Facilitating nourished scholarship through cohort supervision in a professional doctorate programme

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Abstract

During the past 20 years there has been a global expansion in doctoral education and in particular professional doctorates. Difficulties with progression and completion have increasingly become the focus of attention within both academic and professional contexts. It has been acknowledged that a range of factors, beyond demographics, could be influential in whether students are able to sustain their studies to completion. In this paper we stress the importance of conceptualising professional doctoral studies as a personal, professional and academic journey that is sustained by emotional factors that may need more explicit attention. As such, our contribution is the delineation of a phenomenon that we call 'nourished scholarship'. We wish to illustrate how such 'nourished scholarship' functions as a resource for sustaining motivation and integration through the doctoral journey. We offer seven dimensions that a doctoral programme needs to embody in order to facilitate 'nourished scholarship': belonging, containing anxiety, growing confidence, commonality and uniqueness, values clarification, scholarly community, and negotiating the rhythms of receptive and active times. We illustrate these dimensions in the context of a professional doctorate programme that emphasises 'cohort supervision' as the primary resource for facilitating such nourished scholarship. We believe that this notion has transferable potential to other provisions where such emotional resources may be important.

Keywords: *Completions – Education – Doctoral Students – Supervision – Emotional Journey*

Facilitare un percorso accademico "nutrito" attraverso la supervisione in coorte in un corso di dottorato professionale

Nel corso degli ultimi 20 anni c'è stata una espansione globale in materia di istruzione dottorale e in particolare di 'dottorati professionali'. Difficoltà nell'avanzamento e nel completamento diventano sempre più il centro dell'attenzione per tutti i tipi di dottorato.

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È stato riconosciuto che una serie di fattori al di là di quelli prettamente demografici potrebbe influire sulla possibilità di completare gli studi. C'è ancora molto da imparare sul motivo per cui l'avanzamento e il completamento del dottorato sono così impegnativi. In questo articolo vorremmo mettere in evidenza un settore che sembra trascurato dalla ricerca: l'esperienza emotivamente complessa del percorso di dottorato.

Offriamo un contributo al dibattito su ciò che è necessario per facilitare il successo e intrinsecamente un soddisfacente avanzamento all'interno di un programma di dottorato professionale. Noi sosteniamo che una maggiore attenzione debba essere prestata al cammino esperienziale di studenti di dottorato dal momento che essi hanno il difficile compito di integrare la loro vita personale, professionale e accademica. Il nostro interesse per le risorse emotive di cui gli studenti possono avvalersi durante il loro percorso di dottorato è iniziato con la progettazione e lo sviluppo del nostro primo dottorato professionale in materia di sanità e cura. Attraverso la nostra iniziale esperienza con due gruppi di studenti, abbiamo riflettuto sullo sviluppo del dottorato professionale, in generale, e trasversalmente a diverse altre discipline, per comprendere meglio come facilitare una buona esperienza di dottorato e una conclusione nei tempi.
L'importanza di partecipare all'esperienza emotiva all'interno del complesso percorso di dottorato professionale ci ha portato al concetto di 'nourished scholarship' (apprendimento accademico nutrito). Si definisce la nozione di 'nourished scholarship' come un percorso di apprendimento che lega i valori personali, significativi e attuali, allo sviluppo e al contributo professionale. Tale nutrimento emotivo è caratterizzato da una soddisfacente esperienza di scambio tra il sé, l'apprendimento e la comunità di pratica/studio. La nostra opinione è che tale nutrimento emotivo sia una risorsa fondamentale da cui gli studenti attingono al momento di negoziare le sfide complesse del percorso professionale di dottorato. Al fine di illustrare il significato di 'nourished scholarship' descriviamo alcune delle sue dimensioni emotive chiave. Queste dimensioni possono essere agevolate in vari modi, ma qui ne segnaliamo uno in particolare: il sostegno reciproco e la supervisione di gruppo facilitata. Al fine di illustrare le dimensioni della 'nourished scholarship' quindi noi riflettiamo su un caso specifico, quello di una coorte di studenti di dottorato professionale. Sono state estratte alcune loro esperienze per illustrare sette dimensioni che sono importanti per contribuire all'esperienza di 'nourished scholarship' come una risorsa di sostegno:
- Sperimentare i benefici di appartenenza
- Aiutarsi vicendevolmente a contenere l'ansia
- Vivere la crescente fiducia
- Accettare comunanza e unicità
- Miglioramento personale, identità professionale e accademica attraverso la chiarificazione dei valori
- Sperimentare i benefici di relazionarsi ad una più ampia comunità scientifica
- Accettare i ritmi dei tempi in cui ricevere dei tempi attivi.

