

Community Development & Human Flourishing: Be the change!



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What in the world is going on?



- z Neoliberal globalisation–free-market capitalism
- z Profit over people and planet
- z Poverty is choice not necessity!
- z Unsustainable world
- z Escalating inequalities/environmental degradation

My key point:

Co-operative vision vs competitive worldview

Interconnected world: fragmented worldview



- z Gandhi, 1926: 'God forbid that India should ever take to industrialisation after the manner of the West. If an entire nation of 300million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts'
- z Today, India and China have 2,500million aspiring to imitate the West!

Development-as-growth is unjust and unsustainable



- z Neoliberal globalisation reinforces the hegemony of the West's economic profit imperative
- z Result is crisis of justice and sustainability
- z A worldview in which unthinkable acts are sold as common sense!

Why is it happening?



- z Neoliberalism and a politics of greed
- z Individualism lacks a common good
- z Market replaces wellbeing
- z Dominant ideology demonises the poor
- z A common sense of privileging the privileged
- z Decontextualised practice
- z Politics of disposability

The consequences: a story of disposability



10-minute dialogue



- What does the statement 'decontextualised practice is placatory practice' mean to you?

What's all this got to do with CD?



- z **CD vision:** just & sustainable world
- z **CD principles:** social & environmental justice
- z **CD values:** ideology of equality
- z **CD process:** popular education, practical projects, collective action
- z **CD theory:** analyses of power

CD Strategic Framework for NI

CD Strategy for Health/Wellbeing



- **Equality and Anti-discrimination:** challenges oppression
- **Social Justice:** works towards a more equal, inclusive society
- **Collective Action:** organise, influence and take action
- **Community Empowerment:** build self-esteem, confidence, identity
- **Working and Learning Together:** popular educators using everyday experience as knowledge for change

Poverty violates human rights

Poverty kills/makes people ill/destroys hope
Killeen (2007)

Northern Ireland:

- 23% higher rates of emergency admission to hospital;
- 66% higher rates of respiratory mortality; 65% higher rates of lung cancer;
- 73% higher rates of suicide;
- Double the number of self harm admissions;
- 50% higher rates of smoking related deaths;
- 120% higher rates of alcohol related deaths.

(2009 Inequalities Monitoring Report, DHSSPS)

Using policy documents



'The main purpose of this strategy is to recognise and support the important and pivotal role that community development plays in improving health and wellbeing'

'The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) and Public Health Agency (PHA) want to see strong, resilient communities where everyone has good health and wellbeing - places where people look out for each other and have community pride in where they live'

'Community development tackles the root causes of Inequalities'

(CD Strategy for Health and Wellbeing, 2012)

Closing the Gap in a Generation: Social justice and health



WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health (CSDH) 2008:

1. Improve daily living conditions
2. Tackle inequitable distribution of power, money, resources
3. Understand the problem and assess action

ANALYSIS, ACTION and CHANGE

10-minute dialogue



- z What opportunities do you have/could you create to use policy documents as a way of strengthening practice?

How do we become critical?



