

# Transfer of learning

Are we really making a difference?

Me – where I am from and what I do - Early research into this area

Hoping to gain a clearer understanding and consensus into what we are achieving.

The aim of this session is to further the discussion and develop an understanding of where the research/practice worlds meet. Are we on the same page?

I'll give you some insight into what I have found so far, then we can use that as a basis for some discussion.

You – where you are from and what you do – High school, tertiary, what else? People map of jobs?



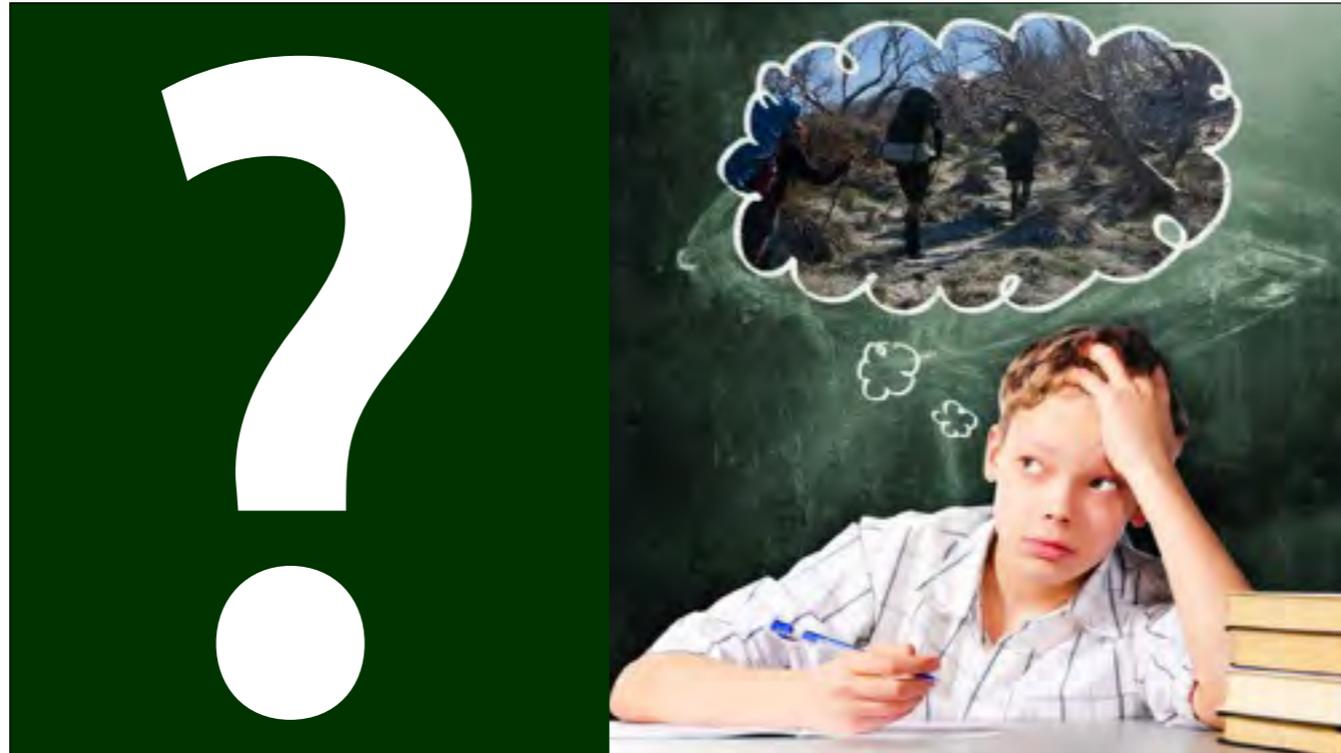
We take people to the bush (change their context)



They learn stuff  
Skills, knowledge, understanding etc.