Inoltre, in questo articolo si riflette su come la particolare struttura del programma di dottorato è stata in grado di sostenere lo sviluppo di queste risorse. Ci sono state tre caratteristiche chiave che crediamo siano state fondamentali nel modo in cui il programma è stato progettato e realizzato:

a) 'Cohortness' (lo stare in coorte) in cui gli studenti si impegnano con il programma come un gruppo in viaggio.
b) Supervisione di coorte: anche se tutti studiavano diversi argomenti, si è formato un gruppo insieme a due facilitatori accademici per discutere il processo, l'esperienza del percorso e il loro apprendimento.
c) Una strategia di valutazione flessibile che permette agli studenti di progredire in modo personale e non lineare.

Il valore potenziale di questo articolo per i programmi educativi è che fornisce un quadro per focalizzare l'attenzione sull'importanza del percorso emotivo e sui modi per sostenere la motivazione degli studenti e la resilienza. Noi crediamo che questo quadro abbia un potenziale trasferibile ad altre situazioni in cui tali risorse emotive possono essere importanti.

Parole chiave: *Completamento – Educazione – Studenti di Dottorato – Supervisione – Percorso Emotivo*

Introduction

This paper offers a contribution to the debate about what is needed to facilitate timely progression through a professional doctoral programme. We argue that more attention needs to be paid to the experiential journey of doctoral students as they negotiate the complex tasks of integrating their personal, professional and academic lives. We therefore consider the question of what it is about a doctoral scholarly journey that can provide the motivation, desire and emotional support for continuing in spite of changing circumstances and shifting demands. The paper is primarily conceptual in that it develops the notion of 'nourished scholarship' and identifies seven core dimensions needed to support this: belonging, containing anxiety, growing confidence, commonality and uniqueness, values clarification, scholarly community, and rhythms. We illustrate these dimensions with an example of a professional doctoral programme, and refer to how

both structural and process elements are built into the programme in an attempt to facilitate the experience of nourished scholarship. This activity stood outside the programme evaluation because we specifically wanted to explore the development of a conceptual framework.

The structural and process elements referred to here may be particular to the doctoral programme we designed, but we believe that the dimensions that facilitate the journey of nourished scholarship may be transferable to a variety of programmes in other ways. Although we draw on our experiences in the practical context of developing a professional doctorate programme, this paper is neither an evaluation of the programme nor a presentation of research findings. Rather, its main contribution is to offer a conceptual framework and to consider the value of such a framework for facilitating doctoral progression.

Background

Our interest in the emotional resources needed for supporting students on a doctoral journey began with the design and development of our first professional doctorate in health and social care practice. Through our experience with two initial cohorts of students, we reflected on the development of the professional doctorate, in general, worldwide and across a range of disciplines, to understand more about the challenges of facilitating a good student experience and timely completion.

Professional doctorates in theology, law and medicine existed for over 600 years across Europe, prior to the emergence of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the early part of the 19th century (Noble, 1994). From a UK perspective, the traditional PhD is largely viewed as a research-based qualification focused on a project that is expected to contribute new knowledge, with the thesis examined via viva voce (UKCGE, 2002). Several studies have explored the nature of the doctorate worldwide. Powell and Green (2007) looked at doctorates in 17 different countries and found wide variations. Whilst the focus of Park's (2007) discussion paper is mainly for UK interest, he covers issues pertaining to doctoral education in Europe, the United States and Australia. The impetus for the emergence of the professional doctorate appeared to grow from concerns that the PhD had little influence on employment outside the realms of

academia (Kuang-Hsu Chiang, 2003; Neumann, 2005), and yet the United States viewed their doctoral programmes as one of the main reasons they emerged as world leader at the end of the 19th century (National Science Foundation, 2006).