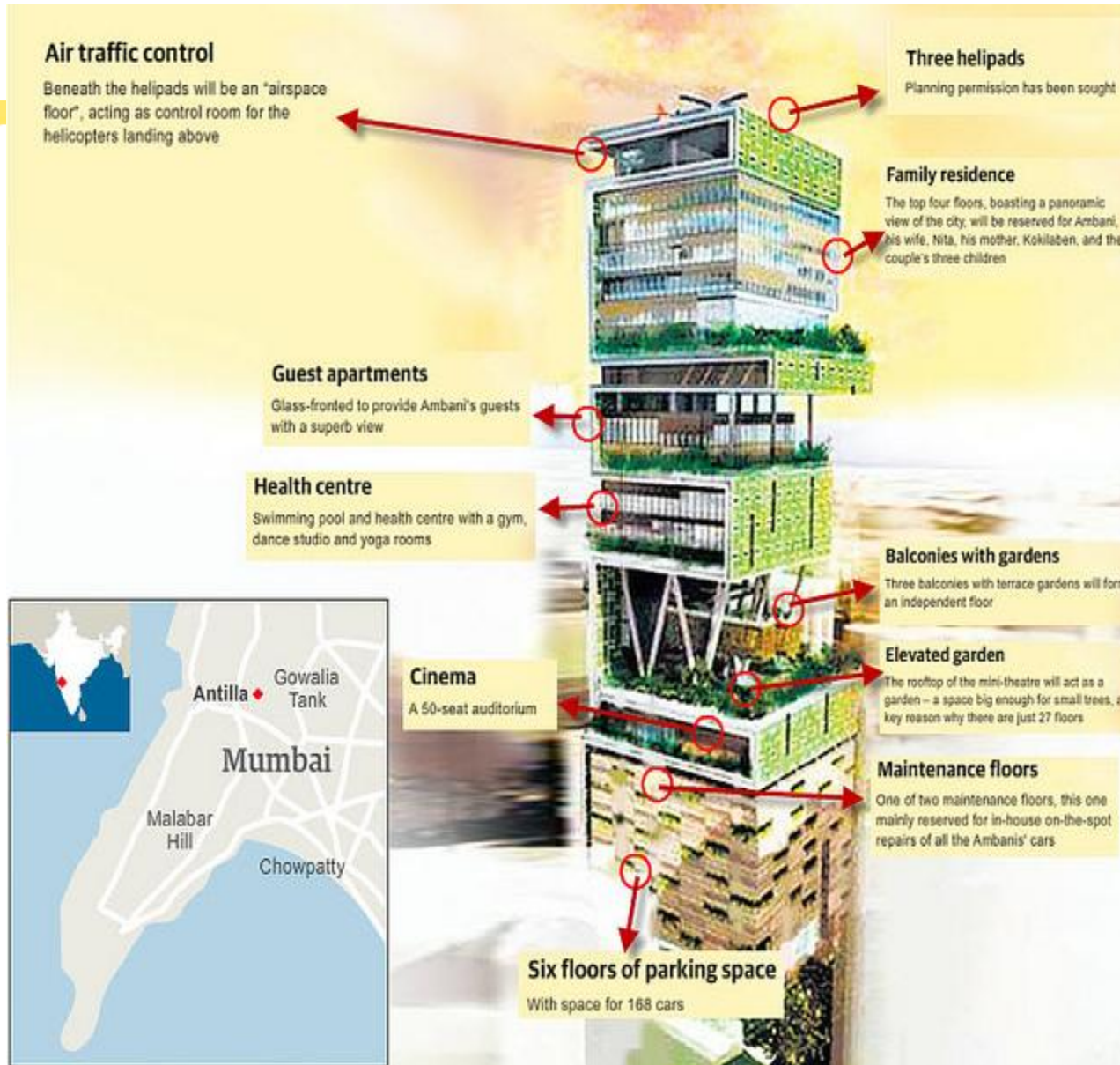
- z Question everything
- z Expose taken-for-grantedness
- z See contradictions
- z Critique everyday life
- z Critique practice
- z Create critical spaces for dialogue – co-creating knowledge is a collective process!

The bubble burst



- z Housing: right to shelter or route to profit?
- z Seeing contradictions
- z Discovering patterns
- z Making critical connections

Mukesh Ambani's 27-storey Mumbai home



Living contradictions in everyday life



Childhood wellbeing



'The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born' (UNICEF, 2007: 1)

Childhood wellbeing:

UK ranked 21/21

Norway ranked 7/21

Child poverty trends



- z UK: 1979 1:10 by 1997 1:3
- z Child Poverty Act, 2010
- z 2020: 800k more children in absolute poverty
- z OECD 2012: UK income gap greatest
- z Norway 1:12
- z Wellbeing and social exclusion

Blueprint for a different kind of future



- z China: crises of inequality/ecology
- z Dismantling power as profit
- z Decolonising our minds
- z Reconceptualising wellbeing as human and planetary flourishing
- z A connected ecosystem

10-minute dialogue



- z Where are the spaces in your working life for creating critical dialogue?
- z How, where and with whom do you analyse and discuss what's going on - and what can be done about it?

