Pedagogy Matters: Episode 20 Transcript

Hello and welcome to the second episode of the Pedagogy Matters Podcast for the 2021-2022 academic session. The purpose of the podcast is to bring you key topics of conversation in relation to learning and teaching to discuss and breakdown aspects of practice and provide snippets, advice and guidance as to how we can integrate these into our daily practice. Today, I'm delighted be joined by Doctor Lee quotes from struck. I've university Lee. Welcome. How are you? Hi Julie, I'm good. Thanks and thanks for from inviting me to come and chat here today. Very very welcome tonight you could join me on a Friday afternoon.

This sort of shame for a change, you know.

So I appreciate your time. Appreciate your input into daily. We talked around the topic of transformative learning and teaching. So I've got no doubt some of this, we think. Well, what do you mean by that? So yeah, pretty good place to kick us off. So kind of what is meant in coming in your interpretation of that term to transformative learning and teaching. Yes, I think you're right. People can interpret what that term means in different ways and for different people. Transformative teaching and learning does mean different things. And really, what I want to talk about today and share today is is my take on it and how I understand it. But for different people, that will mean.

Different signs, and I think you know a good starting point is, it's really just to say it's about making a positive difference. You know it's about making a positive difference in people's lives, and you might say, well, all education aims to do that. But this is a particular perspective and. Or as a particular way if you like, I've been able to do that so before before I start going to some of their, the details are better. I think it's worthwhile just talking a little bit about my own experience and where some of this. View that I have come from so I'm spending significant time in college myself. I did I. I didn't see an agency and when I was younger when I was 1516 it

through college for me was was my

route to get into into university

and I qualified as a secondary

school teacher and I stayed in school

sector for about three years before

moving into college and I worked

in at college for like 10 years.

One of the colleges in Glasgow.

I just the latter part of that ten

years I effectively manage that I

protect my section so I I had quite

a lot of experience in working

with college learners.

So the challenges facing

the sector and so on.

A couple years ago I had the opportunity

to move into higher education,

so I did that complete that mass doesn't

complete the doctor it and moved into to

start clients over the last couple of years.

My my thinking is really been informed

by discussions with colleagues,

integration and reading with academic

writing and also having quite a lot of

time to think about my own experience in

college as a student and also a lecturer,

and I think this is a really

interesting time to be talking about

transformative learning and teaching,

because now is the time.

Of changes period of change and I

know the sector over the last ten

years has seen significant change,

but we had a situation to extend

at the moment we are.

We have an unpredictable future.

You know, with COVID with

changes in technology and so on,

but changed about tap into S QA and next

Next Gen Mick Mick skills being promoted.

So again this is that this is a

period of change and uncertainty.

So for me, transformative learning teaching.

It's about challenging and moving

away from certain mindsets,

perspectives, beliefs,

and assumptions that might be problematic.

And it's about trying to be explicitly

aware of the assumptions that we have,

but how they make us see and

understand and act in the world now.

That's not to say the assumptions

we have are not valid or not right?

And so on,

but it's about explicitly acknowledging

that there are always other

ways to view something,

and it's about taking those

assumptions and seemed to ourself,

well, that's one way of seeing it.

But what about this perspective?

Or what about another perspective

and then making decisions and

making choices about how to behave?

How to act based on that new or

or adapted understanding of how

we see or or view something?

And it ties really well and with the

social justice and sustainability agenda.

It promotes an activist stance and

I know a lot of people might think,

and I certainly thought when

I heard that term activist,

you know like that that that sort of

conjured up all sorts of images in my mind.

And that's not what I mean.

An activist stance is really having this

commitment to social justice challenging

certain assumptions which can make

people on fuel feel uncomfortable.

Sometimes it's been asking questions.

But using that information to have

a positive impact on learners.

That, and that's the key thing here.

And before we can do that,

we have to think about we're learning

takes place and we were one of

the questions that I would ask

a lot of college lecturers is.

Have you really spent a lot

of time thinking about it?

Your college and its community.

And I don't just mean you know

that the learners that go there,

or the S MID area that it's in.

But I mean things like the

political stances of the area,

it conomique assumptions

we make about the area,

the social assumptions we make,

the ideological assumptions

we're making or release,

spending time end interrogating the

assumptions that we make about our colleges.