The diversification and growth of doctoral education has been largely around the professional doctorate. In Canada in 1894, the University of Toronto established a programme of study resulting in the award of Doctor in Education (EdD) (Allen, Smyth, & Wahlstrom, 2002). In Australia, professional doctorates were widely introduced in the 1990s and offered opportunities for doctoral research in non-traditional disciplines and professional fields, as well as the creation of fast-track doctoral qualifications to address the academic shortfall in staff (Neumann, 2005). Early professional doctorates were seen to produce 'mode one' knowledge, typified as discipline-based knowledge of 'methodologically sound' research practice, with second generation professional doctorates producing 'mode two' knowledge which is reflective and produced in a practice context (Barnacle, 2004; Maxwell, 2003). The latter is typified by increased flexibility of delivery, integration with practice and widespread use of the portfolio model of assessment rather than discrete coursework followed by a dissertation. The UK followed a similar pattern of growth, with an array of professional disciplines awarding the degree through the 1990s – 109 programmes in 1998 and 153 programmes in 2000 (Bourner, Bowden, & Lang, 2001). The increasing diversification of disciplines involved was reflected in a national survey by the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE, 2005). The impetus behind the development of a professional doctorate was the need for a study pathway at doctoral level to honour knowledge that is central to practice and professional development rather than the traditional emphasis on research training (Carr & Galvin, 2005). Galvin and Carr (2003) build on the work of Doncaster and Thorne (2000) to distinguish between 'the professional scholar' (the traditional doctoral route) and the 'scholarly professional' (the professional doctorate). They describe the knowledge that a professional doctorate route attempts to convey which also reflects the demands from practice for a workforce with the ability to generate complex knowledge from practice and scholarship.

Park (2007) identifies several tensions which permeate doctoral education: between the quality of the thesis and the process of developing the

researcher, and between high quality research and timely completion. We would add a further tension: between the process of developing the researcher and timely completion. The student profile for those undertaking doctoral education in health and social care is different from those who start following their first degree because their study usually commences when they are mid-career or are in senior roles. They may also be facing such challenges as ageing parents, children leaving home and inevitable 'life events'. Undertaking a doctorate at this time often necessitates a part-time route due to financial and career considerations. A report by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE, 2005) revealed that 28 per cent of students who were part-time were still active after seven years in their doctoral programme. Data on doctoral qualifiers suggests an annual growth of 3.5% between 2003 and 2004 (Mitchell & Carroll, 2008, p. 219). Recent data suggest that growth in doctoral qualification continues (The proliferation of professional doctoral programmes in health and social care poses an additional and specific challenge: ensuring that progression is successfully facilitated. There is currently intense scrutiny on timely completion rates (Elgar & Klein, 2004), and it is important to explore this further in the context of health and social care.

Most of the studies concerning completion rates pertain only to traditional doctoral routes. In the United States, the completion rates for doctoral studies have been cited as a static 50 per cent for many decades, possibly due to different monetary incentives and faculty teaching demands (Budd, 2002). Over 20 years ago in the UK, the Winfield Report (Winfield, 1987) raised concerns about the poor submission and completion rates in social science disciplines. Recent surveillance has given insights into PhD completion rates, which forms the baseline data for 384 doctoral programmes from 29 universities (Denecke & Frasier, 2005). Cumulative 10-year baseline completion data indicate that engineering has the highest completion rates (64 per cent) with social science (55 per cent) and humanities (47 per cent) the lowest. These differences are also reflected in the time taken for completion: 50 per cent of humanities students have not completed after ten years, compared with six years for engineering. In the UK, HEFCE (2005) reported that better completion rates are associated with full-time study (in the natural sciences), overseas students and better financial support (usually through research councils and the British Council). However,

the question remains: why are completion rates poor and what gives rise to the variability across disciplines?

