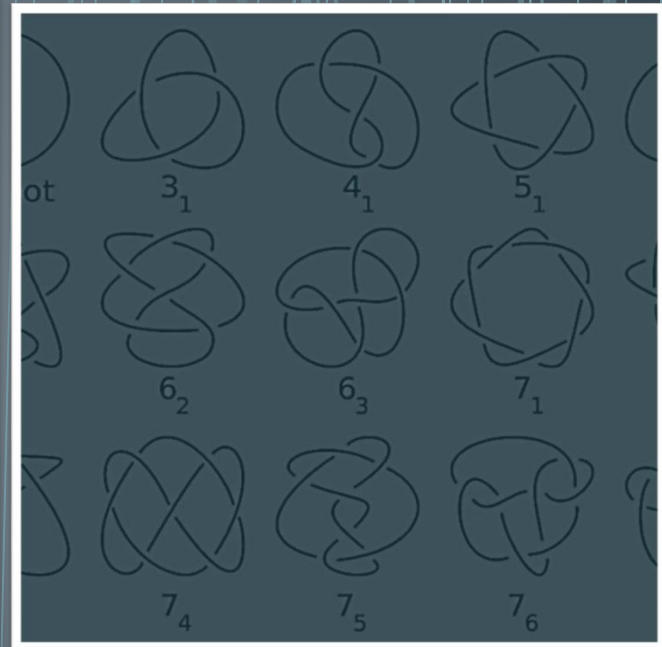


The Networking Lines & Knots of Multi-Sector Environmental Educators

An SCU School of Education research
project in partnership with AAEE-NSW
September – December, 2018



Background to the project

- A qualitative research project funded by a SCU School of Education Research Grant, supported by AAEE-NSW.
- Co-Researchers were 10 self-selected members of the MNCSEN (Mid North Coast Sustainability Education Network)



Aim of the Research

The current educational climate in Australia is one of low-support and exceptionally high expectations. Increasingly research is revealing that networking or collectives amongst educators of similar expertise and passion can create a more supportive working environment. The intent of this project was to understand the social and emotional effects of networking or collective activities on environmental educators who work in the schools, government, industry, and community education sectors.

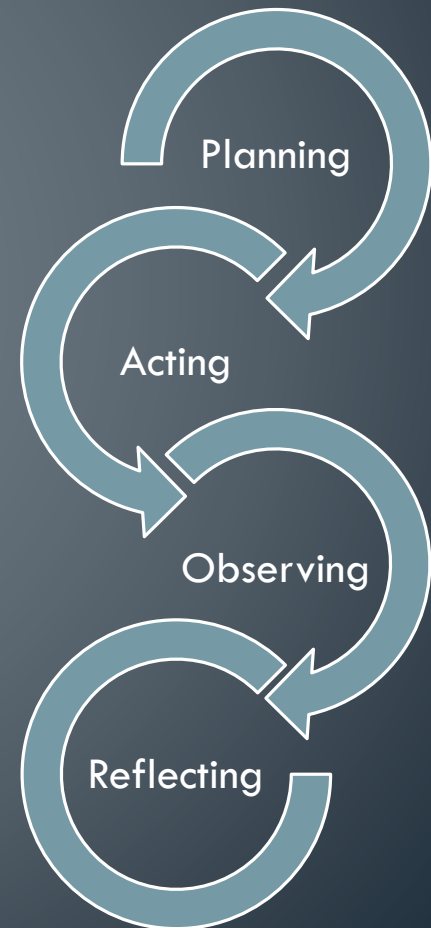
Our question:

“What are the social and emotional effects of different types of networking activities on environmental educators who work in the schools, government, industry and community education sectors?”

Our method:

Action Research - a “democratic inquiry process” in which colleagues collaborate to explore and deepen their processes and practices (Marshall and Rossman , 2011, p. 23).

It included four phases:
(Altrichter et al, 2002, p. 130).



‘Planning’

Co-researchers participated in an introductory planning research workshop where they learned about the research theory and methodology, ethical practices and consent procedures, as well as mapping out a research plan.



‘Acting’

