

USING A LOG BOOK/WRITING JOURNAL IN COURSES IN PCP AND THERAPY

Dennis Bury, Chair PCPA 2020

JOURNAL WRITING

The literature about 'Journal Writing' [sometimes Diary Writing] is very full of research into the benefits of keeping a Log Book of commentary and reflection on the experience of learning.

Education in many fields, including, surprisingly, some sciences, has found value in aiding reflection upon learning experiences. Outcomes have included more retention of learning, greater achievement and altered emotional stance and betterment. The benefits of Journal Writing in Therapy has now a long history. There are occasionally reports of downsides but usually these apply to those in therapy with ruminative states.

Personal Construct Psychology has the task of moving with the rapidly developing interaction between people and the changes in physical and social environment which are occurring. It has had a good case for considering that Self Reflection/Reflexivity is fundamental to its method and there is a wider evidence base growing to suggest that educationally focused self development methods (as opposed to analysis) are efficacious. The PCPA already uses reflective method to good effect in the registration of its Psychotherapist Registrants in the UK. There may be a good case for considering the use of a Journal as an aid to a Referee in the writing of a Reference and even selection processes. Future courses will have this as a fundamental element.

INCLUSIONS IN A LOG BOOK

Here follows a list of suggested inclusions from various sources for a Log Book/Writing Journal.

TWO CAUTIONS FIRST

1. If the reflection takes too ruminative a turn, it is time to stop and discuss with another.
2. A Log Book will always be vulnerable to potential hacking, even post mortem, and should therefore contain no reference to living persons in such a way as they might be denigrated or personal secrets disclosed. Likewise, a Writing Journal would not include specifics of Clients/Patients.

POSSIBLE ITEMS LIST

Largely Factual

A **description** of the learning activity.

The **date** of the learning activity

Immediate **Outcomes** from what was undertaken.

Copies of any certificates or **validating documents**.

Initial Reflection about its application and wider meanings.

The **amount of time** spent with the activity project.

Some evaluation of the **level of knowledge achieved**

Post Hoc Reflection

Meaning of the learning for the Self

Personal reactions to the learning

Commentary on **potential application** of the learning achieved

Reflections on an **article or a book** involved in the activity

A piece of writing on some **application of PCP to some aspect of a discipline** such as Psychology, Architecture, Business, Medicine, Art and so on

An account of '**Learning Conversations**' with other PCP informed people in practice and peers.

Supervision/Teamwork

Summary of **Research**

Commentary on Research

Creative writing about the impact of PCP

Use of **PCP tools**, such as Repertory Grid, Bow Tie, ABC, Change, Implications e.t.c.

Non Writing - Images, Photographs, Music and Artwork

Initiatives not specifically mentioned Journal Writing research

Reflections about PCP as a possible contributor to the **resolution of, not only local, but also global problems**.

Re-Construal of specific understandings of practice, experience and attitude in the light of PCP

Other **external effects and change unconnected** with the activity to practice, attitude and feelings

Reference

Reflections in Personal Construct Theory. Ed., Richard J Butler. Wiley Blackwell. 2009

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Summary Checklist

- A **description** of the learning activity
- **Date** of the activity
- Immediate **Outcomes**
- **Validating documents.**
- **Initial Reflection**
- **Time** spent
- **Level of knowledge**

- Learning for **Self**
- Personal **reactions**
- Potential **applications to practice**
- Review of **articles/books**
- Some **application to disciplines**
- Other '**Learning Conversations**'
- **Supervision**
- Summary of **Research**
- **Commentary** on Research
- **Creative** writing
- **PCP tools**
- **Non Written** - Images, Photographs, Music and Artwork

- Local **problems.**
- **Global** problems.
- **Re-Construal** of previous
- **External effects and change unconnected**

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