Wright and Cochrane (2000) argue that different fields of study may be more intrinsically challenging to students and emphasised the importance of support mechanisms and research training for supervisors. There is continued and growing interest in identifying factors that influence the completion of doctoral studies, including closer attention to selection criteria (Lovitts, 2001), student attributes (HEFCE, 2005) and supervisory processes (Green & Usher, 2003; Manathunga, 2005; Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2004). A questionnaire distributed to 2,200 full-time PhD students in education and chemistry departments found that chemistry students felt they received better doctoral education due to the team nature of their research group (Kuang-Hsu Chiang, 2003). The importance of social networks and support has been highlighted for those undertaking higher education (Steele et al 2005, Whisker et al 2007). This notion fits well with the concept of 'communities of practice' where a group or team learn together around a specific activity (Wenger 1998). Preliminary data from the large, longitudinal PhD Completion Project in the United States and Canada support the notion that completion rates are higher in smaller programmes (Denecke & Frasier, 2005).

There is little published evidence about completion rates for professional doctorates. What is available is predominantly quantitative and is based on data collected at the commencement of the degree: male/female, part-time/full-time, educational qualifications, etc. (Booth & Satchell, 1996; Denecke & Frasier, 2005). Few studies explicitly capture the students' perspective of factors influencing their progress. Where attempts have been made to capture the students' experience of supervision these have often been through questionnaires with the content driven by the researchers (Kuang-Hsu Chiang, 2003).

There is still much to learn about why students' progression and completion are so challenging and we would like to highlight one area that seems neglected in the discourse and research: the emotionally complex experience of the doctoral journey (Bretag 2006). Neumann (2005) notes that one of the advantages for professional doctorates has been the opportunity for cohort entry, to counteract the 'lone researcher syndrome' of traditional PhD study. Neumann draws out the difficulties facing doctoral students

who choose to align their research with their professional or practice field and uncovers a range of issues. To address this, a website was used to publish discussions between doctoral students and faculty, and one student talked about the doctoral journey as having three components: institutional structures, peer-to-peer exchange of information and the necessary emotional support required for the journey (University of Southern California, 2004). These components encouraged us to think further about the complexity of the emotional journey and the kind of support that may be needed. The importance of attending to the emotional experience within the complex professional doctorate journey encouraged us to think about our own students' experiences and the features of a doctoral programme that supports such an experience. Before we describe how we explored the nature of the emotionally complex experiences of the doctoral journey, we look briefly at the nature of scholarship.

Boyer (1990) considered scholarship as an activity that requires the integration of a number of scholarly domains including research, teaching and application. Riley, Beal, Levi, and McCausland (2002) proposed that such scholarship is holistic and fluid, and combines knowledge, experience, rigour and a service base. These ideas build on a previous tradition of thought and introduced notions of knowledge that expanded its boundaries beyond those of mere propositional knowledge. These include forms of actionable knowledge and other ways of knowing that arise out of the complexities of immersion in practice (e.g. Carper, 1978; Polkinghorne, 2004; Schon, 1983; Van Manen, 1999). While accepting these important parameters of scholarship, we would like to take this further by emphasising the emotional and motivational dimensions as well as the temporal consideration of scholarship as a journey.

The present paper addresses this gap in concentrating on the emotional and motivational dimensions of the doctoral journey by reflecting phenomenologically on our own students' experiences of a newly designed professional doctorate programme, and from these reflections deriving a phenomenon that we call 'nourished scholarship' and further delineating the kind of experiences that facilitated this phenomenon. First we summarise the features of the professional doctorate programme as a context for our reflections.

The programme

The Professional Doctorate in Practice at Bournemouth University, UK, was developed in 2002 and specifically aims to support a variety of professionals undertaking doctoral work as part of their practice. The current intake includes social workers, physiotherapists, nurses, psychotherapists, higher education lecturers, a residential care home manager and a health scientist. The aim of the doctorate is to enable participants to focus on the development of professional practice as well as research an aspect of their practice that can make an integrative contribution to knowledge. Also, in sharing the journey with other health and social care professionals, the participants support one another in contributing to practice knowledge in an interprofessional context.

