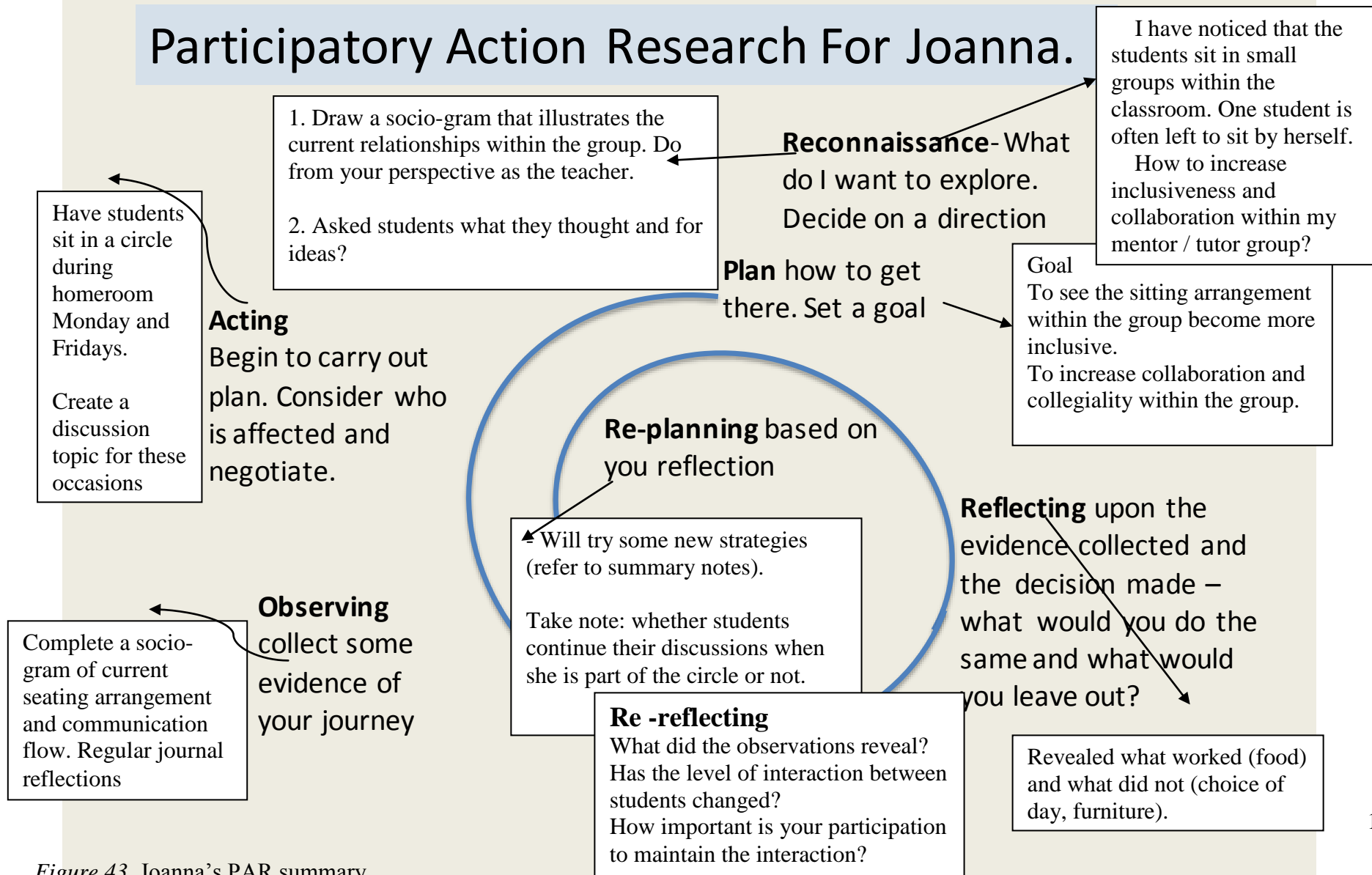
Participatory Action Research For Joanna.

1. Draw a socio-gram that illustrates the current relationships within the group. Do from your perspective as the teacher.

2. Asked students what they thought and for ideas?

Reconnaissance- What do I want to explore. Decide on a direction

I have noticed that the students sit in small groups within the classroom. One student is often left to sit by herself.

How to increase inclusiveness and collaboration within my mentor / tutor group?

Have students sit in a circle during homeroom Monday and Fridays.

Create a discussion topic for these occasions

Acting
Begin to carry out plan. Consider who is affected and negotiate.

Plan how to get there. Set a goal

Goal
To see the sitting arrangement within the group become more inclusive.
To increase collaboration and collegiality within the group.

Re-planning based on you reflection

- Will try some new strategies (refer to summary notes).

Take note: whether students continue their discussions when she is part of the circle or not.

Reflecting upon the evidence collected and the decision made – what would you do the same and what would you leave out?