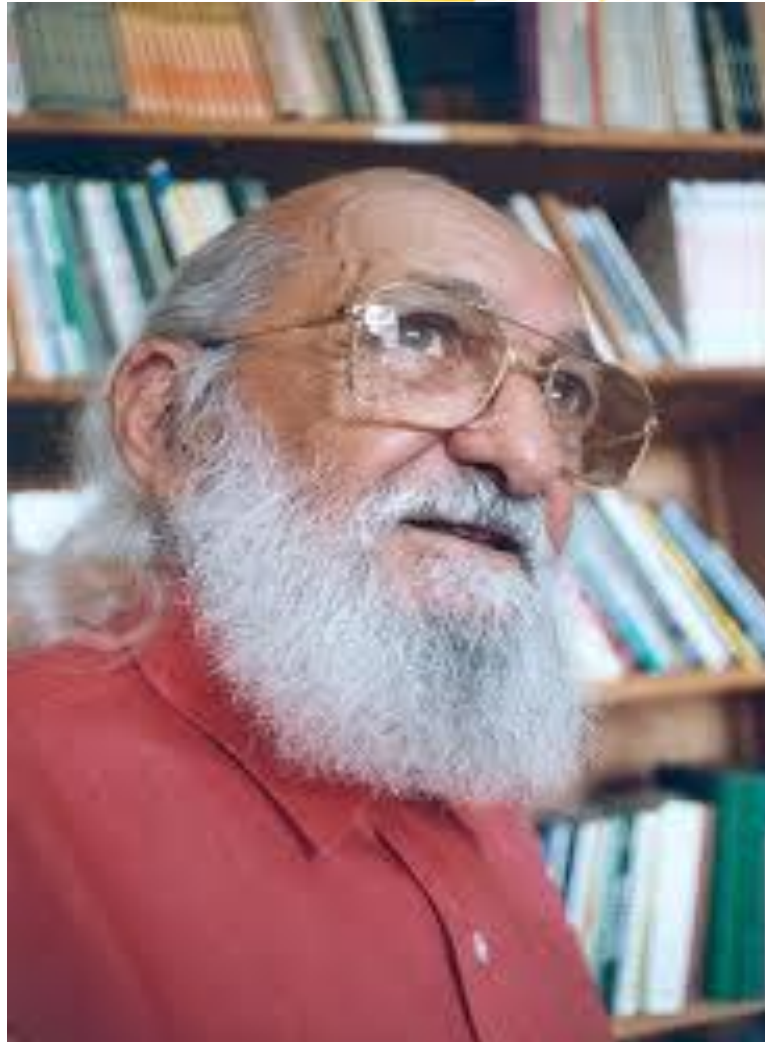
What's to be done?



CD critiqued for:

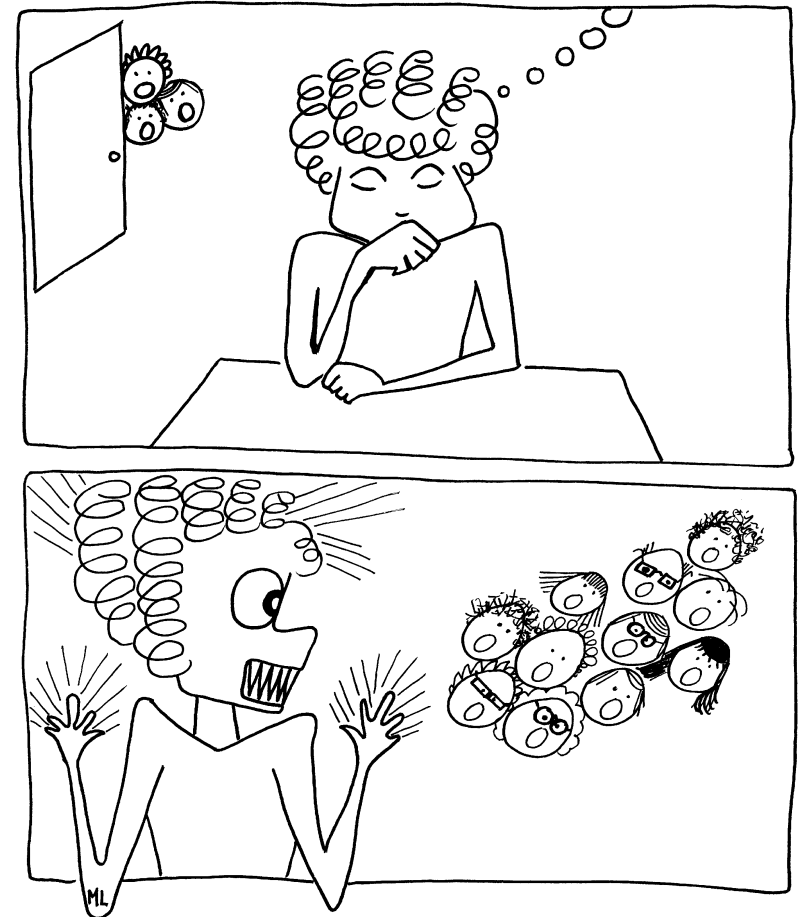
- z Failing to be critical
- z Delivering top-down policies
- z Thoughtless action – lacking theory
- z Staying local – not acting collectively
- z Losing overall sense of purpose!