Are communities, learners and even ourselves.

And probably a lot of people

don't spend a lot of time.

Really thinking about that and

also thinking about the impact of

those assumptions on the learner

experience and a lot of the views

that that as individuals have,

will will come from an experience.

Of course they do it.

They'll come from things that

we've seen other people do,

and they'll come from views that we've

we've obtained from reading from talking

to people from experience, and so on.

There's always an opportunity to

challenge those and to think about,

well, I hold this view.

What is the impact of that

for you on my learners?

And what are you?

What are the other ways of

seeing the view that I have? And could that be a more positive and outcomes for learners? So I know spoken quite a lot there, but it's it's. It's not really easy to define again, so I suppose if I was going to summarize the habit, I would be saying in my eyes it's about making a difference. It's about really taking time out to examine assumptions and beliefs that we have, and thinking about. What do those beliefs and assumptions and views mean forever learners and are there other ways of viewing them? So if it does not give you an insight that that's a very extensive introduction, and I think it's really good, and it can, you know, I think it gives a wider context

and then came now, is it down? But kind of gives a little. A little tough. You are a number of different elements that kind of start to unpick that which is really useful. But I know I've got no doubt some lectures or kind of thing. Yeah I do that. Great, you know. And I think the purpose is conversation is it's not absolutely is happening education so it's important for everybody to consider how we do that. And certainly this never stops when it says continue involvement, we can elude the very start, you know it's a time of kind of opportunity for change. Right now there's always

an opportunity for change, but being ignited because of recent circumstances. Yeah, yeah. I think is really important. Really, quite exciting there as well, so. I think you're right, there's been with, you know, with someone through a period of extensive change, and we're about to go through further change, particularly in the college sector with. No matter the registration, each in next generation changes in estuary and so on. You know we're about to see another significant period of change over the next five to 10 years. And and I suppose this is a an alternative approach. And to embracing that change, yeah, and I think.

We aren't, we aren't gonna go through a

lot of change language absolute systems are changing systems around us or changing, but actually our rule effectively hasn't changed. Absolutely not. I know you're not seeing house, but yeah, and I think what's important for. For people involved in education to really remember is actually what our role here is to educate learners in front of us is prepared for next steps of the workforce or wherever they wish to go to. But yeah, those natural things that are evolving around the periphery or a bit more substantial than our rules do impact on that. Absolutely yeah, so come back the topic of transformer blowing, teaching and nose is all part of the topic.

By the way,

is I've got no doubt people think right.

Either I do it or what does it look like.

So you kind of.

You teased through a couple of elements

there in terms of looking at well and

takes place and lock your learners.

What's the advice or thoughts

of use in relation to that?

So I think there's there's lots of

different ways we can approach this,

but I think the first thing we have

to think about and recognizes that.

All classrooms,

regardless of whether that you know

there are called setting a school

setting as well, education setting.

All classrooms are sites of power

and privilege and that in less

something we need technology

and we also have to acknowledge

that all education is political.

You know the decisions that

have been made about education,

what we teach, how we teach, and so.

And there's.

There's a political motive there and

and I think I would say the first

thing I would say to people is we

need to recognize that and we need

to think about and be very open and

honest in the the conversations we

have with students and with colleagues

about the decisions we've made.

So for example,

if we were talking about appetite

textbook called for total resource,

we were going to use with students

will be thinking about well,

what's made us choose that book?

That by choosing that resource in that book,

who are we,

potentially excluding Norwalk assumptions,

are we making what values or are we

promoting by using that resource?

And what viewers are they

promoting and therefore what are

we potentially excluding from using

that particular resource?

And if we think about a an assessment

task that would get learners to do,

for example, will,

what are the assumptions we need when we,

when we've been designing that

task we've been creating about it?

What's LED us to make the decisions

about that task that we have,

and but who are we potentially

excluding by making those decisions?

So it's about. It's about taking

a step back and thinking about.

OK, I've made this decision.

I, I think the resource and then assessment

about students on our meeting assumption.

What are the other ways of looking at it?

You know who am I potentially excluding

what implicit assumptions have I need?

And sometimes we might not be

able to see those for ourselves.

Sometimes we need to ask students.

You know what assumptions have I made

when I've been doing this past year?