Observing
collect some evidence of your journey

Complete a socio-gram of current seating arrangement and communication flow. Regular journal reflections

Re -reflecting
What did the observations reveal?
Has the level of interaction between students changed?
How important is your participation to maintain the interaction?

Revealed what worked (food) and what did not (choice of day, furniture).

Figure 43. Joanna's PAR summary.

Participatory Action Research For Julianne.

Reconnaissance- What do I want to explore. Decide on a direction

Goals- Increase collaboration within the group
Increase mentor teachers 'ownership of their role with the students.

What does the college handbook say?

Use regular meetings to develop collaboration within the group
Hold second meeting
See individuals if unable to attend

Decided to hold a meeting
What did the meeting reveal?

Plan how to get there. Set a goal

Are the goals still relevant?

Acting
Begin to carry out plan. Consider who is affected and negotiate.

The two teachers in question did not come to the meeting. This needs to be addressed in a more formal manner

Re-planning based on you reflection

Note where people sit in the meeting and who communicates – socio-gram

Have minutes taken
Journal some reflections after meetings

Observing
collect some evidence of your journey

To conduct a survey of S and T regarding their involvement in the activities

Reflecting upon the evidence collected and the decision made – what would you do the same and what would you leave out?

Re reflecting
What does the survey reveal?

New issue revealed
How much collaboration actually happened in the Mentor groups while working on the Fund raising Day activities?

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Figure 44 Julianne's PAR summary.

more, rather than that insular, closed groups ... the little sub groups". Her role in helping to

maintain interaction with the conversations and others where teacher directed. *"One group*

usually dominated the discussion ... but in the last few weeks they have come together" she

acknowledged that moving students into *"the circle, was the precipitator of change"*

(Julianne, personal communication, November 14, 2011).

     Joanna had organised her mentor group to make and have breakfast together as an

end of year celebration. "*What a wonderful job you had done with your mentor group"*.

Julianne relayed to Joanna a comment made by her Pastoral care coordinator during a

meeting she had attended. "*She* [the Pastoral care coordinator] *said how hard you had*

worked and that the group had worked really well", Julianne added *"I walked into that area*

and I could smell eggs" holding her nose high in the air (personal communication,

November 14, 2011). "*Awwwww*" we all responded. The mentors turned to face each other,

made eye contact and were smiling. *"That's really nice, accolades"* I said.

     Engaging in her own PAR allowed Joanna to learn and understand from her

participation, illustrated in Figure 45 (Joanna's reflective practice of learning from engaging

in her own PAR). Through engagement with the concept of collaboration, experimenting

with a variety of strategies and collaborating with Julianne and myself in the PAR (Wenger,

1998), Joanna changed the way she did her practice of mentoring and began to relate

(Kemmis, 2009) differently to the students in her mentor group . *"What are you most proud*

of"? I asked Joanna in our final interview. "*I think I've really bonded with them* [her mentor

group] *and that's really why I wanted to make a point of going tonight* (year group formal)".

Although Joanna found it challenging to "*consistently do what we've discussed or to try and*

action it more often which has been very difficult for me". She went onto say:

    I think the value, the true value of seeing, for example, some of the ideas we have

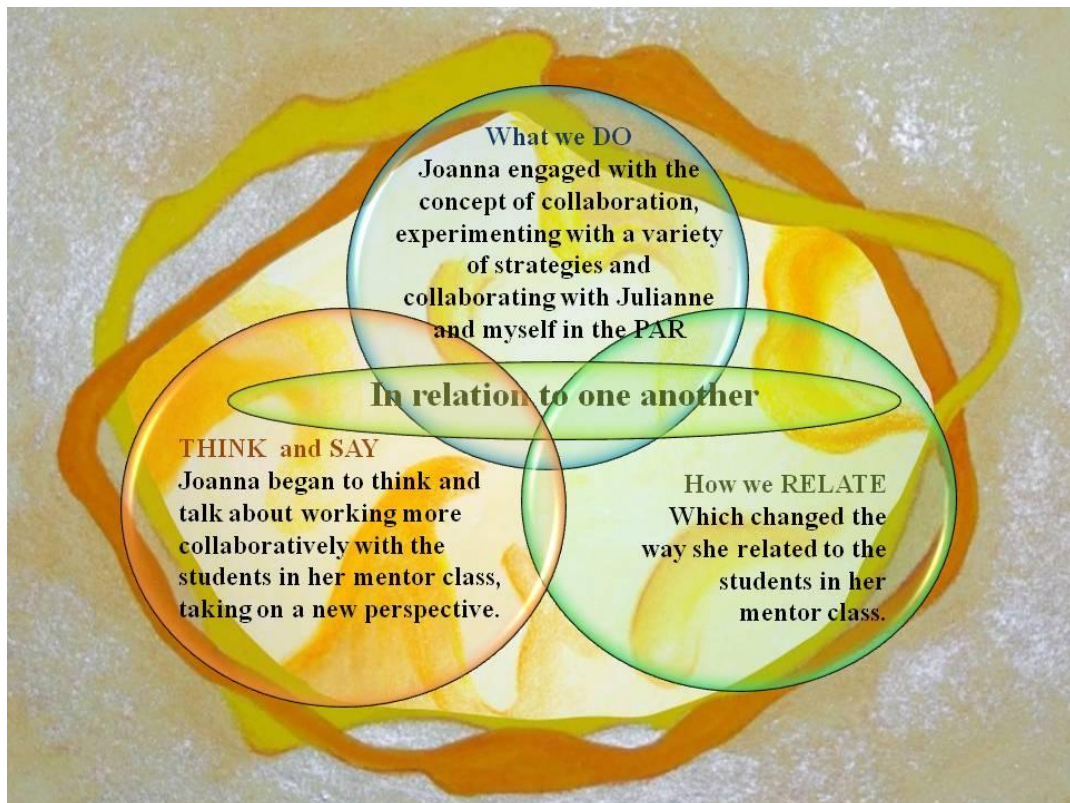   *spoken about, like getting the circle going, even once a week. To validate what*

