

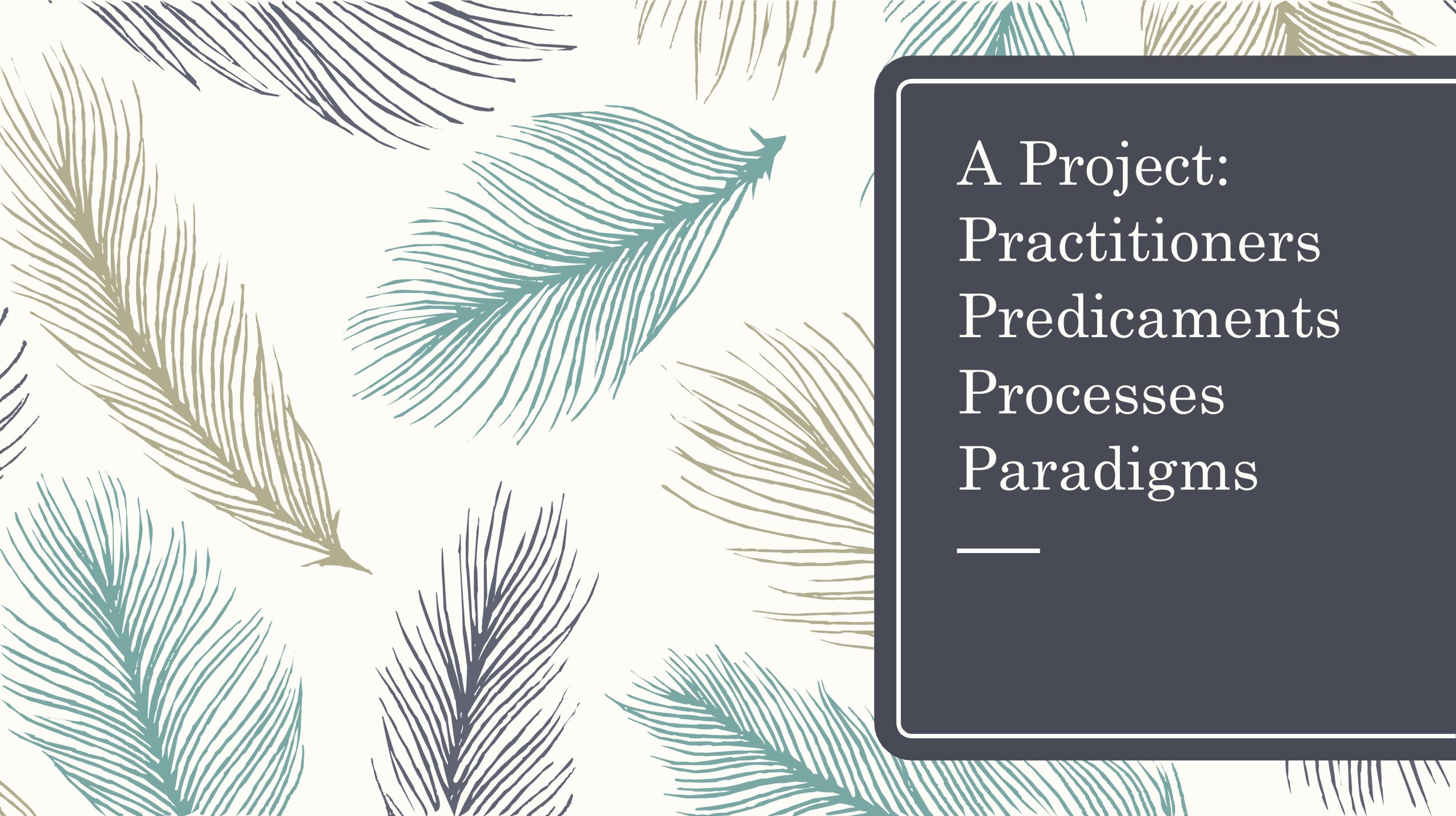
Exploring EAP Practitioner Identity in Circles of Trust

Michèle le Roux

Durham University DCAD (Durham Centre for
Academic Development)

University of Birmingham BIA

michele.a.le-roux@durham.ac.uk



A Project:
Practitioners
Predicaments
Processes
Paradigms
—



Why attend to EAP Practitioners (PEAPs)?