We might need to ask colleagues we

need to ask other people and that

can be uncomfortable sometimes.

But if we really are to transform things and.

And have a real commitment to social justice.

And that's what this is about really.

Then we need to be able to have

sometimes uncomfortable situations

or conversations so that we can

and introduce positive change.

No, I think it's really awesome.

Points are in.

I don't know what our conversation
the other day about a different topic,
but I think it was back to routines

and habits.

I've got no doubt be coming back with some colleagues to work.

I think one how we gonna do

after every textbook it.

It's not necessarily about being literal child going through that process and

thinking and knowing your learners

and develop that understanding.

That mindset around that they're

learning and teaching practices that

we have and the approach that we

have in resource that we utilize.

Its that consideration, isn't it?

Absolutely yeah, yeah. And it's about.

Really,

taking students as an as partners

Co constructors of their learning so

students have a big role in this.

And we've spoken a lot about the

lecturers assumptions in the lectures,

views and so on,

but students can give you a huge

insight into that.

They might be able to tell you the

assumptions that they think you have,

and you might not know you know you

might not recognize them yourself,

and it's really about having

students being the Co constructor

in the resources that are used.

The tasks that are.

Done,

you know if everything about their

learning says it will be about them

and their their goals and aspirations,

engaging them and all aspects

of making decisions.

And if we really,

if we truly are learner,

same targets or student centered then should

should be involved in every decision.

Every decision is made about their

learning about how they've spaced

about their their journey and so on.

They're also right there.

Yep, no, I would agree,

and I think the other element

that you mentioned, it's really

important to engage with his peers.

You know, because yeah, you know.

Lecturing can be quite isolating rule.

You know, none more so now than ever wear.

Make it work in an online world or remote.

You know there's different terms kind

of band around this kind of what class

would never remote because we're engaged,

but actually can feel quite remote,

quite isolated,

but even back it up record world

collaboration with peers is really important,

especially within this topic there as well.

So what are your thoughts on that?

Or what are you?

I guess maybe even tips or advice

as well for colleagues around

that I think II absolutely agree.

Collaboration is crucial.

And and that partnership with colleagues.

This is.

More fundamental and I I know

it all takes time, you know,

I appreciate that and you know,

we're all busy.

People have got things to do,

but we have to recognize the benefits

or potential benefits of collaboration,

not just for ourselves,

but for our colleagues and also

students now collaboration could could

mean a number of things that might.

It might involve sitting down with a colleague for half an hour and talking through what they're doing. The students while they're doing it in a certain way. You know, thinking about some of the, UM, some of the decisions that they've made. But one of the things I did in college lectures to do is is to go and see other people teach, you know. Actually go and observe other lectures and other disciplines. For example when or or view what they're doing. Think about how that relates to your practice. Then came out the assumptions that other lecturers are making about students and the way they learn, and so on. And, you know,

but do not have some dinner college.

Having some sort of critical friends

where you can run things past from.

I think it's really useful as well,

and there's lots of.

There's lots of ways to be

able to collaborate well.

There's there's sort of more,

UM.

I don't see formal or official

ways that things like undertaking

you know perfect collaborative

professional inquiry you know,

and working with a colleague to

to work through a project or a

problem and and to to come up with

some sort of solution so it can be

very informal as well as formal.

But I think partly in the college sector we.

Maybe need to think about a little

bit more about the role that college

can have and how they can influence

and shape what we're doing and what we

can learn from our colleagues as well.

And I always think what's particularly

interesting is going to see a colleague

teach a class options that we also

teach to see how the same students behave,

react,

and and function.

With the same,

you know same peers but in front

of a different nature.

I was like that's quite an

interesting experience to do that,

and so that that would be

some advice that I would have.