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Figure 45. Joanna's reflective practice of learning from engaging in her own PAR.

> *Julianne said in terms of the cards getting the kids to write down an idea which I*
>
> *haven't actioned ... it will probably happen somewhere next year. Things people*
>
> *want to talk about I think those two elements have really come onboard for me. But*
>
> *what I've seen is if you really connect as one of your pieces of literature* [referring to
>
> a section of an article I had given her on the culture of collaboration] *has spoken*
>
> *about, you connect.* (Joanna, personal communication, November 28, 2011)

"And it becomes all a lot easier doesn't it, once you have made that connection" (E. C.

Betlem personal communication, November 28, 2011). *"Yeah the girls get to know you and*

respect you and I think this, ... um.. I think if you connect with them mentally as well in

terms of not just listening to the songs that they listen to but sharing experiences as either a

mother or as a woman or as a former young woman you know, they connect (Joanna, personal communication, November 28, 2011).

Joanna began to take on a new perspectives of working and relating with the students in her tutor group (Wenger, 1998; Kemmis, 2009). These new perspectives became part of who she was as a teacher.

Julianne's learning

"It was a great success", I asked Julianne with a question in my tone. Julianne hesitantly replied *"Yes ... the kids were engaged"* (personal communication, November 14, 2011). Julianne had decided to hold mentor team meetings. She planned and held two meetings with the mentor team to develop and organise a number of activities for a fund raising day to be held early term four (see *Figure 44*. Julianne's PAR summary). Establishing a common goal provided the team with an opportunity to contribute to the production of ideas and take ownership (Wenger, 1998, p. 203) of their role as mentors (see Appendix H for Julianne's Gap anaylsis). They had something to focus their work and bring them together and through their participation they reified this work into a number of fund raising activities (Wenger, 1998).

> *They could dress up, the sausage sizzle ... there was lots of support for the sausage sizzle ... it brought them together as a mentor group ... as a year grade and it raised money for a good cause. ... The flowers were a good idea ... you could pre-order a flower and then girls from the mentor group would deliver it* (Julianne, personal communication, November 14, 2011). They also had "*a big constructed wire ribbon shape about six foot tall ... on the green ... kids paid money to put a ribbon on it.* (Julianne, personal communication, October 10, 2011)

In true PAR manner Julianne's feedback and reflection revealed a new problem. *"To work collaboratively, they* [the teachers] *need structures ... You are a PE* [Physical

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Education] *teacher you are use to getting kids to work collaboratively"* I explained to Julianne. *"I know it is easy for me ... I find it hard to hand it over to other people"* Julianne responded (personal communication, November 14, 2011). The collaborative exercise the teacher's did with their tutor class prior to the fund raising day looked different for the teachers involved. One took total control of the group, *"it was her project, she wanted to look good"* said Julianne (personal communication November 14, 2011). Other teachers did little to organise the students resulting in two or three from the class doing the work and one teacher did not do the exercise with the students.

Cooperative group work is a tool for teaching students how to function in society. Individuals are part of a culture, a shared way of life. Schools are like the larger culture, they make possible a shared way of life, a sense of belonging and community (Eisner, 2001; Wenger, 1998). The group work aims to teach students in a small, safe and comfortable environment the same values expected of the larger society; values such as, cooperation, tolerance, participation, sharing, and understanding of each other's limitations (Betlem & Bolitho, 2002).