- **Little attention in the scholarly literature**
- Riazi, A. M., Ghanbar, H. & Fazel, I. (2020) “The contexts, theoretical and methodological orientation of EAP research: Evidence from empirical articles published in the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*”, *JEAP* 48
- Ding, A. & Bruce, I. (2017) *The EAP Practitioner: Operating on the Edge of Academia*, London, Routledge
- Ding A. & Monbec L. (forthcoming) *Practitioner Agency & Identity in EAP*, London, Bloomsbury
- Leeds Practitioner Precarity & the Coronavirus event: <https://celt.leeds.ac.uk/practitioner-precarity-and-the-coronavirus-introduction/>
- le Roux, M. : <https://celt.leeds.ac.uk/day-one-views-from-precarious-practitioners/>
- le Roux, M. (forthcoming 2022) “The impact of neoliberal managerial policies on the roles and identities of practitioners of EAP in precarity” in B. Bond & I. Bruce (eds.) *English for Academic Purposes in Higher Education: Politics, Policies and Practices*, London, Bloomsbury



Why attend to EAP Practitioners (PEAPs)?

- BALEAP (British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes)
- neglect, in particular of PEAPs in Precarity
- Some attention is given to:
 - PEAP identity — knowledge base
 - professionalization
- see Bruce, I (2021) [Towards an EAP without borders: Developing knowledge, practitioners, and communities](#). *International Journal of English for Academic Purposes: Research and Practice*, 2021(Spring), 23-36.
- PEAP agency – “our” position in the academy



PEAP Wellbeing

- **Thriving / Flourishing**
- My engagement is informed by a variety of disciplinary perspectives on human flourishing:
- Theology
- Philosophy, esp. Aristotelian tradition of Virtue Ethics
- Political Philosophy, esp. Martha Nussbaum's framing of Social Justice issues in terms of Human Capabilities