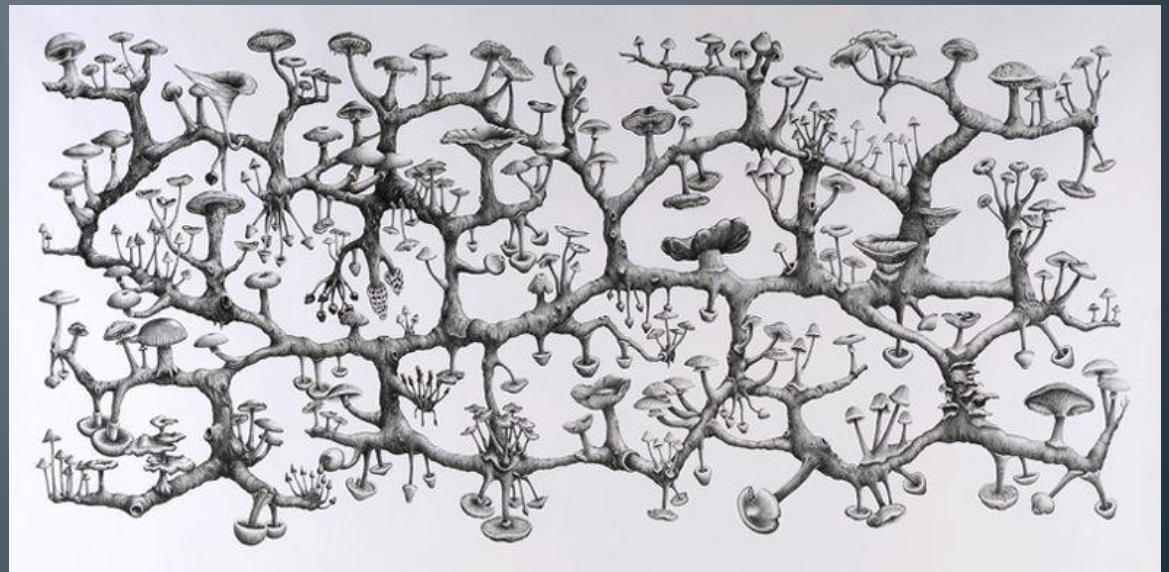
Co-researchers conducted research through the use of personal journals (writing and art) on their understandings, attitudes and behaviours towards being part of a network of environmental educators.

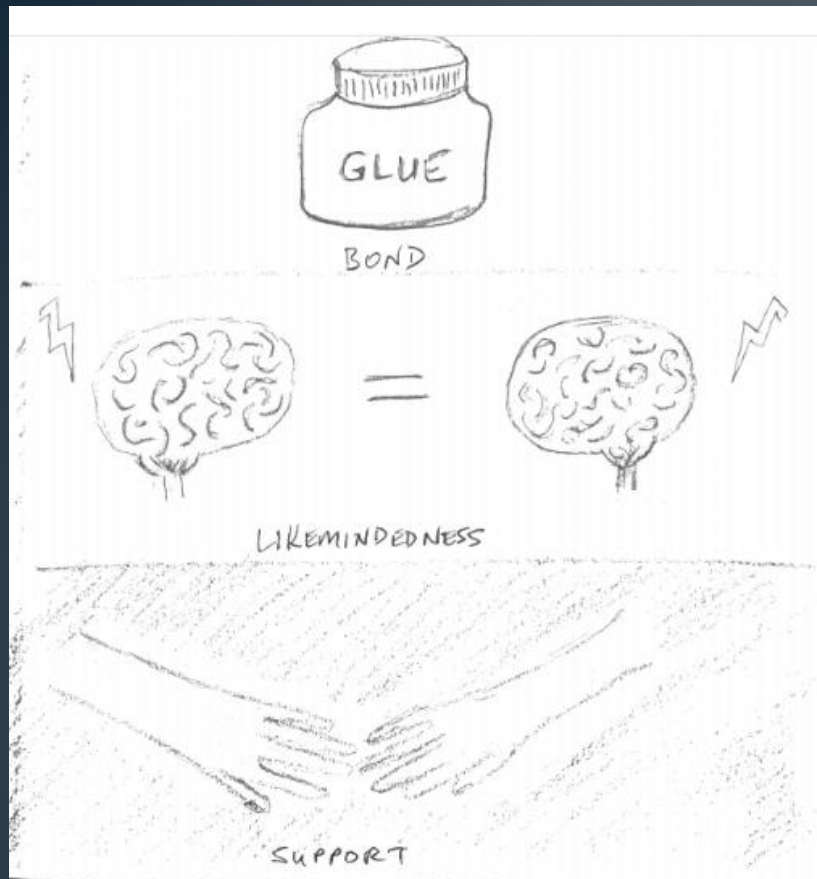
‘Observing’

Participants met at periodic intervals (once a month Sept-Dec) at group meetings that focused on sharing what they learned from their journal work.

‘Reflecting’

A final group meeting was held in order to summarise, synthesise, and reflect on gleaned learnings from the project.





WEEK 8

social + emotional effects

* feeling like you're not working in isolation.

* CE network was an emotional time because of the cultural discussion.
"lots of moist eyes"

Pride at getting positive feedback when I set up the new Life Sustainability Officers Network - good to touch base with people in my old LG network

Some networks are great as a circuit breaker

energy charge up vs energy suck down

idea of networking -
there any noticeable immediate impacts on your
daily life? How have they affected your
thoughts or feelings?

I was pleasantly **Surprised**
to discover just how big my network
of groups & individuals ~~was~~ were AND
didn't realise how many friends
who I don't work with were in my
network of environmental educators.

Because I have been working from
home for the past 2 1/2 yrs, I had
always thought I was quite isolated
as an environmental educator - but
doing this has helped me to realise
I am part of so many vibrant
networks! I don't feel isolated

In my happy place
Where our shared
dreams are fostered
Making an impact

Networking is hard
I do it because I care
We owe the planet

Come in one by one
Settling into the tribe
A sigh of relief

What will we do with the “data”?

Use a rhizomatic analysis to help us understand how networking effects our own well being and that of our colleagues.... And how we can help build and support networks of environmental educators!