In cooperative group work the teacher takes on the role of facilitator. This role is different to the traditional role of teacher. The teacher structures the activity so that the students work in teams where the labour is divided between the students. Each student takes responsibility for a part of the work. At times the students may need scaffolds to help them develop the necessary skills in order to achieve their job. Their individual contributions are pooled into the final product to ensure that the goal for the activity is reached (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, October 25, 2011). As the group becomes more involved in the activity, students become used to working with each other and natural leaders begin to develop and take control. Structures and scaffolds are used less by the teacher and students allocate work to the team members, negotiating who does what. The appropriate sharing out

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of effective resources and territory during the group work is necessary in cooperative groups. The success of the group will depend on the success of all in the group. A sense of cooperation and tolerance of each others' views will see the groups become self-directed and self-motivated (Topping & Ehly, 1998).

"*Perhaps you need to structure it, help them out with strategies to get it done*" I suggested "*because some teachers just don't do collaborative work*" [with students] (E.C. Betlem, personal communication, November 14, 2011). "*Yeah, I don't*" said Joanna (personal communication, November 14, 2011). Julianne writes in her journal and says at the same time, "*2012 collaborative project needs clear steps*" (personal communication, November 14, 2011). "*With your instructions*" suggested Joanna as she pointed onto Julianne's journal notes freely entering her personal space ..."*put due dates, by the first week do, second week, ... give them a timeline*", (personal communication, November 14, 2011). "*A good idea*" I affirmed. "*It is a process*" said Julianne as she continues to make notes (personal communication, November 14, 2011).

Julianne's continued to have ongoing reluctance from some of the team members to work with her and other members of the team. "*I think it has improved a little bit with one*" I said in our final interview. "*It takes a long time to change relationships, so I think our goal was that we get some, little bit of change*" I encouraged. "*Yeah, yeah*" Julianne agreed. I continued "*we did get that which is good, because I knew it would be really hard and will continue to be a battle for you*". "*I think so, yeah, I've got them both on my team again next year apparently, so! Alright, we will see*" concluded Julianne (E.C Betlem and Julianne, personal communication, November 28, 2011).

Engaging in her own PAR allowed Julianne to learn and understand from her participation (Wenger, 1998) illustrated in Figure 46 (Julianne's reflective practice of learning from engaging in her own PAR). Holding regular meetings changed the way

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Julianne communicated and related with the team. *"Being more direct, not giving people an*

option" [with everyday expectations such as turning up to check the students' reports] *it is*

expected that you attend [she wrote in an email to the teachers]*... just left it at that ... so yeah*

as opposed to my previous wishy washy ways" (Julianne, personal communication,

November, 28, 2011). She is most proud of the fact that she is able to relate well with some

of the team, that now unlike in our first interview *"people feel that they can come to me with*

either a problem or an idea and I always make time for them try and fit that idea in or help

them out or whatever" (Julianne, personal communication, November 28, 2011). Julianne's

first steps towards engaging the team in a shared practice via regular well structured

meetings opened communication and began to "pull" the team together. *"It was good to*
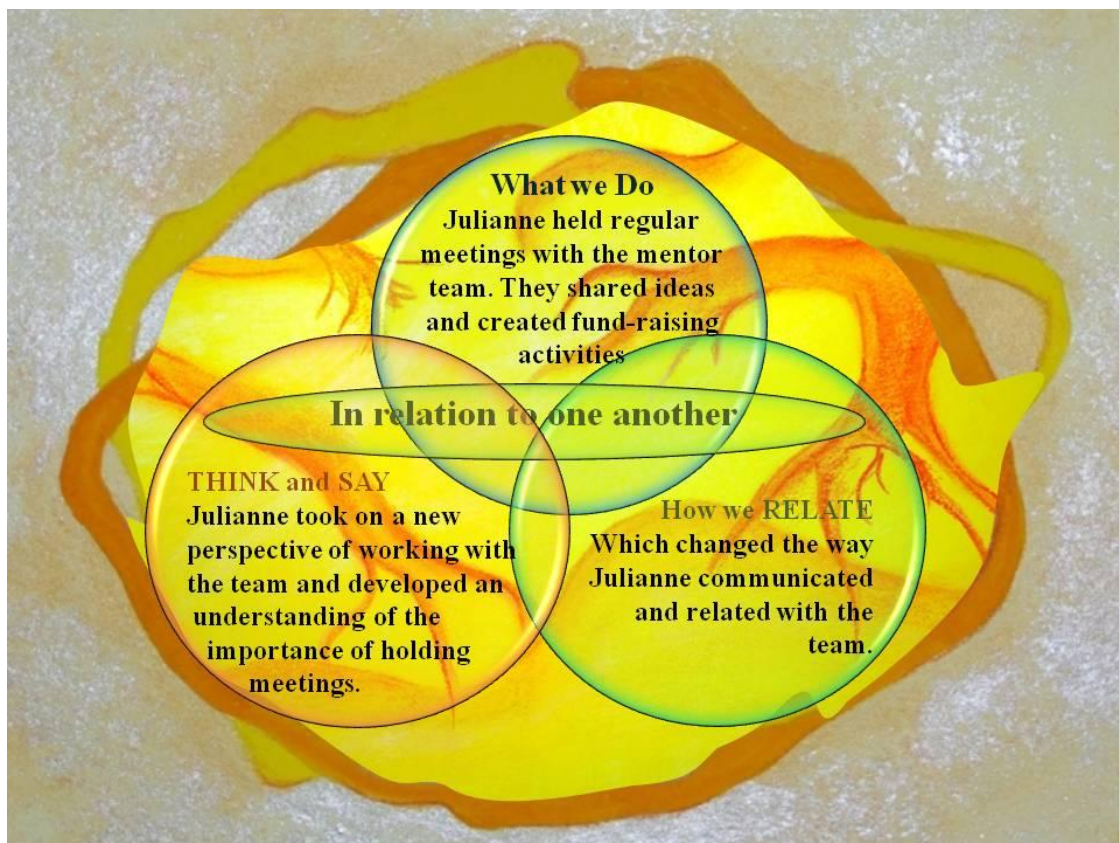
Figure 46. Julianne's reflective practice of learning from engaging in her own PAR.