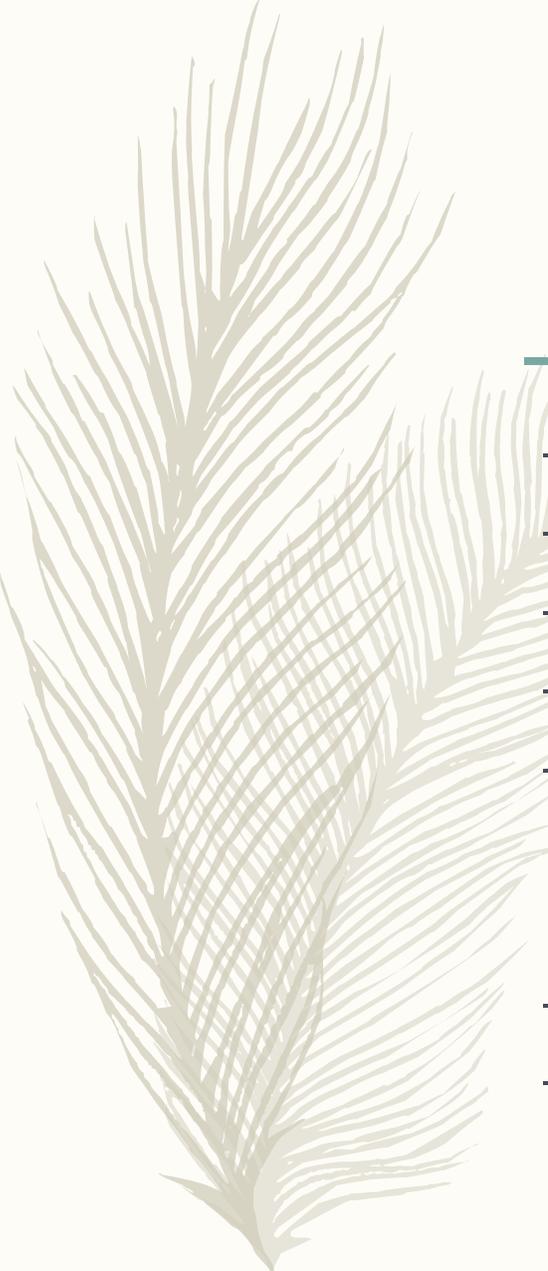
The Predicament

- Neoliberal agenda in HE – commodification of education
- Competitive individualism
- PEAP precarity
- Coronavirus pandemic
- Lockdown
- Working online / from home
- Impact of Brexit
- etc.



The PEAP Predicament

- The predicament of PEAPs in the neoliberal university is often characterised by precarity, marginalisation and cognitive dissonance: the “disjuncture between what we ourselves regard as meaningful practice and what we are instead expected to comply with.” (Kreber, 2013)
- Responding to this predicament with Compassion:
 - *Noticing discomfort, distress or disadvantaging of others and/or of self, and taking wise action to reduce or prevent that.*
 - (thanks to Theo Gilbert for this formulation of compassion in action)



Care & Compassion in the Curriculum

- Care and Compassion in the Curriculum, SRHE webinar, 7th October 2020
- <https://www.srhe.ac.uk/events/pastevents/details/?eid=496>
- Courageous and Compassionate Pedagogy, SRHE webinar, 18th November 2020
- <https://www.srhe.ac.uk/events/pastevents/details/?eid=495>
- Bali, M (2021) “Creating Equitable, Caring Communities Online”, Keynote address at BALEAP Conference, Glasgow, 6th April, slides available here: <https://eap4socialjustice.net/2021/04/27/teasing-out-the-social-justice-strands-from-the-baleap-2021-conference/>
- Compassion in Education website & network
- <https://compassioninhe.wordpress.com/>



PEAPs and (self) compassion

- **Care for others requires that you also care for yourself.**
- "The relationship between self-care and care-for-others is neither a matter of sequence nor of choice – although one can be suspended for the other for certain moments depending on the circumstances. There is an inexorable and complementary quality to the relationship between the two. It is inexorable in that they are not discrete; it is complementary in that each implies and requires the other."
- Jung, J-H. (2016) *The concept of care in the curriculum*. London, Routledge.
- (thanks to Ian Kinchin for sharing this resource)



"The future that we enact depends on the inner place from which we operate."

Otto Scharmer

Self-care is not selfish.
You can't pour from an empty cup

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



#SelfCareSeptember



Reflecting on self-care and wellsprings: what enables me to be resourced and resilient?

- Resourcing the mind
- not just “sources” (to be cited) or “resources” (to be mined/exploited)
- **Wellsprings**
- Resourcing the heart & the spirit
- Circles of Trust : <http://www.couragerenewal.org/approach/>
- Non-violent Communication: Rosenberg, M. B. (2015) *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life 3rd edition*, PuddleDancer Press, CA, USA
- Self compassion: Robert Gonzales & <http://living-compassion.org/>
- Global Dyad Meditation: <https://www.globaldyadmeditation.org/>



