



Notice: what was my role as a teacher and taking note of this experience, thinking about it, taking a closer look, the starting point of reflection.

14 April 2020

I don't think I will forget that feeling of panic, that flip of my stomach when I heard for this first time that NZ was going into lockdown. My thoughts initially on preparation, safety of my family, and for what life may look like in a bubble. Two days, although seemingly quite a luxury in the life of a teacher was just not enough time to get my head around what working from home might need to look like.

We are now on day two of week three. This lockdown hasn't really been how I imagined it would be. It started with a big ball of anxiety in the pit of my stomach, followed by me bringing out the monthly planner - my first instinct was to work, to get everything achieved in a month so that I could start a new term feeling accomplished.

On the Wednesday morning, just before lockdown an idea had surfaced, one that I thought could keep our community connected. Given the time I knew I would have, I set my own goal to set up this Storypark system and engage as many of our community as I could. Storypark would I believe allow for a more private group than a community facebook page, and more importantly for our team be a place that teaching and learning is showcased, grounded in philosophy that linked pedagogy to children's learning through play.

My hope was that given the time at home in their bubbles, that families would engage in ways that we might not have seen outside these crazy circumstances.

Recognise: Your thoughts about experience, be honest, make it authentic.

At this time, juggling all the "new normal" things which heavily features, keeping in touch with family who are feeling vulnerable in their employment and taken pay cuts, getting some fresh air, rationing ingredients, 1pm briefings, piles of paper in a newly created work spaces, and WAY too much screen time for my eyes to handle right now. The weird thing is the less pressure I put on myself, the better I feel, but the lazier I feel. I don't like feeling pressure, but then I hate feeling lazy. Such a paradox.

One of the real positives for me during this time was to be able to pick and choose from such a variety of fabulous professional learning. I actually found this a delicate dance to find the balance here, engaging with a screen for hours at a time.

One hour well spent very early on was with Kimberly Crisp. I was reminded how important, even though we are in these bubbles to check in with others. She spoke of the 80/20 rule. The important thing to understand is that in your life there are certain activities you do (your 20 percent) that account for the majority (your 80 percent) of your happiness and outputs.

**Growing a community of practice...
(common-unity)**

When you are in real relationship with people and you have common values, your community grows.



What is right for one may not be for another. We may all do it differently and all of that is OK.

Rhythm and ritual creates grounding, and gives the children safety. How can we recreate rituals via Storypark? While not physically connected we can stay heart connected through our communication. When our rituals and routines are in balance we feel hinged. I can't relax until I have brought order to my environment.

What will Kindergarten look like beyond Covid-19?

One of the challenges for me about being in a bubble for so long, is how I transition out of it.

I see this hinged on how we come together as a team, on cohesiveness, on communication and trust. How you see is how you will be! If you have a strong foundation of why, then you will do the how! If we say we can't we can't. We are on a journey – like an onion, it unwraps over time.

Both Pennie Brownlee and Ann Milne have consistent messages, that they cringe when they hear people say that they just want to get back to how things were before the lockdown. This is our time to evaluate and inform change. How do you do this when it takes everything to take a breath and find your own calm.

Reflect: What have I learnt about myself? What am I more aware of?

The biggest thing I have to learn from this, is that it's ok! I don't feel ok about it right now. I'm an over achiever, a doer, a 10 things on the go at once kinda person, with another 20 things in the pipeline.

<https://hbr.org/2020/03/that-discomfort-youre-feeling-is-grief>

"The loss of normalcy; the fear of economic toll; the loss of connection. This is hitting us and we're grieving. Collectively. We are not used to this kind of collective grief in the air."

Is this possibly why I feel more connected via technology, not just professionally through Storypark. In my own family we are hosting Kahoot quizzes every few nights, and check in with each other every day.

Where does kindness come from? What is in your heart will touch the heart of someone else. Perhaps suspending judgement and trusting that our community are, just as we are doing what feels right for their own family and common-unity will be richer, deeper and connected.

Resource possibility: Dancing on a shifting carpet.