The external requirement is to produce a narratively linked portfolio of work that demonstrates the integration of practical research, theoretical scholarship and professional development activities. Participants write a thesis of up to 90,000 words which brings together a research inquiry, a practice development project or reflections upon their own case work, a systematic review of the literature, and a narrative that shows the integration of this work and makes a case for the contribution to knowledge. Participants can develop the distinct aspects of work (literature review, practice development project and research) in whatever order is appropriate for their practice question. This reflects an assessment structure that is flexible and allows students to progress in a personal and non-linear way. The two central features of this approach of nourished scholarship are cohort supervision and a flexible assessment strategy.

Cohort supervision

A group of students (ideally six to eight), all professionals from a range of health and social care backgrounds, come together on a regular (monthly) basis in cohort supervision to discuss and share the challenges and experiences of their doctoral journey. They learn about each other's content areas and about their ongoing personal and professional development. The group is facilitated by two academic professionals with an interest in nourished scholarship. We believe that such cohort supervision is particularly relevant

to the internal demands of nourished scholarship, and the integration of self, learning and academic and practice communities.

The assessment strategy

The four components of the assessment strategy (a systematic literature review, a practice development project or reflections on case work, an empirical research project and an integrative narrative) enable students to approach the sequence of their work in a personal, organic way by allowing them to undertake the components in whichever order they wish. For the purpose of yearly review, assessment and progression, the students write a document to demonstrate their progress. This assessment strategy is also 'unmodularised' in that support units may be taken but are not assessed in themselves. Rather, it is how the learning from modularised units is used within the total narrative of the journey and in the final product that is important. The aim is to reduce the assessment load that sometimes occurs in some professional doctorates as a result of external quality pressures placed upon higher education institutions (Galvin & Carr, 2003).

Having summarised this practical context we now describe our philosophical methodological style that we brought to bear on reflections on the nature of the programme and our students' experiences of their journey through the programme.

A phenomenological sensibility to exploring the notion of 'nourished scholarship'

The development of the notion of 'nourished scholarship' which we later define, was guided by the logic of Husserlian phenomenological philosophy. Two important phenomenological principles guided us in this pursuit: a) using life-world experiences as an evidence base for reflection and b) using imaginative variation as a way to derive invariant themes that characterise the essential structure of the phenomenon, in this case 'nourished scholarship'. We would like to emphasise that we did not pursue a phenomenological empirical qualitative study, such as that achieved by Giorgi's method (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2004). Rather, we utilised a phenomenological-philosophical style of thinking guided by the two principles indicated abo-

ve. For a more detailed exposition of this style of philosophy we refer readers to Gallagher& Zahavi (2008). In short however, the life-world refers to an experienced world of everyday happenings that people live through before categorising them; it is the stream of experiencing that grounds any later sense-making or reflection, and gives to philosophy an experiential starting point (Todres, Galvin & Dahlberg, 2007). With reference to the philosophical methodology of imaginative variation, this may be expressed as follows: "In developing his phenomenological method Husserl proposed a way that would draw out the essential and invariant characteristics of the things we experience. Quite simply, it involves using our imagination to strip away the unessential properties of things" (Gallagher & Zahavi 2008, p. 27).

Proceeding in this way we utilised life-world descriptions of the doctoral journey offered by our students. Following consent form our students we engaged in a group interview of two hours. During the group interview we explored our students experiences of their first year of the programme asking them to highlight important sustaining experiences and moments in their journey and to illustrate these with concrete examples where possible. Although we were not engaging in qualitative research we wished their feedback to provide us with life-world examples from which we could reflect on within the style of imaginative variation in order to understand some essential features of their journeys. Using imaginative variation we were able to derive seven invariant themes that appear to characterise the complexity of their scholarly journey. As a whole, these themes helped us to crystallise the notion of 'nourished scholarship'. For presentational purposes, we first delineate the boundaries or 'barebones' of what constitutes 'nourished scholarship'. We then elaborate on this notion by describing the seven dimensions of 'nourished scholarship' in greater detail, illustrating these dimensions with reference to students' experiences.