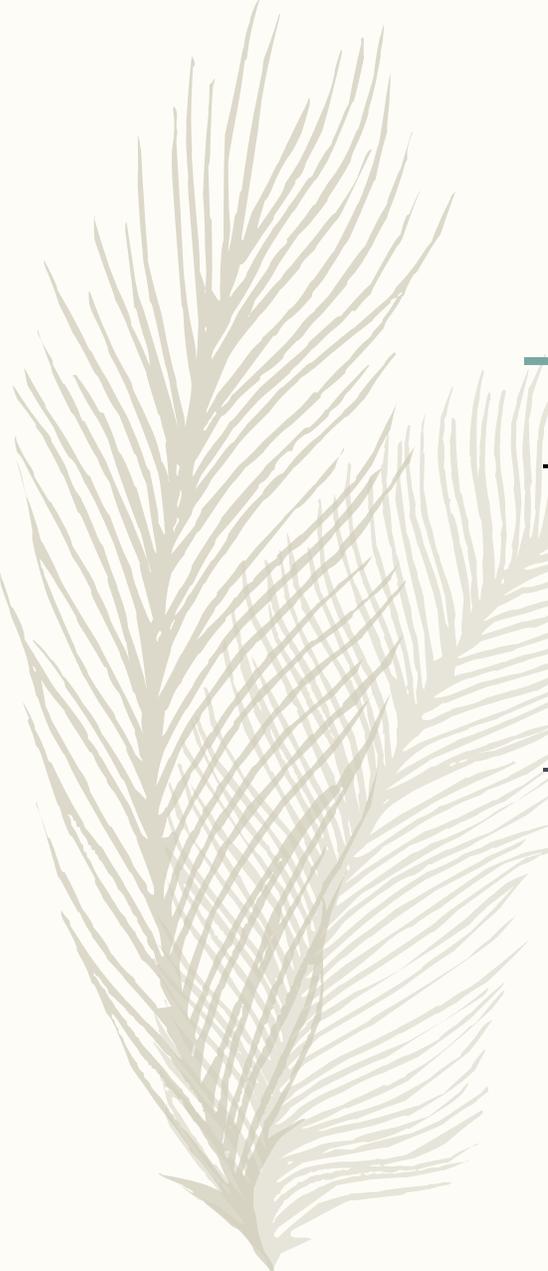
Processes

- The Circle of Trust® approach is distinguished by principles and practices intended to create a process of **shared exploration**—in retreats, programs and other settings—where people can find **safe space** to **nurture personal and professional integrity and the courage to act on it**.
- Michalec, P. & Bower, G. (2012) Soul and role dialogues in higher education: Healing the divided self, *New Directions for Teaching and Learning – Special Issue: Teaching and Learning from the Inside Out: Revitalizing Ourselves and Our Institutions*, 130: 15-25
- Palmer, J.P. & Zajonc, A. (2010) *The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass
- see also: <http://www.couragerenewal.org/resources/evaluation/#he>



Paradigms

- **safe space**
- **the work is intended to contribute to participants' wellbeing, regardless of other outcomes or outputs**
- **nurture personal and professional integrity and the courage to act on it**
- **shared exploration leading to emergent understandings**
- **centring the Research Ethics of SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching & Learning): Beneficence; Respect for Persons; Justice (Gurung et al., 2007, cited in Martin, 2013: 62-63)**
- **re-envisioning scholarly artefacts (products/makings/shapings)**



Safe space

- I believe that creating and holding **safe space** is necessary to enable and empower PEAPs to articulate their experience from a place of authenticity and trust. This need for safe space emerged as a key theme in the 2020 Leeds University CELT Practitioner Precarity event.
- Palladino, M. & Sharma, S. (2020) To combat racial inequality, university classrooms must be more inclusive, *THES*, 7 November 2020
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/opinion/combat-racial-inequality-university-classrooms-must-be-more-inclusive>



