

# Preparing Learners for Long, Complex, Meaningful Learning Lives: *A Personal Manifesto to support Lifelong/Lifewide Learning* Norman Jackson

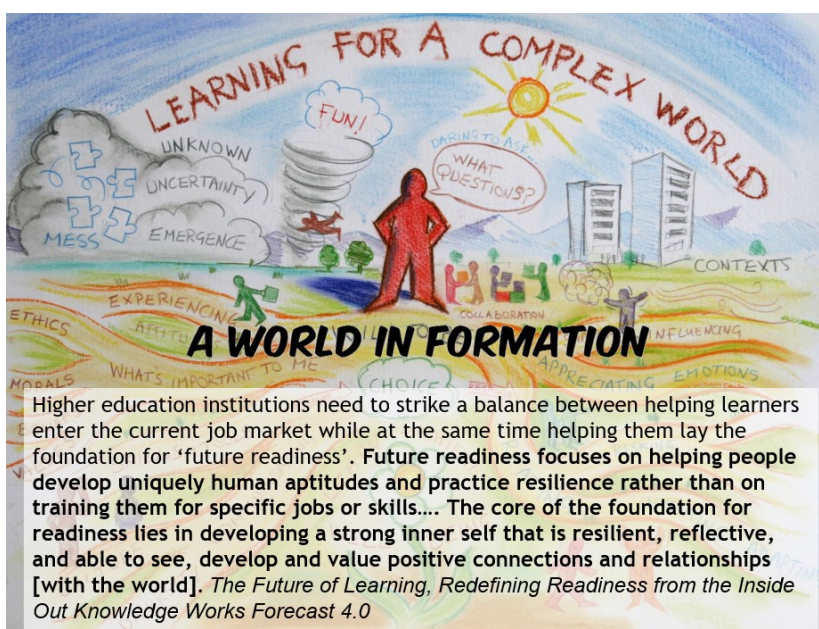
My aspiration for a higher education experience that prepares HE learners for long, complex and volatile learning lives, and fosters the holistic and unique development of learners, is founded on the principle that *'the whole of life is learning and education can have no endings'*<sup>2p4</sup>. I believe that learning, practice and creativity are ecological phenomenon<sup>3</sup> emerging from the interactions of unique people with their unique histories, identities, talents and beliefs with their environment as they try to create new value in things they value and care about<sup>4</sup>. Educational innovation lives in the ways and means that people transform what they are learning into future possibilities that only they can imagine and enact. It follows that learners' imaginations and creativity are profoundly connected to the way they transform themselves while they are studying. It also follows that a curriculum that enables personal transformation is an ontological curriculum - a curriculum that enables learners to be themselves and become better versions of themselves - a curriculum for 'becoming' and 'undergoing'. Higher education can facilitate such transformations by adopting a 'lifewide' concept of education, curriculum, learning and achievement<sup>5</sup>, and an 'ecological' concept of learning, practice and creativity<sup>3</sup> by:

*Higher education institutions need to strike a balance between helping learners enter the current job market while at the same time helping them lay the foundation for 'future readiness'. Future readiness focuses on helping people develop uniquely human aptitudes and practice resilience rather than on training them for specific jobs or skills.... The core of the foundation for readiness lies in developing a strong inner self that is resilient, reflective, and able to see, develop and value positive connections and relationships.*<sup>1</sup>

1. giving learners the freedom and empowering them to make choices so that they can find deeply satisfying and personally meaningful and relevant situations that inspire, engage, immerse and enable them to transform themselves and their world
2. enabling learners to appreciate the significance of being able to engage with situations and see situations as the focus for their transformative development as well as the moment when they can make a difference to the world
3. preparing learners for and giving them experiences of adventuring in uncertain and unfamiliar situations where contexts and challenges are not known, accepting the risks involved
4. supporting learners when they participate in situations that require them to persevere and be resilient when encountering setbacks and failure, not penalizing them for trying but not succeeding and helping them learn through such experiences
5. enabling learners to experience, feel and appreciate themselves as knower, maker, player, narrator, enquirer, integrator and transformer of all that they know and can do
6. encouraging, challenging and enabling learners to be imaginative, creative, enterprising and resourceful in order to accomplish the things that they and others value
7. enabling learners to develop and practise the repertoire of communication and literacy skills they need to be effective, productive and creative in a modern, culturally diverse and pluralistic world
8. enabling learners to develop relationships that facilitate productive and creative collaboration, learning, personal development and transformation
9. encouraging learners to behave ethically and with social responsibility and enabling them to continue to develop their moral compass through the situations they encounter or create across their lives

10. encouraging learners to appreciate the ecological nature of learning and practice and enabling them, through willful, self-directed, self-regulated and self-aware practice, to create their own ecologies for learning and achieving, appreciating their learning and developmental needs as they emerge and recognising and valuing their own transformation.

Such an educational experience will, I believe, provide learners with an orientation and a foundation for a lifetime of learning.



### Citations

- 1 The Future of Learning, Redefining Readiness from the Inside Out Knowledge Works Forecast 4.0 Available at: <https://knowledgeworks.org/resources/future-learning-redefining-readiness/>
- 2 Lindeman E.C.(1926) *The Meaning of Adult Education*, New York: New Republic, republished in 1989 by Oklahoma Research Center for Continuing Professional and Higher Education.
- 3 Jackson, N.J. (2016) *Concept of a Creative Ecology* Creative Academic Magazine #5 September 2016, 3-8 available at: <http://www.creativeacademic.uk/magazine.html>
- 4 Rogers, C.R. (1960) *On becoming a person* Boston: Houghton Mifflin
- 5 Jackson, N.J. (2011) *An imaginative lifewide curriculum*. In N. J. Jackson (ed) *Learning for a Complex World: A lifewide concept of learning, education and personal development*. Authorhouse. 100-121

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