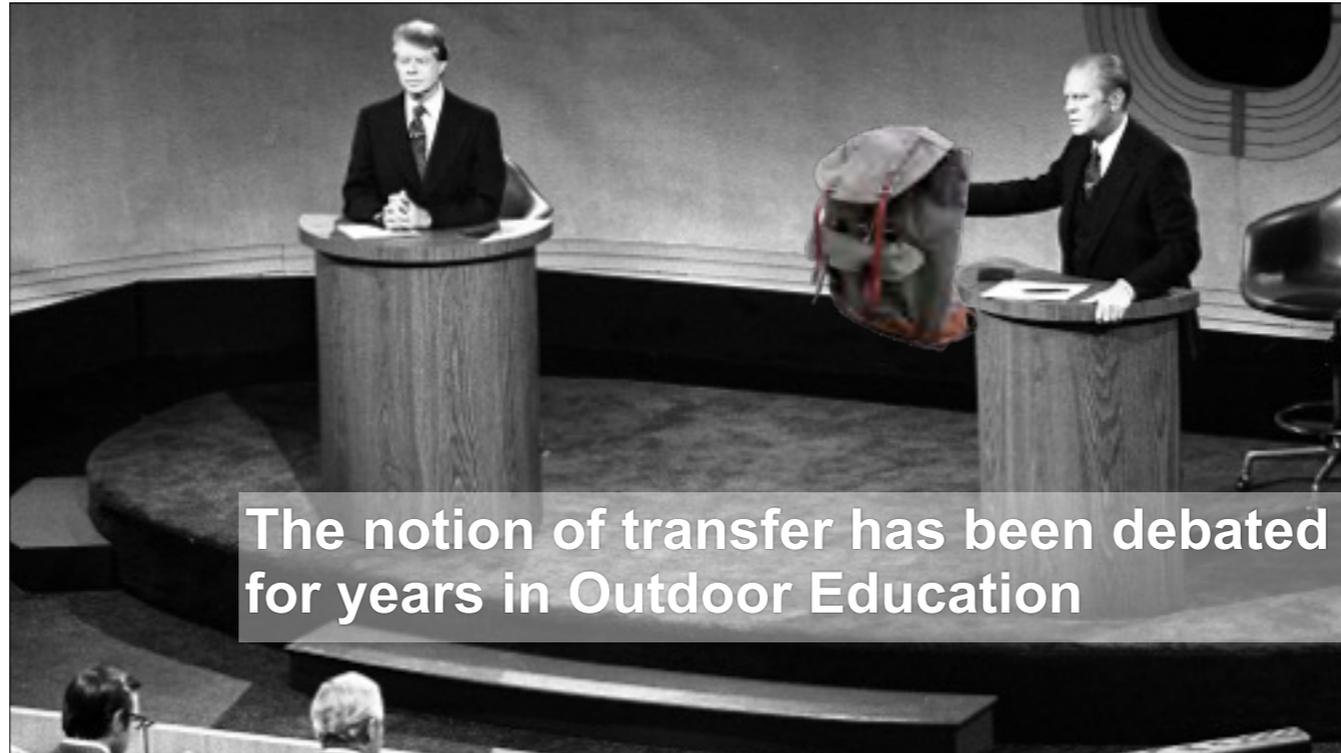
They return to their everyday lives (context)



Then what? Does their learning (knowledge and understanding) continue with them on return?

The juxtaposition that occurs for students (Quay/Dewey)

Quay discussed awareness of the subtleties of the activity. What's happening now, may not be relevant to what may happen in the future. Climate change example (proximity - actions/results).



Not just OEE, the broader education community has issues also.

## Outdoor Education means...

Outdoor Education Environmental Education  
Adventure Therapy Corporate Training Adventure  
Education Experiential Education Outdoor  
Adventure Education Personal Development  
Community Nature Tourism Outdoor Recreation

Partly due to the broad scope of what we are trying to achieve

**Different understanding of what OE is  
= differing outcomes**

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Martin talks of the need for an agreed motive of service, or outcomes. An essence of outdoor education

OAE

vs

OEE?

In the literature, there is a significant divide between OAE and OEE. Where do **you** get your research from? What do **you** take your prompts from?



**Outdoor  
Adventure  
Education  
(OAE)**

Intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships (self and others)



Intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships (self and others)

## Outdoor & Environmental Education (OEE)



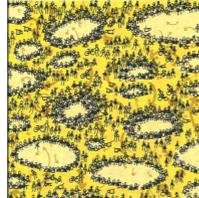
Addresses the additional question of how students might develop lasting relationships with the environment.

Australian research is beginning to look beyond the personal development and is addressing the additional question of how students might develop lasting relationships with the environment following an OE experience (Brookes, 2002; 2003a; 2003b; Preston, 2004, Thomas, 2005). This shift in focus is gradually growing through the research field. This shift is required to catch up with Australian teachers and practitioners, who have already begun implementing a more environmental focus in their programs.