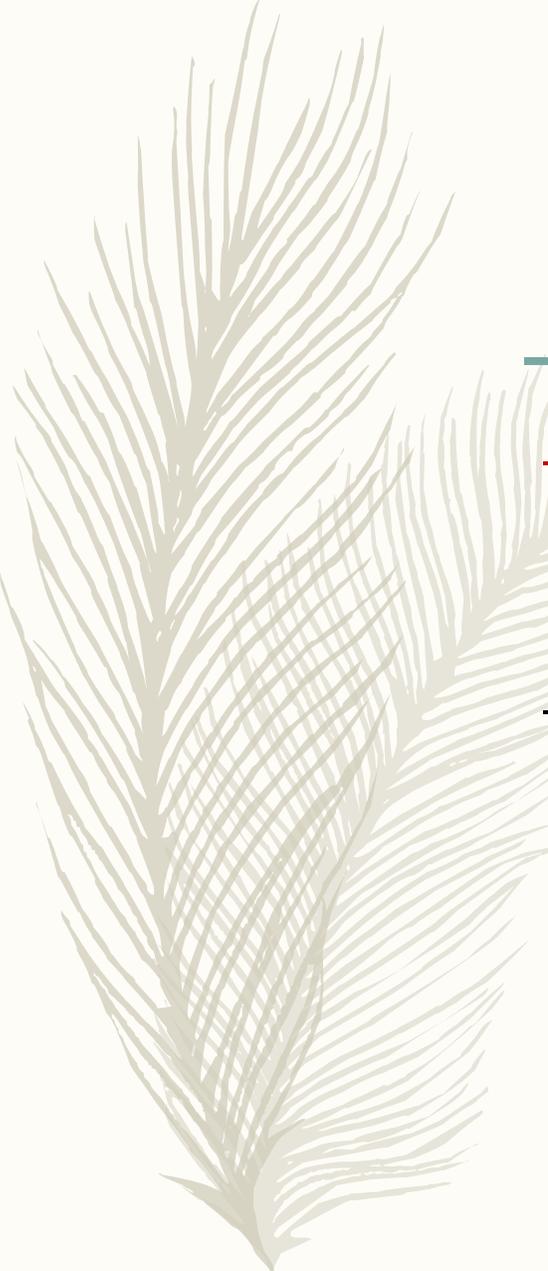
The “vessel” I propose for holding safe space is the Circle of Trust

- The work supports the integration of “soul and role” through supporting participants’ capacity to “hear each other into speech”, to attend to the wisdom of the inner teacher and to find an authentic voice within a community of truth.
- The Circles of Trust model, although originally conceived as face-to-face, has carried over very effectively to the online environment.
- PEAP(P)s from anywhere in the world could participate, and would to some extent self-select, according to their capacity and willingness to make a long-term commitment to engage with the project.



More about the “vessel”...

- a year-long project 2021-22
- to explore how PEAPS and PEAPs in Precarity experience the rhythm of the calendar/academic year
- participants would be invited to meet once a month
- the unifying thread would be to use metaphors of time & place (changing seasons; sites, e.g. forests, deserts, boundaries)
- to stimulate and support reflection on and enquiry into PEAP(P)s’ experience, identity and agency



Beneficence

- The process of engaging in this reflective, slow and nurturing work is intended, in itself, to contribute to participants' **Wellbeing**, regardless of other outcomes and outputs.
- My thinking around safe space and beneficence is also informed by the suggestion that a phenomenographical approach may be “therapeutic”, in the sense that it can facilitate emergent meaning-making and understanding (Marton, 1986).



Respect for persons

- **nurture personal and professional integrity and the courage to act on it**
- **unapologetically values-focused**
- One of the foundational principles of Circle of Trust work is the honouring of confidentiality. The challenge, then, will be to develop a methodological model for making “public” a private and confidential process: how will participants capture or tell their experience & reflection? This will be negotiated with participants. **Respect for participants** will be embodied by situating them not as objects of study in a research design in which they have no say, but as co-creators of the data capture model, the methods for studying the data, and the types of outputs – as articulators of their own identities and experiences.