'Nourished Scholarship': the essential phenomenon

Essentially 'nourished scholarship' is a term that characterises a satisfying and enriching quality to students' journeys of learning, where there is meaningful linkage between learning, personal values and living, professional and academic development and contribution. Such emotional nourishment

is characterised by a satisfying experience of exchange between self, learning and practice/scholarly communities. Nourished scholarship therefore functions as a resource that sees one through the complex challenges of the professional doctoral journey. When such a productive exchange between self, learning and practice/scholarly communities takes place, the student is more likely to experience integration of self, learning and community. Such experiences of integration may be validating, and may further nourish the learner by a sense of confirmation and confidence that the journey is productive and worthwhile, in spite of its challenges. Such integration is facilitated by a journey that is supported by seven important experiences over time that we elaborate on later, but just name here: Experiencing the benefits of belonging; helping one another contain anxiety; experiencing growing confidence; accepting commonality and uniqueness; enhancing personal, professional and academic identity through values clarification; experiencing the benefits of relating to a broader scholarly community; accepting the rhythms of receptive times and active times.

Experiencing the benefits of belonging

The belonging that seems important for nourished scholarship is one that involves being with others who, although following unique topic areas, share a sense that they are on a broad journey together. They are interested in, and care about, one another's personal, academic and professional development, and celebrate one another's flourishing. The importance of a sense of belonging has been reported in others studies (Hinsliff-Smith 2009, Tweedal 2000, p. 213). Such a co-operative impulse is a crucial counterpoint to mere competitiveness as a motivating factor. They often spend some time in the group catching up on one another's personal lives and how their academic and professional journeys are interwoven into this. Personal story-telling is an organic methodology that facilitates an emotional resonance strong enough to welcome their unique and different paths and perspectives. Their laughter is evidence of this as they surprise one another within this belonging. In particular, this belonging reveals a joint interest in reflection and playing with ideas that lead to new insights and directions for personal, professional and academic life.

> I just feel that there are real friendships that have developed and a real cohesion now and I would say that's quite amazing because we spend two hours a month together.
> I wish we did have a bit more time together but that's not a criticism because the benefits are that my understanding of a PhD or doctoral journey is that it was quite lonely and that's why I picked this course because I didn't want to be isolated.

Helping one another contain anxiety

The containment of anxiety that appears important involves a certain sharing in which the risks of the journey are acknowledged and humanised; in that individuals don't 'jolly' one another out of the risks, but the self-doubts and fears about personal adequacy and completion are given space to exist. This is a testing process in which there is some risk-taking around sharing personal, professional and academic anxieties. These anxieties are often unclear, even to the students, as they begin to emerge, but part of the cohort experience is that the students recognise these concerns in others and then help each another find the words to describe them. Such articulation in itself appears to be a containing factor for anxiety in two ways: making sense of experience makes it more manageable, and sharing experiences reduces one's sense of isolation. Another benefit of acknowledging anxieties and risks is that it parallels the creative process in which inarticulate understandings can become clarified through articulation and sharing, thereby enabling the kind of endurance, care and patience that are important emotional components of the creative process.

> I think one of the things that often feels really important for me is that working in the group like this is that it is part, it's almost like a therapeutic process, it follows a therapeutic process and that's partly around witnessing and being witness so I kind of keep bringing, you know, I bring stuff weekly or monthly, as do others and something really important about being seen and seeing that I find really helpful in the whole total process…I think it does for me that process of being able to self-reflect more, you know.

> I think it's something about feeling really supported here – maybe it's a more mature group in a way that I can't identify but there's so much reassurance that's kind of underneath – does that make sense?

Experiencing growing confidence

The confidence that seems important for the journey can rise above performance anxiety, and emerges through repeated opportunities to immerse the self in scholarly challenges. The group is used as a sounding board for ideas. When working well, it is a relatively safe environment that supports enough risk to make it meaningful and worthwhile. The challenge for the facilitators is to manage this balance between security and challenge. Participants may then take germinating thoughts and plans and see how they develop further during the times between group meetings. There appears to be a pattern of self-doubt and confidence within the history of the cohort meetings, and it is increasingly recognised that this is a virtuous tension that keeps things going.