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have a meeting where we got together and we kept to the prescribed time and ideas were

shared" (Julianne, personal communication, September 14, 2011). *"[I have] more*

confidence in myself really, just to go there, to say something or plan something or do

something, ... because I'm never going to get everybody's approval (laughing)" (Julianne,

personal communication, November 28, 2011). These new perspectives became part of who

she was as a Pastoral care coordinator, as Julianne began to develop competence in her

practice (Wenger, 1998).

Metaphor revisited

Did Joanna and Julianne transform how they perceived themselves and invested in

their practice as mentors and/or teachers as part of their identity? Ten weeks after drawing

the metaphor images, I revisited the images (Martinez et al., 2001) during the final

interviews. Allowing the image to "speak back" (Eisner, 2002, p. 11) to the mentor, with the

original in front of us, I asked, what aspects of the metaphor image would they now change?

> **Joanna**
>
> Joanna continued to perceive *that a teacher is a form of light be it natural light or*
>
> *ratification light, light bulb whatever ... They* [teachers] *are the only light that*
>
> *provides them with possibly guidance in terms of attitude, application, knowledge, so*
>
> *you know there is that light that goes on and some of them click, like in mentor*
>
> [time]*, the light clicked on because I referred to my daughter as doing similar things*
>
> *to them* [the students] *or being a Mum and experiencing what their parents feel like,*
>
> *so that's that sort of light.* (personal communication November 28, 2011)

"I liked the concept of the swimming that you're the teacher that guides them to swim", like

our first conversation about her metaphor, I prompted her to include the students. *"Yeah",*

Joanna agreed and continued *"to try to swim so they don't sink or just to manoeuvre their*

bodies so they actually go through the water rather than go to the bottom and then therefore

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like, you know, how to survive" (personal communication November 28, 2011). The swimming metaphor (*Figure 39.* Joanna's Swimming metaphor drawing; annotated with verbalised statements) had taken on a new meaning. Joanna's metaphor no longer focused on her personal representation of teaching; a clearer perception of a learner had emerged as part of, and more in keeping with her philosophy as a Special Education teacher.*"Yeah that's right and that sort of fits in the context of your role as a teacher, what you do as a teacher because you work with the ... special needs kids ... because I was thinking originally that it* [her metaphor] *sounded rather teacher centred"* (E. C. Betlem, personal communication, November 28, 2011). *"Well it is! Teaching, working with special needs kids is teacher directed"* Joanna reminded me.

Joanna continued to have problems aligning with the school's practice Joanna's identity as a teacher, as symbolised in my artwork (*Figure 47.* Joanna's identity as teacher/mentor) was being "pushed and pulled" by internal and external forces (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) due to her ongoing need to regain power in the relationship with her supervising colleague. Although Joanna had a successful relationship with her students she still questioned her continued career in teaching. "*Do I want to continue* [teaching]*, which is a lot of questioning I'm doing myself at the moment"?* (personal communication, November 28, 2011). Regarding her plans to undertake a part time degree the following year, I asked her, *so are you starting your study next year?* . "*I'm supposed to. Yeah, I'm going for an information night* Joanna confirmed. *"So you're doing Law aren't you"?* I asked. *"Scared, very scared*", was her response (E. C. Betlem and Joanna, personal communication, November 28, 2011).

