



Editorial: Inspirational Stories

Pat Cody looks to his professional community for sustenance.

Selfish professional motives are at the heart of this Ezine. I wanted to create some compulsive and energising reading for myself.

Much of my reading, thinking and action lately has been around the career system: policy reviews, benchmarks, business operations and policy documents. It's been about politics, rationale and allocation of scarce resources in our industry. When you focus on those things alone, it is easy to lose the sense of clients and professionals working collaboratively towards development and change.

For sustenance and perspective I wanted to return to the heart of our helping profession – our people. Thank you Vicki, Shane, Richard, Raewyn, Julie and Brigitte for sharing your stories. You are true professionals, helping to shape and co-construct people's future identities with your knowledge, skill and energy.

Reading these narratives, I pick up themes. Practitioners are fellow travellers with their clients. Many writers mention how happenstance unwittingly led them into the career industry and how their diverse backgrounds gave them insight into their work with people. I also sense the parallel process of practitioners assisting with meaning but also obtaining meaning from their clients!

There is a strong sense of practitioners looking through theoretical lenses. It is reassuring to read that most have been in the industry for a long time; they have earned their stripes and remain curious and questioning – sure signs of reflective and dynamic practitioners.

The writers also bring commitment and energy to their work. I love intentional passion – it's yummy, addictive and inspiring stuff. There is a tension – we are all experiencing such a lot of change in our work. There is also pragmatism; the professional is always pushing the envelope to do the best for the client with the resources at hand.

I happily conclude that every day practitioners bring their experience, competencies, knowledge, ethics and passion to do their best for the client. We do have rich depth within our industry.

And this depth of wisdom, experience and commitment can be forgotten when focussing on a macro system with drivers and values that are potentially at odds with those of the career practitioner. As we shape our industry, let's always strive to be aware of the sensitive balance of professional wisdom, client needs and the economic, political and fiscal drivers in decision making.

So to Vicki, Shane, Richard, Raewyn, Julie and Brigitte, thanks for reminding me why I got into this profession. I will take your stories into my work.

And to all of us at the coal face, Kia Kaha!