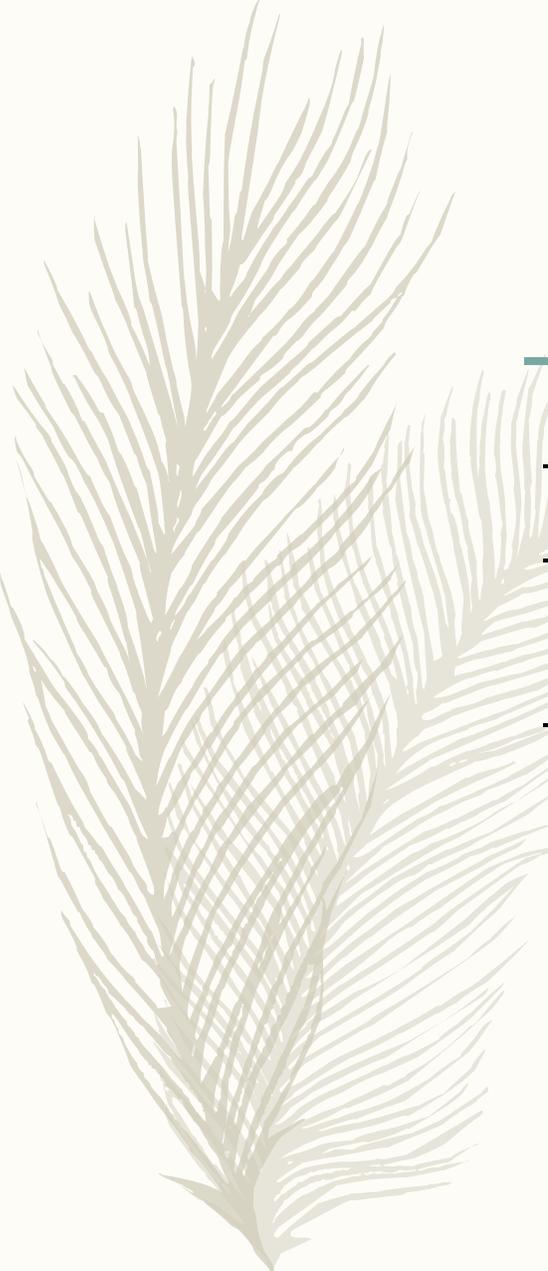
Justice

- **shared exploration leading to emergent understandings and outputs**
- The principle of **Justice** will be embodied in supporting participants' agency to share/disseminate/write up/publish/present on their experience – individually, or collaboratively, i.e. the project could have several outputs by different authors. The intention is to provide participants with opportunities for research, publication & conference presentations within the field of SoTL in EAP:
- “by withholding contributions to scholarship, we are potentially limiting our own agency...and accepting of changes and practices defined and decided by others” (Ding, 2016:12)



Knowledge is about relationship- building and about care

- Decentring some kinds of knowledge
- Putting some other kinds of knowledge at the centre
- Challenging traditional framings of scholarly knowledge (“scholarly artefacts”, e.g. books, journal articles, conference presentations)
- Digital Stories for Knowledge Equity event, convened by Maha Bali & Leslie Chan, 26th January 2021
- Building a socially just academy: <https://onehe.org/equity-unbound/>
- Knowledge Equity Lab: <https://knowledgeequitylab.ca/>



