**Why Evaluate 2 Conference: Selected Questions and Comments**

Monday 18 May 2020

Everything Is Broken: COVID 19, Learning From Failure And The Importance of Reflexive Practice

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**Questions and Discussion: Chris Bayes**

*How exactly was the co-production model used to include the lads in the planning/delivery etc of Phase 2?*

CB: The co-production in phase two was with a Head and Deputy Head, both of whom grew up in Kirkby, attended the school themselves and therefore implicitly understood 'the lads'. We designed a programme and got suggestions from the lads. It was a step towards co-production, but this was the best we could do at that point (NCOP timeframe, me moving from Liverpool to Lancaster and wanting to get things off and running before I departed). Phase Three would and should have been genuine co-production with the lads themselves. I can't speak about whether Shaping Futures did this, but imagine they didn't and reverted towards the standard 'aspiration raising' model as it is easier.

*This is excellent, Chris. These are the projects that stem from determined, well networked and innovative practitioners making things happen. Key for me, as ever, is full collaboration with Schools, LAs, other agencies, and of course HEIs. It's when WP works most effectively with actual results. Great work.*

CB: Thank you Ant, and once again a genuine thank you for both hosting the residential on phase two and involving me in this. It was great to see how they had progressed.

*Thanks Chris… not sure this is a question but agree with importance of drawing out the intermediate steps in progression….And to emphasis progression in their terms rather than ours!*

CB: Yes, I think this is crucial. Too often Universities and staff are slightly patronising towards the young people we work with. This in some cases is unwitting, but it obviously has potentially negative impacts on the success of projects.

*Decisions to move directly to HE is a clear success indicator, but is not a more relevant assessment the ability of youth to see opportunities, feel they can own a path to them, and know how to work out a path for themselves. ie., More about vision & confidence. Question is: do you*

*find grant makers are assessing the right proxies for success, or just the ‘easy’ ones?*

CB: This is not always the fault of policy makers, as I feel that NNCO, NCOP and Uni Connect have all been developed with the best intentions in mind. However, and slightly ironically, I feel not enough effective consultation with practitioners takes place in the development of policy. Therefore, on each of the above projects and these case studies, we have had to disentangle elements of policy - targeting, monitoring and evaluation. Although each of these projects have been sought to encourage collaboration across the piece, the model (particularly on NNCO) did not enable FE to participate fully.

*Success in Access and Participation looks very different for policymakers to what it does for practitioners - I get very personally invested and celebrate any success for the young people I work with, even when that doesn't result in a 'bum on a seat' (either at all, or at my institution). Reporting on this success is challenging when the focus is on stats.*

CB: This is a product of the marketisation of the sector.

CB: Collaboration in a competitive landscape. Necessary, but again creates problems in terms of demonstrating 'success'.

*Do you think that the approach was too top down and needed more co creation from schools or even school led?*

**Other Questions and Discussion**

*Given the Covid-19 situation and engagement predominantly online, would evaluation be more appropriate to show qualitative analysis, or quantitative?*

*In terms of co-production, be interesting to ask participants at the start of an intervention, or in its development, what they want out of it!*

CB: Would also add that the agenda, particularly in NCOP has seen an influx of colleagues from outside of the WP community. They often bring with them an outlook and an approach which is alien to those of us who have worked on this agenda for over a decade.

*Great points, Gino - I always feel a little frustrated when we conceive of WP as solely about preparing young people to fit in to university, without considering how HE can respond to what we learn from young people.*

*Does anyone have any practical tools or resources they use for co-creating programmes/activities with people from the target audience?*

*Re: coproduction, there are lots of amazing examples of youth participation in the youth and charity sectors.*

*Really fascinating to think of missionary-models in WP approaches, Gino. There could be v useful interdisciplinary learning to take forward from work on cultural colonialism. This has left me with a lot of food for thought, thank you to all presenters!*

*Thanks all. Co-creation blog is certainly one i'd like to read.*

*Fantastic from all, many thanks. As an advocate of credit models and a funds of knowledge approach, Gino's presentation really resonated with me. Wonderful!*

*Thank you for a joyful session. Keep well and stay safe.*