Julianne

"So what about your flower, are you happy with your flower as a metaphor"?
(*Figure 40.* Julianne's Flower metaphor drawing; annotated with verbalised statements) I
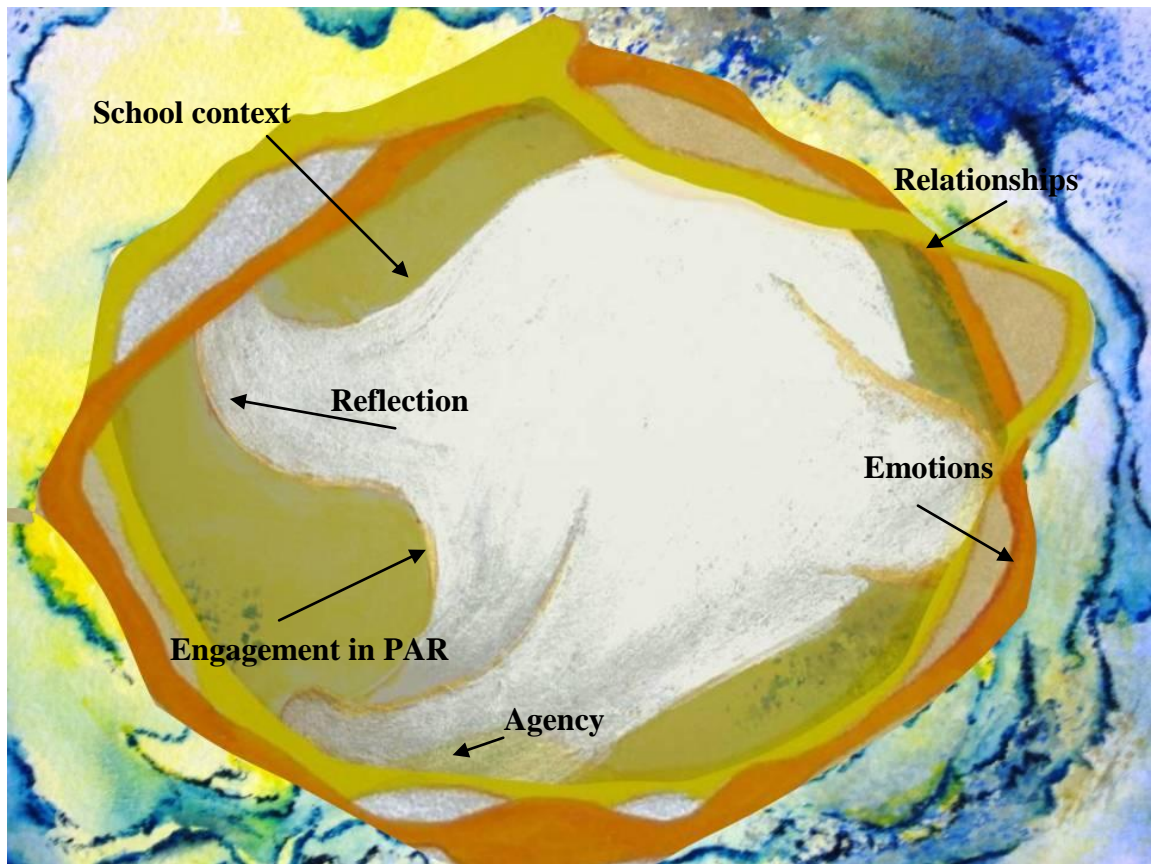
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Figure 47. Joanna's identity as a teacher/ mentor.

asked, Julianne in our final interview. "*It's a bit egocentric really*", she responded. *It's interesting you should say that, why do you think that?* I asked. *"Because it's all about me"* she said as she was laughing. "*And when you look back at it now*"? I prompted. *"It's not really ... but your explanation was a little bit different than that because you talked about growth and planting the flower and things like that"* I reminded Julianne. *"We all depend on each other to make a whole"* she added (E.C Betlem and Julianne, personal communication, November 28, 2011).

How might you change it, do you think? I asked Julianne. Contemplating for a few moments before she responded:

I would probably have ... I actually find the students are closer to me in many ways

than [the] *mentor teachers. It's a different relationship but I do have a closer*

relationship with the students, a more formal relationship, like, it's quite interesting

but as the year's gone on, umm yeah be more equal". (Julianne, personal

communication, November 28, 2011)

"Move yourself out of the middle more? I suggested, *"Yeah, yeah! But then it would not be*

about me either, so I don't know. More of a satellite thing but then, I don't feel that

disconnected to be a satellite either, so, interesting". Julianne continued to reflect (E. C

Betlem and Julianne, personal communication, November 28, 2011).

"You've changed in your perspective you know in your role and your idea of the

role". You were talking about how you were concerned about things were happening to you

at the time with the teachers". I reflected out loud what we established earlier in the PAR.

"Yeah I probably took it too personally" (Julianne, personal communication, November 28,

2011). "*You now have become more objective about it and you recognise you don't have to*

be in the middle ... something to think about, because I like the concept [of a flower] *it was*

really nice. Remember how the flower came back in a PowerPoint ^{TM} *that you did"* (E. C.