I think that's great as there's

lots of different examples there

and again at what I'd recommend

based on my own personal learning

experience of going through the

process of developing professional,

looking for colleagues where I've been in college is is actually treat them like students. What I mean, my heart is everybody is different. No phrase, I've used quite a lot through the podcast Susan or your learners. Yeah, same here. It comes on kind of knowing your stuff so. It was some stuff might like it formal and rigid. Other stuff might later more relaxing inform you on it. It it's it's really important. Thank you. Other word which you've used quite a few teams, which again resonates with me is that that word perspective? Yeah, that's all. I think as educators that we can really encourage and we can develop others

around this to develop their own or awareness around that term perspective. Yeah, yeah. Perspective in my head is just quite simply how people view a situation. Yeah, yeah. And it's incredibly powerful. Especially when working with colleagues around their own practice. 'cause naturally where very defensive and protective that typically as human nature on practice absolutely introduce appearing to cover conversation after kind of watch. The guard goes up naturally. Yeah, yeah, it's about perspectives or trust and all the other things are trying to build student support to kind of build this stuff.

'cause again kind of end of it for me on this is I would fully echo your point around. It's really, really important to watch all the other teachers or lecturers. Yeah, and I think I've been very fortunate thing. Kind of. Part of my job to do in the challenge for me is how do we develop the capacity for more teachers and lecturers to do as part of their job? Because just so hot I do often. Yeah, I. I think so and and and that you know the requires buy in from from colleges as well. You know there needs to be some capacity for lectures to do that. You know that means the time provided to do that where possible. And it also needs to be seen as truly

at developmental and learning tool. It's not some sort of performativity major, and you know, I have a direct. It shouldn't be some line manager that's going into or so, and you know there should be no power relations involved or we should minimize the power relations data feel like and it should be purely development, development, development of task and one of the suggestions that we have. If anybody is thinking about engaging in peer observation or or learning from appear in some sort of way is to keep it focused. So perhaps here you're going in to look at. Interactions with students or you're going to look at questioning,

or you're looking at behavior

management or know something really

quite specific you're going into you.

You're not going into just look

at everything that's going on in.

These classrooms are busy places,

but you're trying to keep it quite

focused and quite and quite narrow.

And and the point Johnny made

a moment ago about perspective.

I think it's important we do.

We do all have this natural

inclination to get to get back,

so we back in the guards couple.

But when, when maybe somebody offers

different perspective or challenge it.

But we would expect, I think,

our students to be open and

willing to be challenged.

You know,

we're promoting a questioning mindset from

students were encouraging students to

to be able to see different perspectives.

And so and so, in my view,

we've got to model that ourselves and

be seen to to model that perspective.

No, I would holding agree with that,

and I think when we talk about the term

of transformative learning and teaching,

these are coming from really

key principles in.

Yeah, difficulty is,

these things are suddenly common sense,

you know because yeah, yeah, absolutely,

you're looking for the same thing, actually.

Why aren't we doing this?

But actually there's a number of reasons.

Why haven't you know?

Because of Kevin culture in the past?

Or how just how things have been?

Yeah, and it's 'cause it's not easy to do.

Yeah, former colleague of mine,

you know, just kind of often.

Make reference to things that

is not goes on too hot to do.

Pile doesn't happen. It's A good idea.

It doesn't happen 'cause it goes

on too hot to do pile.

Let's just get back.

Have always done it and and do what

we do and it's really important

that you know if we're going to

really reflect on the impact of

our learning and teaching,

either individually or collectively.

Mirror even a college right that we

have these difficult conversations.

First,

look at kind of what we're doing

and why we're doing it, and then,

secondly,

as to how we can evolve and how

we can develop and improve.

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Further,
that's right,
and it's all you know you have to
write and it's also about you know,
challenging the views of students.
And I think that's something
that you know lots and lots of
college lectures will do all the
time and and that's great.
So we need to be open to have our own
views challenged sometimes and and to
be willing to see different perspectives.
But the key thing,
I think is to think about the impact of
those views on the street experience and
sometimes that impact doesn't visible.
It might be.
It might be heavy,
you know it might be implicit.
And we really try and tease that
out by by collaborating with
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students and and talking to them,

thinking about the context

and place of learning and and.

And you know, having that honest

and frank dialogue with students

and other people as well, yeah?

No, I thought that's really interesting.

Lee and I think the other thing

to to really share is that again,

for those web concepts of this,

either maybe new or can

it kind of setting some.

Some thought telling head is.

These aren't exhaustive process

is this is just part of your daily

price and part of your culture with

humans and what kind of building

those routines and bell building this

routine is part of your mindset when

going through the planning or the

core creation element for a new unit,

you modular assessment lesson or whatever.