> I was babbling away to Harry about these things and gosh like two years ago I wouldn't have a clue what I was talking about, so that gives you a bit of confidence when you find yourself talking to somebody and almost like you know what you're talking about and it's OK, that inner authority I suppose what you were talking about then, I do know about that so yes that I felt more confident and I think the group does give you confidence.

Accepting commonality and uniqueness

The interpersonal creative tension that seems important for nourished scholarship welcomes novelty and surprise from others. Here, just as one is beginning to know and feel comfortable with others and the group, someone says or does something that makes one think or develop new thoughts. This is the gift of cohortness. When working well, the group shares common general purposes and cares and this reduces some of the loneliness of a more solitary journey. Within the context of an increasing move towards less interpersonal contexts of learning and increasing modularisation, the value of having a sense of history with fellow learners may become increasingly unappreciated – interpersonal continuity may become de-emphasised as a component of integrative learning. The sense of commonality as well as uniqueness has been acknowledged in other literature (Davys & Beddoe, 2009) where it is noted that students have positive and productive experiences in identifying difference between themselves in an interprofessional supervision situation.

> I've been thinking about this a lot, what's changed in me over the last year is I'm learning to research. That's I feel a commonality between all of us that as well as having support for that new development I feel – when I kind of list who am I, what's my identity I go through counselor, supervisor…and there's this bit at the bottom that says researcher and I'm like that's really exciting and that I think is part of why I'm doing this because it's about the creation of new knowledge, what is knowledge, how is that developed and I think that that's what bonds us perhaps that as well as with struggles, what we're going through uniquely is the process of learning about research.

> Difference I think for me is a really healthy curiosity about what everybody else is doing and in my own mind thinking well why are they doing it that way and being able to ask those questions, those are kind of common questions, why this way, why this method, what is it you're trying to create, where are you trying to get to and it's OK that it's all different, we're all doing different things.

Enhancing personal, professional and academic identity through values clarification

The values clarification that seems important for nourished scholarship enables one's own emerging and changing identity to be articulated. Davies & Bedoe (2008) identified that interprofessional cohort supervision deepened understanding of professional roles and identify which was often taken for granted. The identity changes that occur during the doctoral journey are complex and happen before they are understood or known. Participants are often going through important changes in their personal, professional and academic lives. The space for reflection within the meetings of a cohort group addresses a certain hunger in our post-modern lives to 'take time out' to understand the significance of what we are engaged in. Nourished scholarship feeds on meaning. It addresses an existential need in us to know how what we are doing makes a difference, how we fit in to a larger picture, and whether this is good or true. Our background sense of identity – personal, professional and academic – often calls out to be managed, and nourished scholarship helps organise the significance of our learning. It gives a 'why' to the 'what' and 'how'.

> I think for me maybe it's not so much my values have been challenged as strengthened and reinforced in terms almost put a spotlight on…It's just strengthened my

> own personal values because actually I feel a bond here which is quite healing and therapeutic and challenging at times but just reinforces things that I've held inside that it's been good that they've really come out.

Experiencing the benefits of relating to a broader scholarly community

It is important that students develop the discipline of being accountable to a broader scholarly community and its tradition of scholarship. However, nourished scholarship requires that a person's own creativity and what they implicitly know from their experience in practice can also be accommodated. The assessment processes and requirements that appear to support this balance between tradition and personal creativity allow participants to follow their own sequences of accountability at various stages. For example, for some, a deep immersion in a practice project may precede a relevant research question. For another, a burning research question that arises from the literature may only later generate an important practice project. In traditional doctorates, there is sometimes an overemphasis on fitting one's studies to the scholarly tradition and community. This can deflate nourishing possibilities for personally relevant creativity. The spirit of a professional doctorate helps reframe the goal, not just as scholarly contribution, but as professional and practice development as well. However, on the other side of the creative tension is the pursuit of personal and professional interests that do not sufficiently match the current and emerging needs of a professional and academic community. Nourished scholarship embodies a creative tension between personal creativity and scholarly tradition.