Paulo Freire and community development



Becoming critical: Reflective journal

- z clarify thinking
- z develop noticing
- z become/stay critical
- z question
- z expose contradictions
- z interrupt taken-for-grantedness
- z identify issues
- z make links between knowledge and experience
- z understand values in practice
- z inform action
- z make connections
- z become focused
- z maintain purpose
- z plan action
- z stimulate dialogue



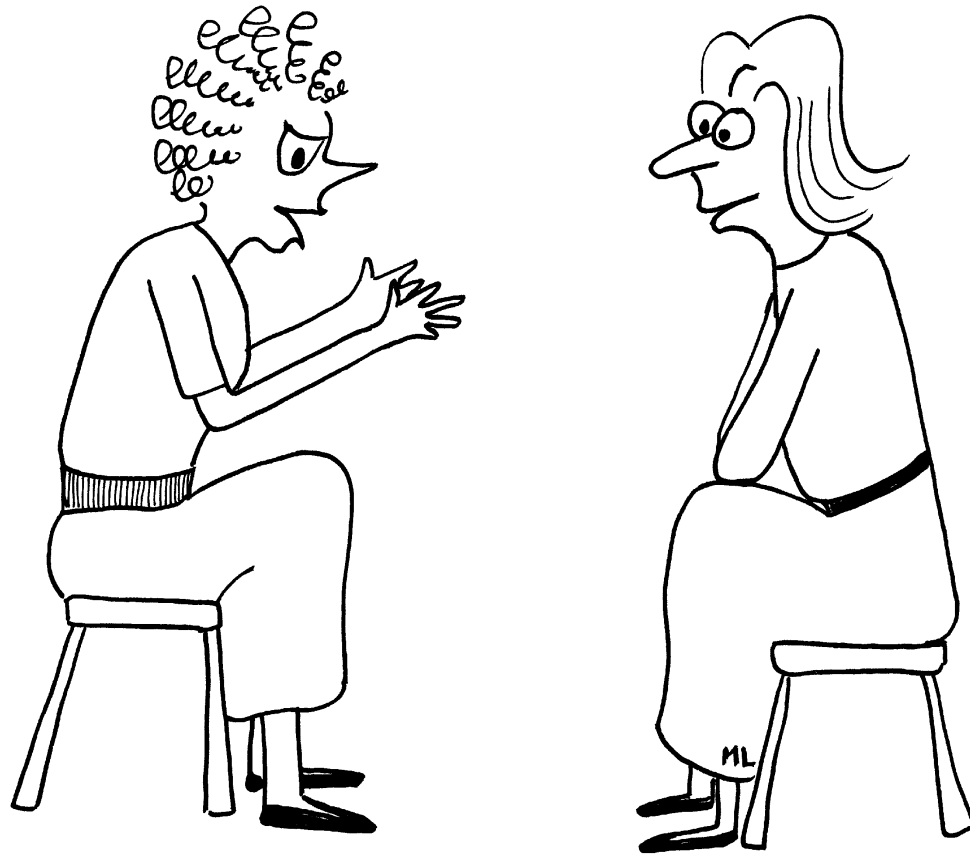
Thinking in a Doing World!