# Themes



**Take a more localised, context aware approach**



**Deeper use of a community of practice model**



**Use of time to extend reflection**

I identified three themes that could be addressed in order to increase the possibility of successful transfer

## Take a more localised, context aware approach

Brookes (2003) urges us to “open the way to construct on-going relationships between individuals, particular groups, and particular places in the outdoors” (p. 60)



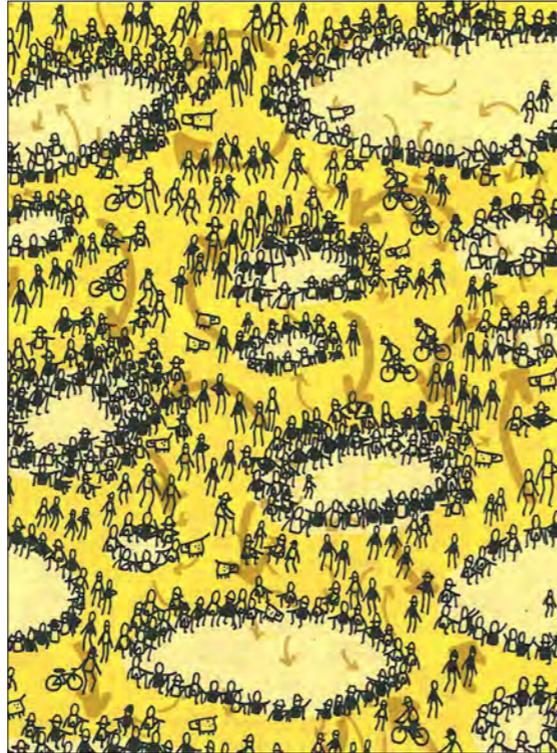
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**Take a more localised,  
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Preston (2004)  
suggests a focus on  
context specific  
learning – using the  
location as an integral  
part of the experience.



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## Deeper use of a community of practice model

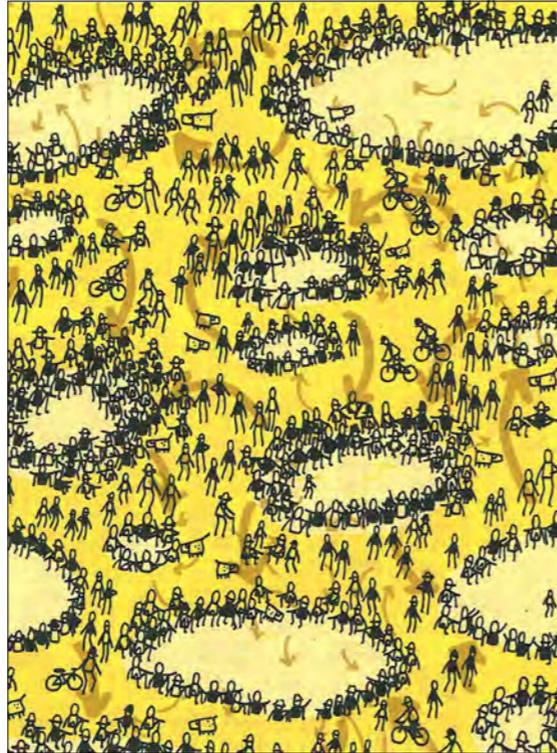
Brown (2010) suggests we throw out trying to acquire knowledge that can be transferred to different situations and actually focus on social interaction.

Brown says we should reframe the question: suggests we should not ask:

“what can be transferred from OAE to everyday life, in an effort to justify our job, but rather how have we assisted students to understand the affordances and constraints which will help them become meaningful participants in different situations?” (p. 19)

It is when we reframe the question, that we can explore new opportunities.

This can be achieved through stronger use of communities of practice – participants bring enormous experience and knowledge to every situation, let’s work together to achieve a common understanding.



