

involved in the knowing process. The validity of each form of knowing also depends on how sound it is in the light of standards internal to it, of autonomous criteria at its own level.

So, for example, when practice is a valid outcome, it is well-grounded on propositional knowing by being evaluated in terms of a range of verbally stated criteria of sound practice. These include executive, technical, psychosocial, intentionality and value criteria, as defined in Chapter 9. And a valid practice is one that is sound by its own internal standard, which is having the knack, an inherent knowing of the excellence of its doing. I discuss this notion of a knack in Chapter 6.

I take the view that validity itself, concern with the justification of truth-values, is interdependent with that which transcends it, the celebration of being-values, of what is intrinsically worthwhile in our experience. This is discussed in Chapter 9.

Next I present a simple overview of special inquiry skills, and of validity procedures. Chapter 7 elaborates on the skills, Chapter 8 on the procedures and Chapter 9 on validity as such.

Special inquiry skills

I have in mind here the special skills involved in the forms of knowing used in the action phases of the inquiry, when people are busy with the particular kind of experience or action that is the focus of the research. A bald list of these skills looks daunting. In fact, I believe they start to develop simply by being engaged in a committed way with the cycle of inquiry.

The first group relate to radical perception in informative inquiries where the purpose is to be descriptive and explanatory of the inquiry domain. All these skills relate to what is going on in a person when he or she is actually there, engaged with the experience.

Being present This is to do with empathy, with meeting and feeling the presence of people and a world. The skill is about harmonic resonance and attunement, participating in the inner experience of people and the mode of awareness, the prehension, of things. It is indwelling the inward declaration made by the being of the other. It is necessarily associated with the next.

Imaginal openness This is to do with being receptive to the meaning inherent in the total process of shaping people and a world by perceptually imaging them with sensory and nonsensory imagery. I enact and participate in their appearing and intuit its meaning. The skill is about imaginal grasp, the intuition of pattern meaning.

Bracketing This is to do with managing the conceptual labels and models embedded in the process of perceiving people and a world. The skill is about holding in abeyance the classifications and constructs we impose on our perceiving, so that we can be more open to its inherent primary, imaginal meaning.

Reframing This is to do with the conceptual revisioning in perceiving a world. With this skill we not only hold in abeyance the constructs being imposed on our perceiving, we also try out alternative ones for their creative capacity to articulate an account of people and a world. We are open to reframing the assumptions of any conceptual context or perspective.

The second group relate to radical practice in transformative inquiries where the purpose is to engage in some action that seeks change within its domain. Again, all these skills relate to what is going on in a person when he or she is engaged with the action, busy doing it.

Dynamic congruence This is about practical knowing, knowing how to act. The skill goes way beyond ordinary competent action. It means being aware, while acting, of the bodily form of the behaviour, of its strategic form and guiding norms, of its purpose or end and underlying values, of its motives, of its external context and supporting beliefs, and of its actual outcomes. At the same time it means being aware of any lack of congruence between these different facets of the action and adjusting them accordingly.

Emotional competence This is the ability to identify and manage emotional states in various ways. These include keeping action free from distorted reactions to current events that are driven by the unprocessed distress of earlier years; and from the limiting influence of inappropriate conventions acquired by social conditioning.

Non-attachment The ability here is to wear lightly and without fixation the purpose, strategy, form of behaviour and motive which have been chosen as the form of the action. This is the knack of non-attachment, not investing one's identity and emotional security in the action, while remaining fully intentional about it and committed to it.

Self-transcending intentionality This skill involves having in mind, while busy with one overall form of action, one or more alternative forms, and considering their possible relevance and applicability to the total situation.

Validity procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to free the various forms of knowing involved in the inquiry process from the distortion of uncritical subjectivity, that is, a lack of discriminating awareness. This occurs when, for example, the mind fails to do justice to the claims of the given cosmos in which it participates, to the claims of appropriate method, and to the claims of dialogue and engagement with other minds involved in the same arena of participative knowing. All the following validity procedures need to be planned for, or applied, within the reflection phases.