Is that practically there as well.

Yeah, I think you know there's there's.

There's things around tree in new modules

or or knew you know new units and

NSA so you know we're going to have a chat,

but those innovative few things

to really to think about there.

Uhm, so we can.

We can have a chat right now.

Yeah, no, that's crazy.

And in terms of Space Lee,

it's really kind of elements of research

that kind of people could draw,

but if want to go and find out more,

there's a lot of different perspectives

around transforming teaching and learning,

and it's something that really

over the last 20-30 years,

which fully for 40 to 50 years.

And I want to think about it and

that's evolving, exchanging and.

And it's not a criticism,

you know,

that there's always different

perspectives and and that's not to say

this is the solution to everything,

I don't think is this social

deference one perspective?

And I'm obviously biased.

I I put up with like it, you know,

and I'm open to that to that bias.

But there is a lot of there's a lot

of literature and reading so late in,

but I can maybe just send you some

some links particularly easily,

easily accessible pieces of text and

things that people can put into practice.

But I think that we could be quite useful.

I've also set up AT and you Twitter feed,

looking at learning and teaching

and transformative practice and

colleges so so I can only share that as well and people can.

He can name no.

They will find some some articles and resources and things like that

electrician out there and text.

that I shared but there's alot

It's just I suppose it's just

one we have to go and and finding

something that's iaccessible.

Yep Yep that's great thanks.

So yeah, we absolutely share that.

Would kind of unreleased podcast

as well and that will be coming

in the description and I guess the

final bit one keep deals kinda stop.

Bring us towards a clause is.

As I guess, consolidate some of these.

Some of this discussion.

Think right where do I start?

You know,

so maybe could it three or four

key points are actually.

This is something I think I

do, but you know, I wanna check it or want

to do more on conversation with where do

I start so we can start dentify yeah sorry

three or four key elements believe the

first thing I would do is I would sit in,

interrogate myself and say to myself.

OK what assumptions do I make about myself

and my approach to teaching and learning?

But some things don't make

about their students,

the college and the community.

You know what? You know?

What and and really interrogate that

you really think about the assumptions

of each of those stakeholders.

I would then try and think about

the the impact of the assumptions

that I've identified so you know if

I find this happen to look at this,

I might drive some sort of mind map

to think about these assumptions and

then think about, OK, what are they in?

What's the impact of those assumptions

that I have on students and experience?

And then I would be thinking about,

you know what opportunities do I really have,

or what opportunities do I really

provide students to?

Question the decisions that I've

made about resources or how they're

going to learn and so on.

You know what opportunity have I

given them to really help Co construct

what they're doing and to be active

in participants?

If you like in in in the learning

and teaching and assessment process,

and I think for for me,

you know that there are two really good

starting points and it's to think about that.

Think they assumptions in the impact and also

you know really be honest with yourself and

say genuinely what opportunities do I have?

Do I?

Give students to enter.

Ask me questions about the teaching

learning assessment that they do and

and at least interrogate me on it.

I think that would be the

good starting point.

No Lee,

I think that's great.

I think what you've done there

is really sunrise was a pretty

complex topic in the end,

but also into kind of 2530 minutes off.

Yeah,

I'm gonna say that that kind of bite

size information that's a starting

point for people kind of really think

about really explore what I'd say

is this may be the type of episode,

but listen back to you know

twice or thrice sometimes.

I mean you can look a little

snippet of their actual.

What does that mean for me and

how do I do it and what what

I guess is refreshing is that.

Links to other key topics explored

rather in the last hour session,

around relationships around.

A lot of a doctor at whole.

Join us on connect interactions and

actually viewing meetings or order

conversation students interactions and

committing those counts and summers.

Underlying principles within

knows a link to this is as well.

So again Marshall for individual

single is not a great big long

checklist of things that we have to do.

All these things often feed together

to help us develop our own practices

as a lecturer or practitioner to access

property and make us more rounded.

And more aware of different factors.

Yeah, and there's a couple of things that I,

uh, for me I'm I'm not only interested

in and shoot engagement and where we?

Change only gives two students opportunity

to shape things and and they have seen

decisions and a couple of things for me.

Stackhouse or hinted at this earlier

and one of those is around assessment

yeah and and it comes back to the

fact that we had and apply it.