Betlem, personal communication, November 28, 2011). *"Yes! The kids could not see it on*

the day" (unfortunately the technology had failed on the day of the year group meeting)

Julianne responded. *"You relate to the floral thing as an image?* I drew to her attention. *It is*

worth thinking about ... because it is quite interesting when you talk about growth ... we

plant seeds and all that type of thing. So there is a connection between the students ...I don't

think that the students are as far out for you?" I was referring to where she had placed the

students in her metaphor drawing (see *Figure 48.* Close-up of Julianne's Flower metaphor

image). "*No they're not",* Julianne agreed. "*A bit closer, mentor teachers, students, mentor*

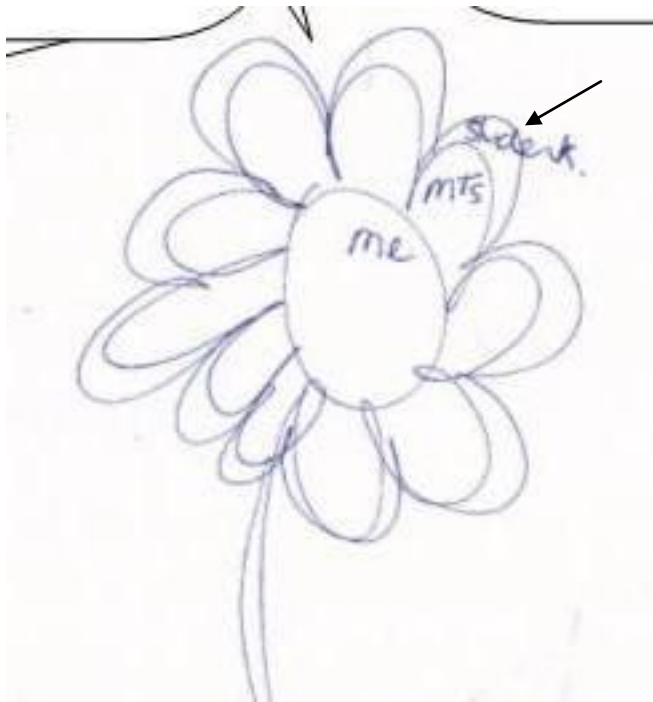*teacher?"* I suggest as I am pointing to her picture, alternating between the

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Figure 48. Close-up of Julianne's Flower metaphor image.

petals. *"I don't know"* Julianne continues to reflect. Making another suggestion, I said, *put*

the students in the middle? Yes! She agreed excitedly. Placing the students at the centre of

the work, Julianne's perception of her role is no longer *"egocentric"* as Julianne had

expressed earlier in the interview. She has moved herself out of the centre to be with her

colleagues from her team, all surrounding the students. "*So you guys are all the petals that*

work together. Because that would be more in keeping, like you said, you wanted to work as

a whole team, so it's not putting yourself at the centre" I summarised (E.C Betlem, personal

communication, November 28, 2011).

Working with me as a critical friend gave Julianne access to opportunities that

allowed her to begin to make sense of her new role as a Pastoral care coordinator (Wenger,

1998), *"You made me look at myself quite objectively or tried to look at myself objectively,*

what I needed to own and what other people needed to own and not tie people in, be more