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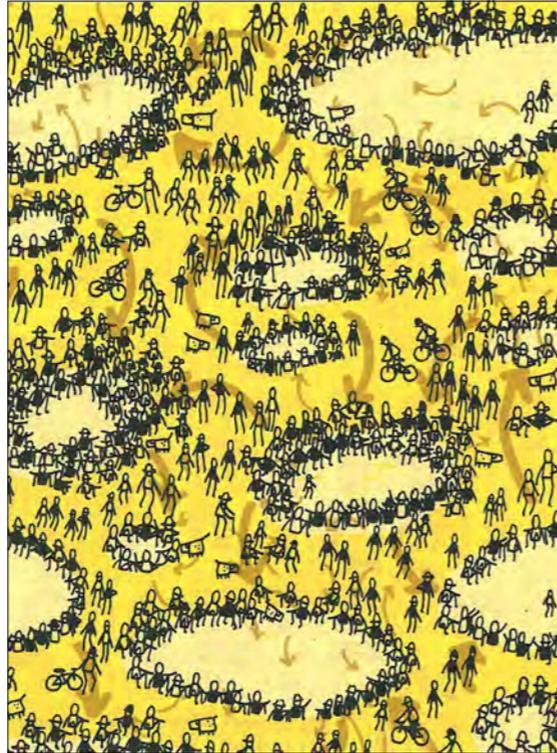
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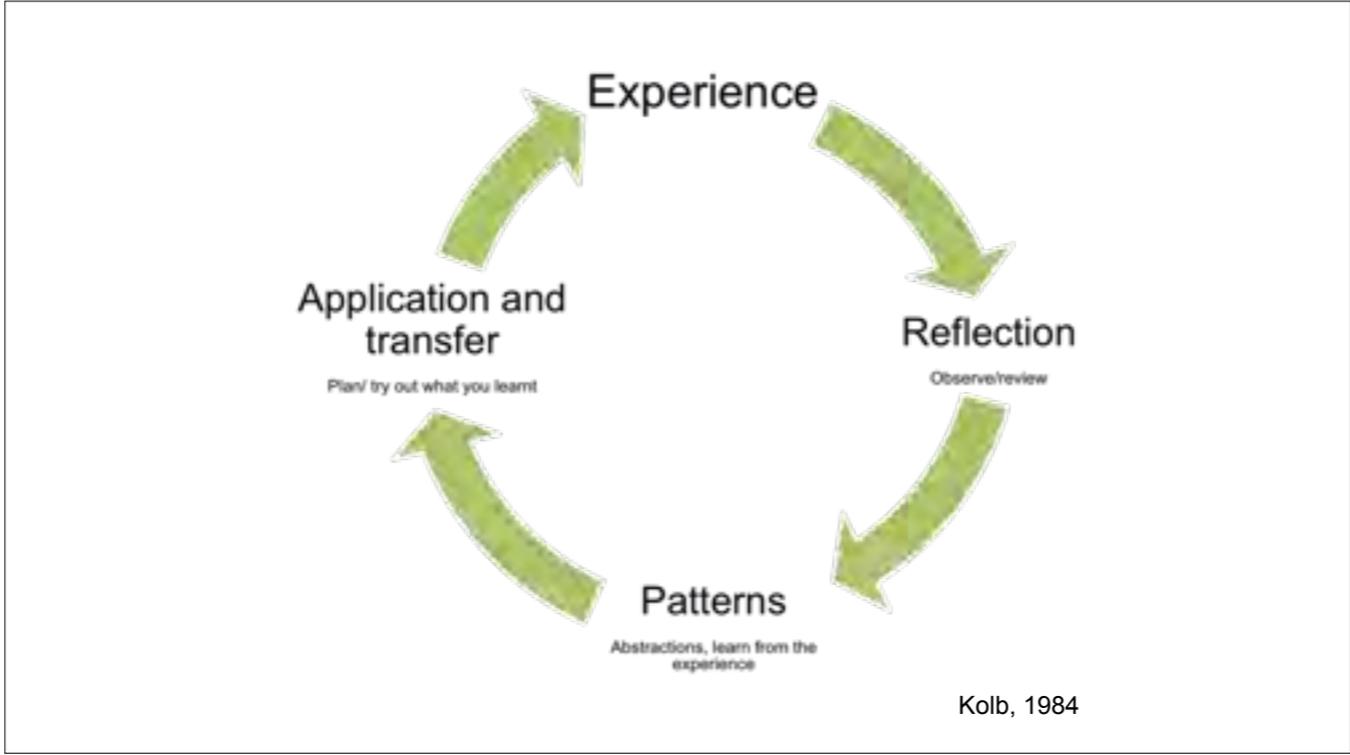
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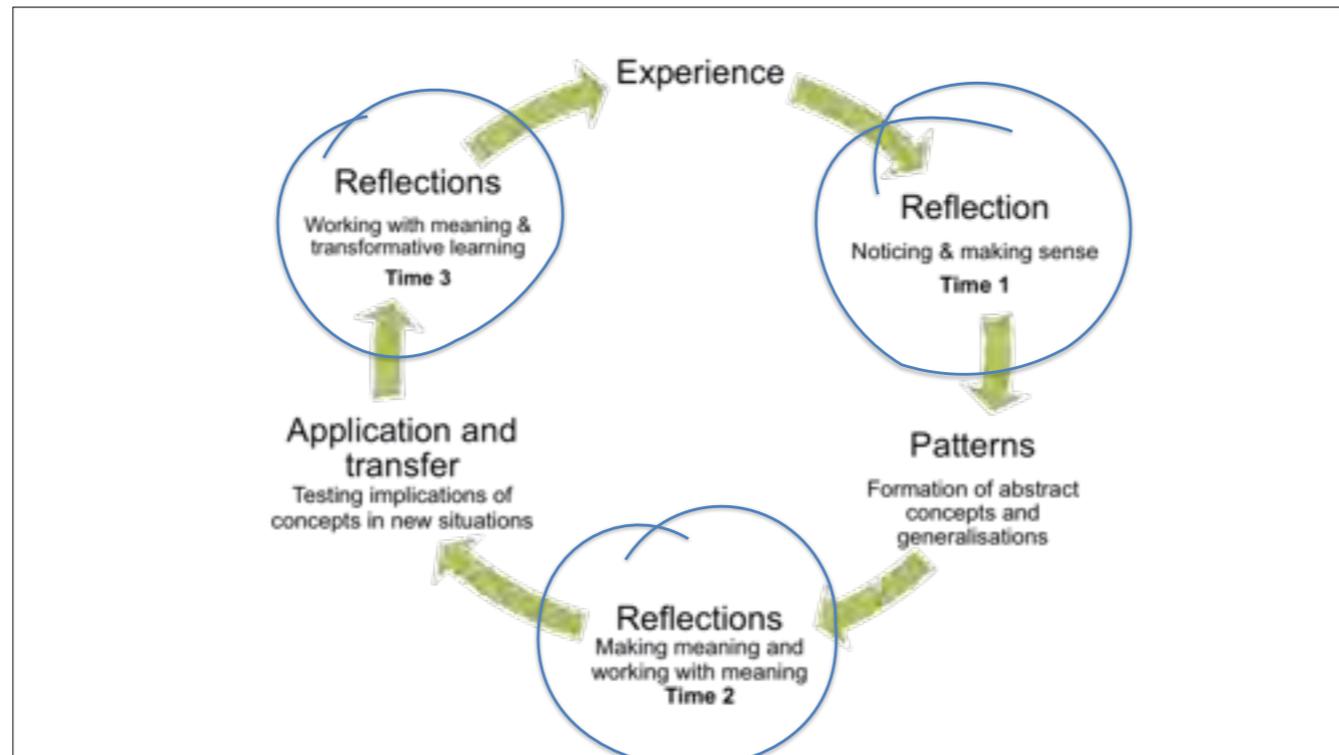
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argues for extending the time of involvement in an OE experience, suggests that a good deal of the literature fails to revisit participants after their experience and relies on surveys conducted on the final day of a program or generalised supposition to cast their findings. Sarah Leberman & Andrew Martin (2004) found the addition of participant post-course reflection enhanced transfer. Their longitudinal study found very strong correlations between ongoing reflections and the persistence of the transferred learning (Leberman & Martin, 2004)