> I'm trying to find my voice and meaning in my own sense of inner authority in terms of what it is that I'm doing.

> [Over the] years my scholarly identity has changed and I've been working very hard on producing writing that is not typically academic, it's academia in a different way, so it's been hard, because of the method, it's been quite hard to fall out of that distant way of writing and scrutinising and keeping myself back and then suddenly I've got to come in and be real and express and connect and that is really hard to do and I defy any academic to have a good go at that one because it is hard to do but when you are able to do.

Accepting the rhythm of receptive time and active times

Together with the cohort meetings, the assessment strategy facilitates the discipline of allowing receptive times and active times. The needs-led agenda of the cohort meetings provides a certain openness and freedom for creative inquiry. This is in contrast to doctoral cohorts for group work or tasks associated with assignments (Whisker et al 2007). The assessment tasks at the end of each year and at the transfer from master's level to doctoral level provide scholarly 'punctuation' points that require a certain focus, and this focus combined with the openness of the group generate a creative temporal rhythm. The creative challenges of the journey require times of letting go of predetermined agendas, and other times of focus and discipline. The cohort meetings become the place where this rhythm can be understood and worked with.

> I have found is actually this DProf is quite flexible, you know that kind of flexibility in, you know, I can pick it up, I can put it down, when I put it down actually do you know every day there's something in the back there going on, I've thought about it, I've scribbled something I've read somewhere else so it feels like you know it's, I feel a bit like a collector in many ways…

> I think having the group helped in that because I think if we were all on our own and we've having those fallow periods…I think you might start panicking but I think coming to this group and saying I haven't done anything for the last two months and somebody else saying well neither have I, reassures you and I think that's been very helpful for me.

Concluding thoughts: providing emotional resources for the doctoral journey

The challenge of studying for a PhD is clearly an arduous one and those undertaking research in the arts and humanities may expose themselves to more intrinsically stressful work which challenges progression and completion rates (Elgar & Klein, 2004; Wright & Cochrane, 2000). The emergence of the professional doctorate makes for new demands on the integration of professional and academic life, with the personal world of the student woven between the two. We have illustrated how the integrative scholarly journey and a seamless way of being can potentially exist in the context of a professional doctoral pro-

gramme. The themes we uncovered illustrate the emotional context in which integration occurs within the boundaries of more specialised activities. The potential value of this paper for educational programmes is that it provides a framework for focusing attention on the importance of the emotional journey and on how to sustain students' motivation and resilience.

We suggest that students can be supported on this journey through a sense of 'cohortness' and companionship that may be more important than the traditional process mechanisms instigated by educational institutions. Indeed, we have concerns that there is a serious discrepancy between the understanding and expectation of faculty regarding this process and students' needs. As mentioned earlier, there are small 'signals' emerging from the published literature and internet discussion forums that other factors may be involved. This point was illustrated in a doctoral educational exchange between students and faculty members where, in a roundtable discussion on 'mentoring', the student observed that there was no mention of the discrepancy between faulty expectation and student achievement (University of Southern California, 2004). Indeed, the student went on to identify that the 'emotional support required to help students navigate the individual doctoral journey' was ignored by the panel members:

> There appeared a particular reluctance to engage the institutional responsibility to address the emotional needs of students; the emphasis instead was almost exclusively focused on process, as if the machinery of sausage-making deserved more attention than the ingredients that go into making quality sausage. (University of Southern California, 2004, para. 8)

There is, of course, the possibility that those keen to find the key to successful completions are looking in the wrong place, rather like medicine which adopted the biomedical model and then realised that the psychosocial aspects of a person's life might have a more profound effect on outcome than medical intervention. It might be that other variables, beyond demographics, could be influencing the doctoral journey. We suggest that ensuring students are nourished through scholarship which addresses their emotional needs by using cohort supervision could be far more powerful in determining their doctoral outcome than previous heralded processes.

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