Dialogue: Questioning the taken-for-grantedness of everyday life



Dialogue: Connected Knowing

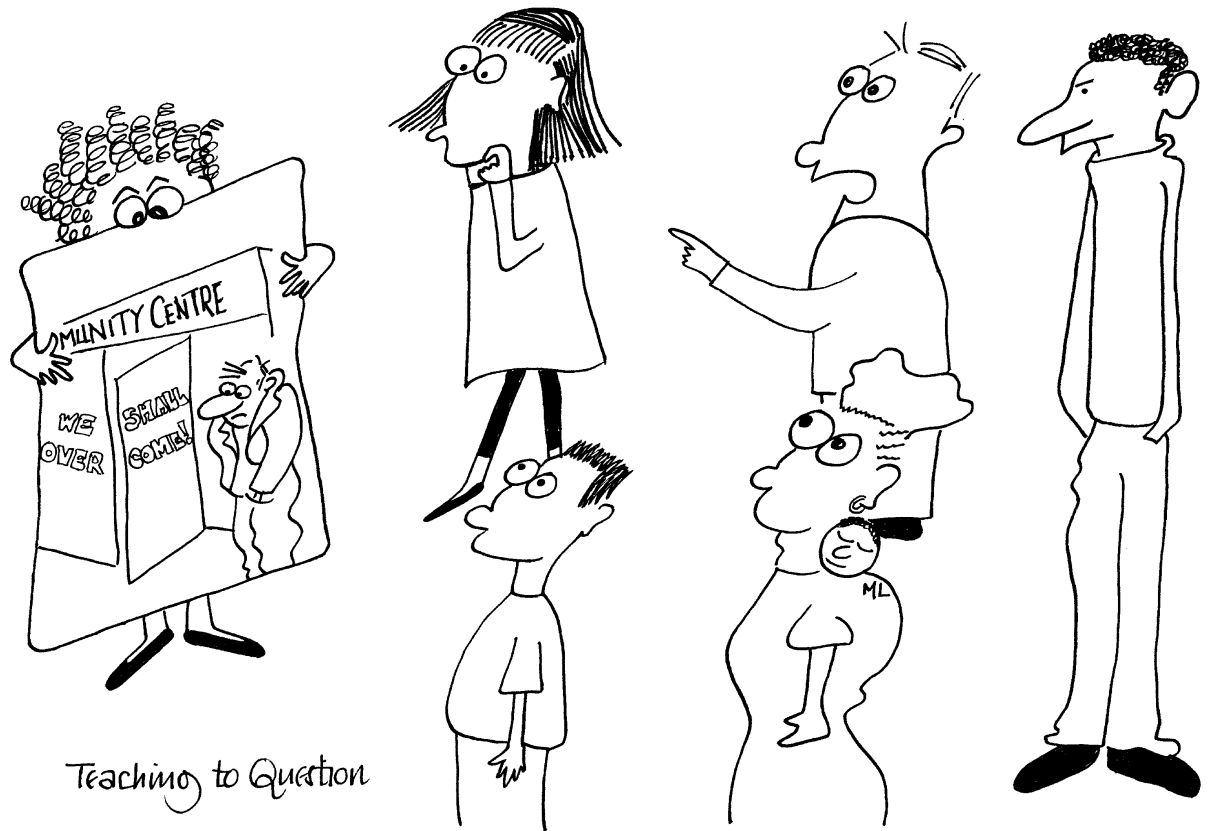
Listening from the heart



Listening from the Heart

Teaching to question:

'Questioning answers not answering questions'



Social and environmental sustainability go together



- 1970 Critical pedagogy/popular education
- 1992 Earth Summit, Rio - ecopedagogy
- Paulo Freire Institutes
- Balance, harmony, respect
- World in balance - diversity/biodiversity
- Economic growth is destroying health, happiness, wellbeing of people and planet

Liz Lange: Critical Living Praxis



- z **Research-education-social action**
- z **Living systems theory:** wholeness, connectedness, balance - cooperation within diverse whole
- z **Sustainability theory:** political, economic and social thought to deep ecology, social ecology, environmental justice, ecofeminism and sustainable development

10-minute dialogue



- z Do any of these ideas excite you?
- z What theories inform your practice?

‘Be the change you wish to see in the world’ Gandhi



Social change starts from grassroots:

- z Respect
- z Dignity
- z Mutuality
- z Reciprocity
- z Trust
- z Compassion

Stephen Kemmis: Change the course of history



Sustainability criteria:

- z **Discursively unsustainable:**
false, misleading, contradictory ideas
- z **Socially unsustainable:**
excluding, unjust, oppressive, dominating
- z **Ecologically unsustainable:**
depletes natural resources, environmental degradation
- z **Economically unsustainable:**
cost/benefits, privilege/poverty relations
- z **Personally unsustainable:**
harm physically, intellectually, emotionally

More of the same: a contradiction!



- z 'Further improvements in the quality of life no longer depend on further economic growth: the issue is now community and how we relate to each other'
- z 'Evidence strongly suggests that narrowing income differences within rich countries will make them more responsive to the needs of poorer countries'

(Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009)