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clear in my communication and to follow up on things (Julianne, personal communication, November 28, 2011). She learnt how to engage with the members of her team. Julianne's new repertoire of team meetings and improved collaboration strategies with her colleagues contribute to increase competency. Her changing perception of her role and investment in her practice as part of her transforming identity was revealed in the suggested changes for her metaphor image. Joanna has begun to become familiar with her practice as a Pastoral care coordinator and is moving towards becoming a "full member" of her practice (Wenger, 1998) as symbolised in my artwork (*Figure 49.* Joanna's emerging identity as a full member of the practice).
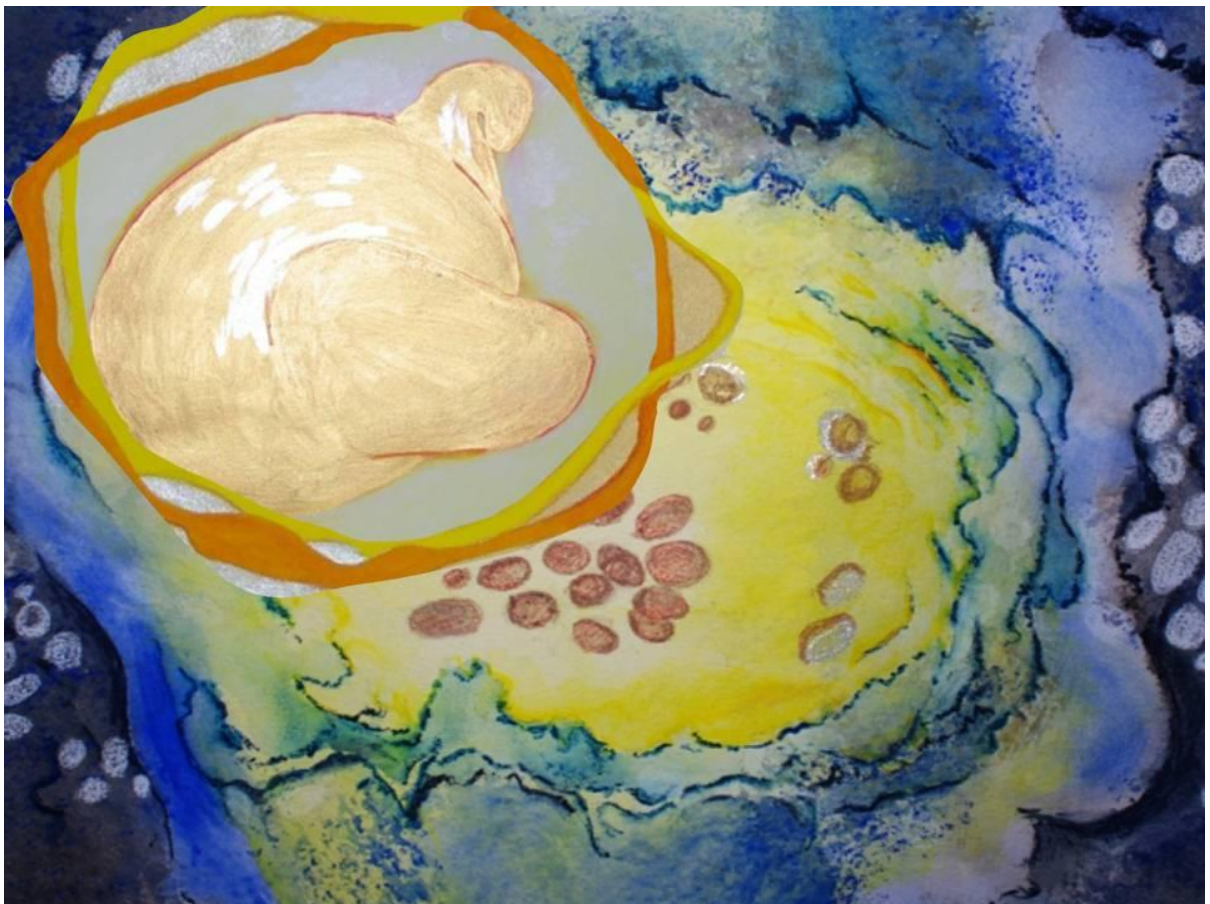

Figure 49. Joanna's emerging identity as a full member of the practice.

Summary

The two drawing activities done in this PAR cultivated the mentors' imagination and engaged them in the activities to stimulate their reflection, reflexivity and learning about their mentoring practice. The 'Pass the drawing' activity opened the way and acted as a vehicle for cultivating trust in our relationship allowing for me as a critical friend and the mentors to rapidly accept each other into the group (Bottery, 2003).

The construction of a personal metaphor by the mentors of their practice through drawing and dialogue was a powerful tool for both the mentors and myself as their critical friend. For the mentors, the metaphor drawing activity acted as a creative bridge between what was personal and what was made public (Eisner, 2002; Hunt, 2006). As a non-threatening method of introspection, drawing freed the mentors from the constraints of a traditional verbal response to metaphor construction. The metaphor drawings, their writing and conversations we had revealed: their teaching and/or mentor philosophies, aspects of how they engaged in and understood their mentoring practice and how these connected to their past and present "personal sets of events" (Wenger, 1998, p. 153) disclosed during the shared dialogues in our earlier sessions.

In the role of a critical friend, for me, the metaphor image was an unexpected powerful visual tool because the images embodied the mentors histories, their current practices and future aspirations as teachers and mentors (Wenger, 1998). They gave me insights into the mentors' personal and professional lives.

Providing the mentors' opportunities to verbalise and clarify their interpretations and intentions reduced the possibilities of ambiguity of my interpretation of the mentors' metaphors. The conversations permitted me to negotiate greater understanding of how the drawn metaphor images were a representation of the mentors' past, present experiences and future aspirations of their professional practice.

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The metaphor images where for me also a creative bridge as the generative nature of an image allowed me to use it on different levels. First as a tool that refocused the mentors back to their practice from the subjective personal path their professional relationship issues had taken us during the earlier PLT sessions. Secondly as a tool to go back and forth between the mentors' revealed 'personal sets of events' and their current ongoing negotiation of their identity as mentors and teachers (Wenger, 1998, p. 154). Lastly by revisiting the metaphor image, as suggested by Martínez et al. (2001), at the end of the PAR made available opportunities for the mentors to generate new meanings of their practice and for myself, insights into their transformative change. Transformative change in the mentors' investment in and perceptions of their role as part of their professional identities as mentors due to their professional growth and learning from working in PAR.