Kolb (1984)



Showered participants maintained a stronger  
Also suggested using a communities of practice approach in further reflection time  
Wattchow uses an artistic approach that continues beyond the experience.

## **Is it about reflection?**

**Does spending more time after the experience, processing, make a difference?**

**Does transfer occur?  
What affects transfer?**

What about the programs that include follow up processing/reflection?

The juxtaposition that occurs for students (Quay/Dewey)



**8 Students**

3rd year OEE university students



**6 months**

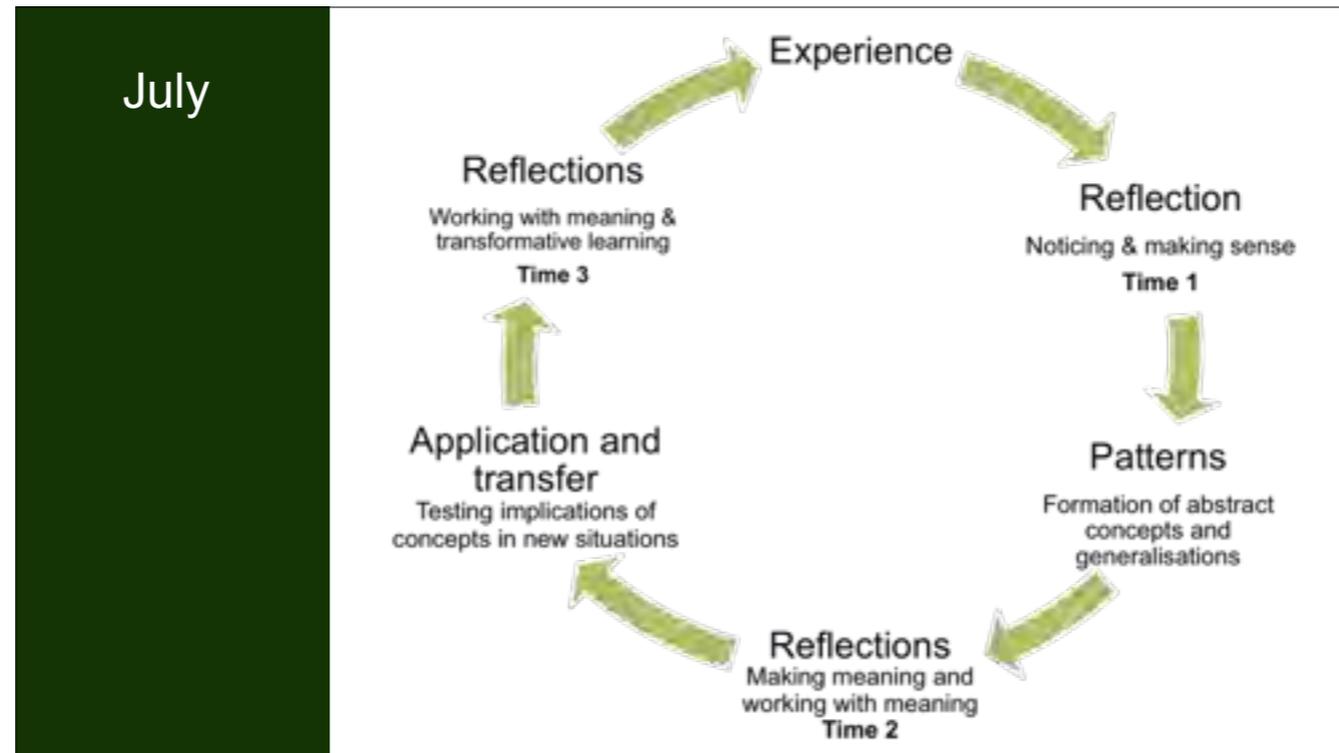
# Data



3 sets of data

journal, essay, focus group

July



Journal entry at the beginning

Journal entries during the experience

Essay

Focus group

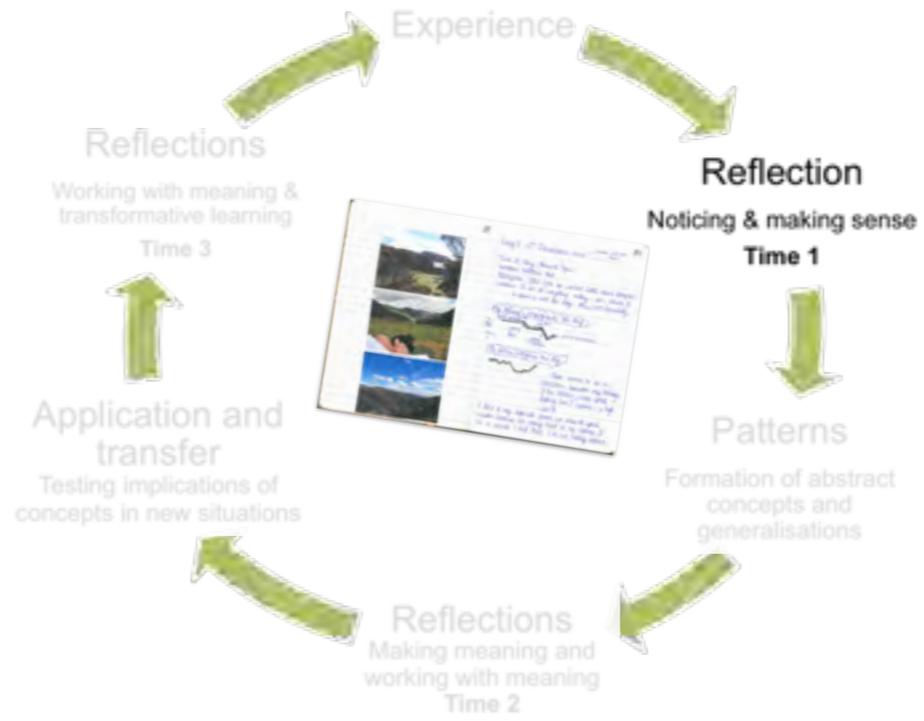
July

December