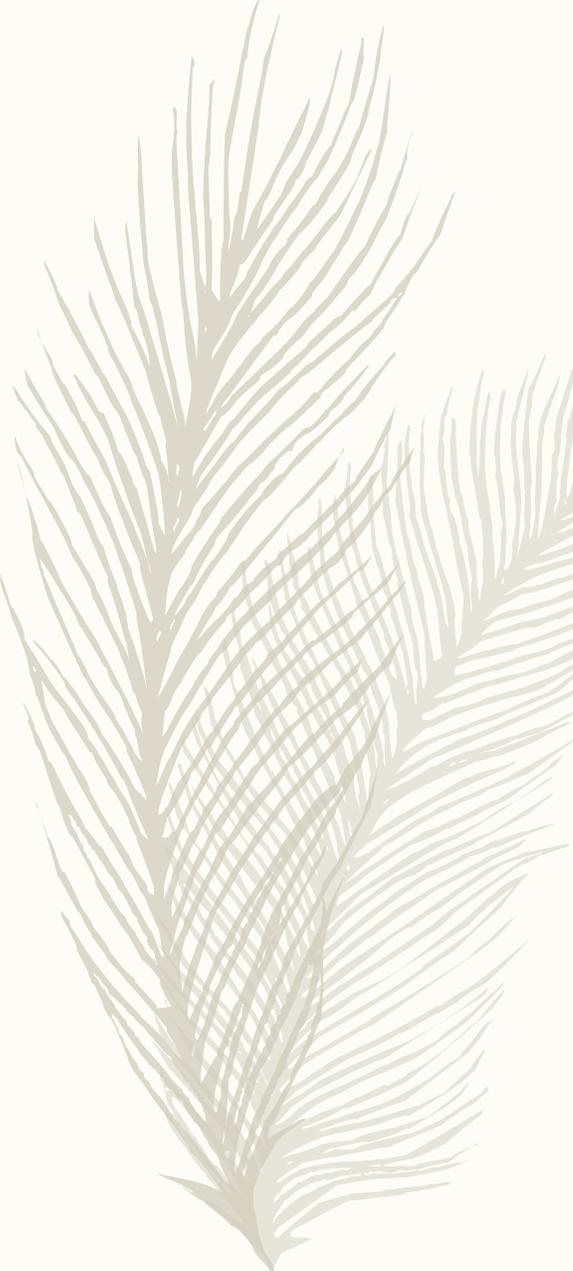
re-envisioning scholarly artefacts

- The form/mode of outputs/scholarly artefacts will be negotiated with participants
- Artefacts could be in the form of individual journals or video diaries; open dialogue, e.g. discussion board, blog; or some other mode entirely...
- My thinking about how we might re-envision scholarly artefacts is informed by projects such as Future Library (<https://www.futurelibrary.no/>) and Human Library (<https://humanlibrary.org/>), in which artefacts become, in turn, archives/resources for future exploration.



I invite you to contact me if you are interested in participating

- Email: michele.a.le-roux@durham.ac.uk
- **Centre for Courage & Renewal Heart of Higher Education conference (online)**
June 16th-19th 2021 (register by 11th June)
<http://www.couragerenewal.org/the-heart-of-higher-education/>
- **Circle of Trust High Summer series (to get a flavour of the work):** July 25th, August 1st, 8th, 22nd & 29th, 8.00-9.30pm UK time (GMT+1)



Wellsprings & References:

Center for Courage & Renewal Circle of Trust Approach

<http://www.couragerenewal.org/approach/>

Ding, A. (2016) Challenging scholarship: A thought piece, *The Language Scholar* 0, 6-19

Kreber, C. (2013) *Authenticity in and through Teaching in Higher Education: the Transformative Potential of the Scholarship of Teaching*, Abingdon, Routledge

Leeds University CELT Practitioner Precarity and the Coronavirus blog (2020)

<https://celt.leeds.ac.uk/practitioner-precarity-and-the-coronavirus-introduction/>

Martin, R.C. (2013) Navigating the IRB: The ethics of SoTL *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 136: 59-71

Marton, F. (1986) Phenomenography – A Research Approach to Investigating Different Understandings of Reality *Journal of Thought*, 21.3: 28-49



Michalec, P. & Bower, G. (2012) Soul and role dialogues in higher education: Healing the divided self, *New Directions for Teaching and Learning – Special Issue: Teaching and Learning from the Inside Out: Revitalizing Ourselves and Our Institutions*, 130: 15-25

Palladino, M. & Sharma, S. (2020) To combat racial inequality, university classrooms must be more inclusive, *THES*, 7 November 2020

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/opinion/combat-racial-inequality-university-classrooms-must-be-more-inclusive>

Palmer, J.P. & Zajonc, A. (2010) *The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass



Thank you for
your attention.
I am happy to
respond to any
questions.

Michèle le Roux

michele.a.le-roux@durham.ac.uk