Education is political and we've got to

think about the awarding bodies and so on.

And you know, there's not always

enough for what we can do about that,

but for me, what lies at the heart

or or one of the things that likes

to have transformative teaching?

Learning is the idea of a think

tank assessment.

Because we already know that

assessment as powerful,

we know for a lot of students I said

assessments what their interest

to that assessment is.

You know,

they want to know what they're doing.

Assessment would drive to a certain

extent what they're learning.

So F assessment does have that

powerful role then.

Surely there's a relationship

there for us to consider between

assessment and social justice,

and that from easily interest in the idea.

And when we think about assessment,

we quite often talking conversation

with people up and students

about assessment being fair.

And that fear doesn't mean

that it should be the same.

And what I think we often get maybe

bogged down a little bit when it

comes to assessment is the procedural

aspects of it and and and you know,

we think about what's permitted was

not permitted in certain circumstances

that you know we might have assessment

policies in colleges and and you know

the history and examples and so on.

You know, give a spec, Lester,

things that's acceptable and not,

but I think that's something for

us to really think about that we

need to really think about how they

think is our assessment approaches.

And how fair is the is the process of

assessment and I don't mean procedural there.

And and remember, fair doesn't necessarily mean the same. And I think that's an interesting idea. You know, fairness does not mean in all instances. Saying this, if that makes sense, and that's that's for me. Personally, that's quite an interesting idea to to think about, and that's challenged quite a lot of my own assumptions about teaching and learning. And, and I think that's that's pretty interesting. You know, you know, if I give you a quick example, you know when granting an extension for an assignment, for example, you know quite often we will glance at EXT 4. Traces of work, for example, or because sometimes having to work,

but actually, why not? You know why? Why should we be taken into account? The fact that if somebody is having to work or have a family to look after and so on and or or having to, you know to work during the night and things like that, then why we do not give them that extension? OK, you know we we tend to only get extensions for example for medical reasons, so I think there's a whole interesting conversation made about socially just assessment practices and policies. And for me that that's really exciting and interesting. Needed to explore now. So I think it was lined up the next podcast or. A podcast later this year is gonna really unpick elements of that there as well.

'cause you're absolutely right

and had a similar conversation

is more not necessarily fairness,

but around assessment methods

around meeting the needs of all

learners where we yeah at times is A

perception that is quite restrictive

when it comes to assessment,

but all of the Romans are learning

and teaching are really quite open

ended and in and and diverse and meet

the needs of individual learners.

Yeah no absolutely.

And and I think you know it started them up.

I started on modular started by unit.

One of the things we probably all doing

and you know I'm guilty of X well this week.

Make sure slide with the learning objectives,

for example,

but that's a very sort of transmission,

transmission or almost like a

contract between the learning objectives and assessment. You know, that's how that's been communicated or or that's their solution or view that's being promoted, but we really need to. If we're going to engage students with learning another session and so on, then we need we need to really engage them and that conversation about about their learning and learning outcomes. And so on. But I think that is a whole other conversation around that and something that's that's quite interesting. No, I think it's fascinating. It's really interesting 'cause. Whilst we're talking around transformable and teaching. There are other factors out of our

control which can then get moved can

negate some of the positive impact

that has been made across different

elements of learning teaching,

so it's actually get it.

It's a huge huge element,

but I'm conscious around this topic

today and I think the more I'm

thinking about this now you know

'cause I listen we don't pre script

that these conversations what we're

feeling cover got the questions on

where we go and I'm thinking well,

actually I'm a lecturer. Where do I start?

My lasting better advice?

Uhm on nourishment is one of the kind

of former podcast guests get to share.

That instead of having takeaways

but watching nourishment,

I think the Fed notion for me is to

get something small in this topic.

Focus on that. Yeah, build and develop their 'cause if you try and tackle all of your teaching practice within one goal as you said about teaching observation. Yeah yeah you'll go crazy. Yeah, I think you know just to add to that final point is we all sat in with a recessive different points and we need to recognize some of us. Maybe adopting some of these practices already. Others you know, maybe not, not so, not as much. So we need to build on, but we already know what we experienced and that will be different for everyone. For everybody, it's less than absolutely. No, great what that's fantastically, really interesting conversation I