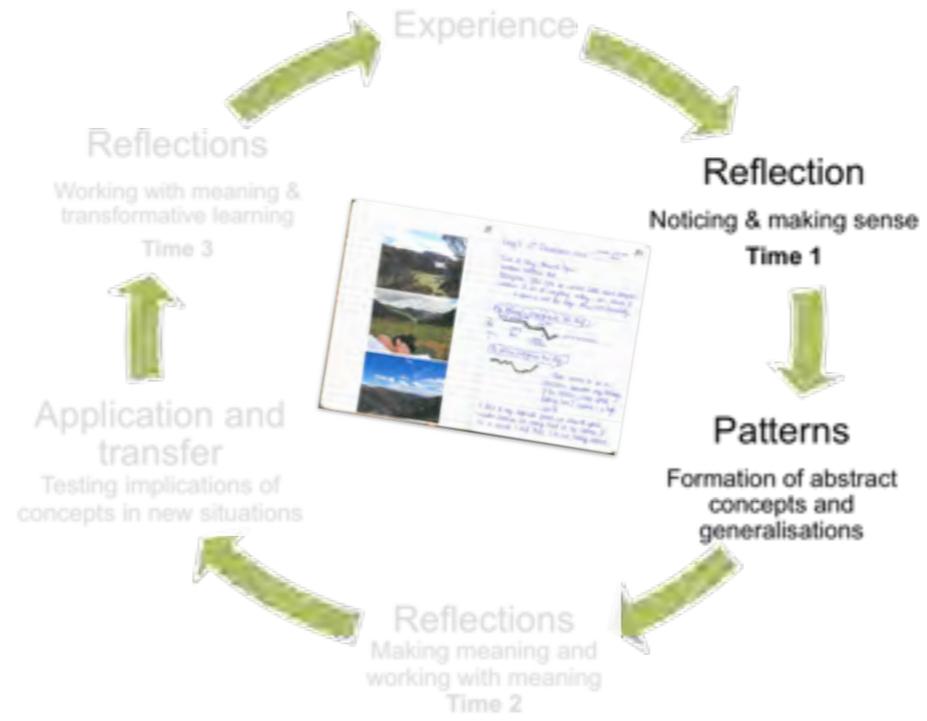
July

December



July

December



July

December

January

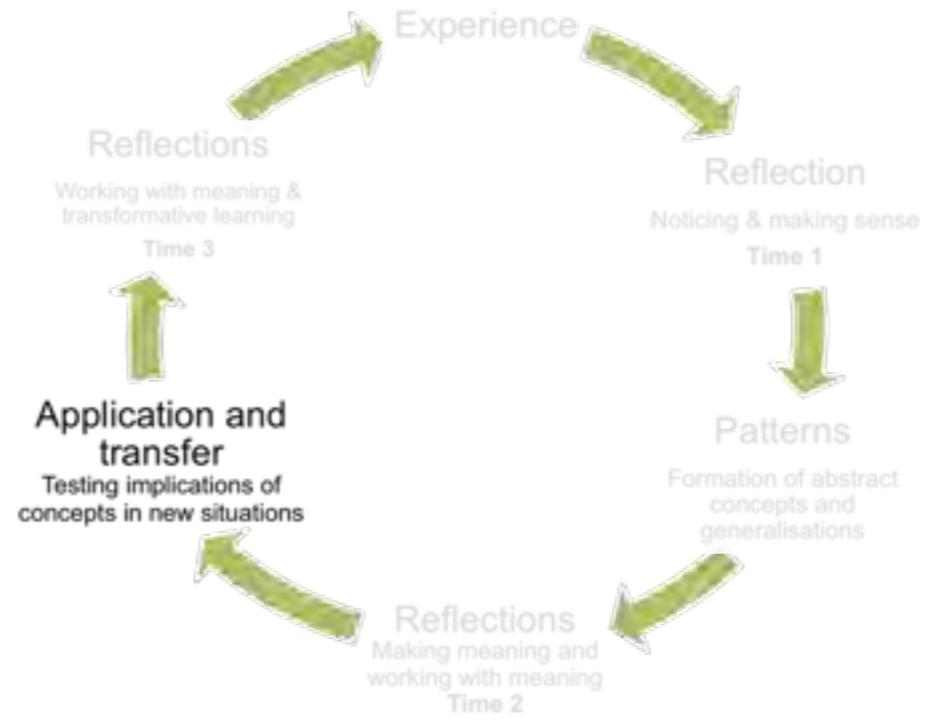


July

December

January

May



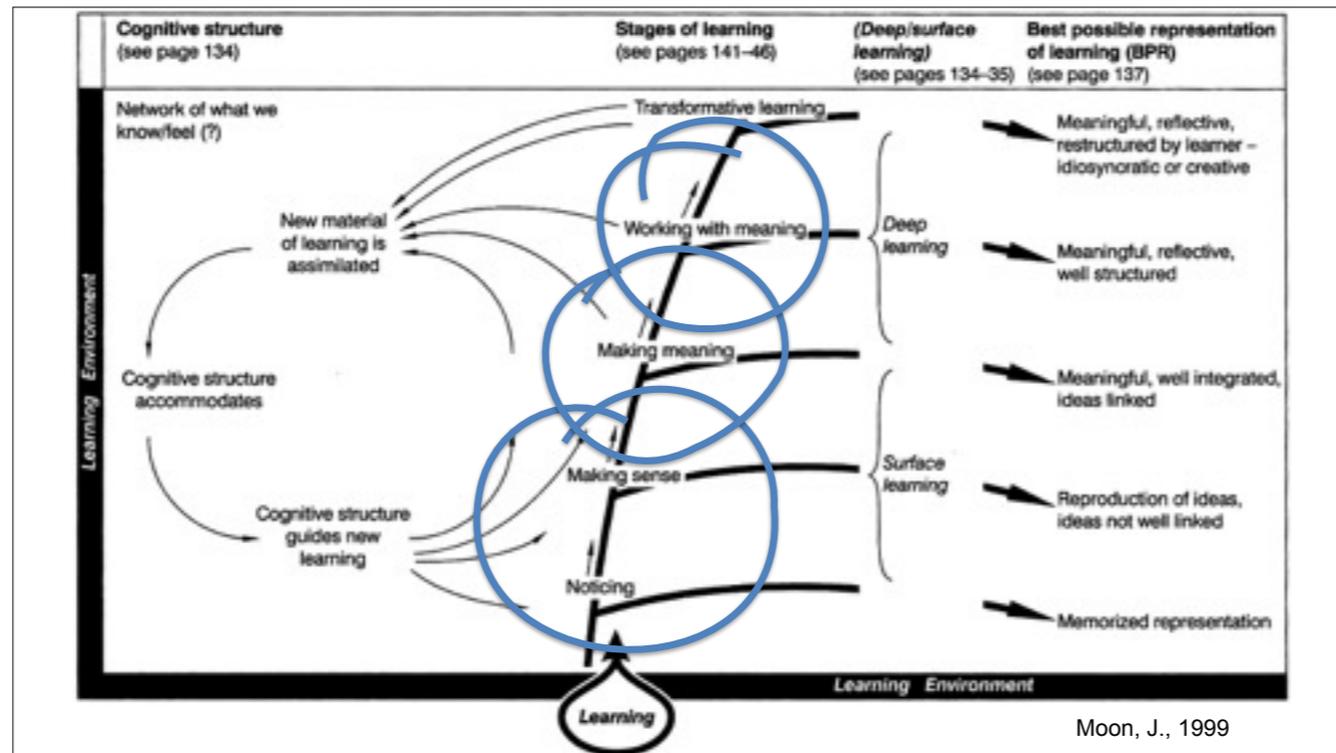
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Generally working through  
 Not quite reaching transformative  
 More likely to occur over time?

**What are the implications for our  
practice?**