



LUXE
COLLEGE FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

AN AFROCENTRIC MODEL FOR KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SW TEACHING

**ELMARIE ERASMUS ASASWEI CONFERENCE 9 – 11 OCTOBER 2017
MANAGER: LUXE TRAINING COLLEGE FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, JHB, RSA**



BACKGROUND

- **PhD study over the past 6 years** at the Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management at UJ
- **Accepted into their Personal and Professional Leadership program (PPL)** based on a masters in SW supervision at Uni Pretoria (cum laude) and on entrepreneurial skills in starting a Further Education and Training College (FET) in 2006
- **Focus of the Luxe College for Social Services is to train and equip social auxiliary workers to assist social workers** (it started in 1996 as a community empowerment project for women in the Diepsloot informal settlement north of Jhb)



STRUCTURE & LAYOUT

- **Part 1:** -Sources of the growing crisis regarding knowledge
- **Part 2:** -The apple knowledge tree as a metaphor to frame the **DIALOGUE ABOUT KNOWLEDGE**
 - The Disciplinary knowledge tree of SW
- **Part 3:** -Integral research & teaching inclusive of all four worlds
 - The GENE model as pedagogy in Social Services training
 - Short interview with ex-student on her experiences
- **Part 4:** Conclusions



BASELINE QUESTIONS

- **Who are you as a person?**
- **An African, an Indian, a White, a Black, a Westerner, a Coloured, a European, a Zulu, a Sotho, a Venda, a Zimbabwean, a Nigerian, a Mozambican, a Portuguese...?**
- **Who are you as a social worker?**
A caseworker, group worker, community worker, an academic, a GP or a specialist? How do you define yourself? What is your planned legacy as a SWr?



PART 1: SOURCES OF THE GROWING KNOWLEDGE CRISIS

- 1. The exponential knowledge explosion** – knowledge doubles every 2-3 years and is soon to be doubled every year
- 2. A growing concern, rightfully so, from previously excluded and powerless groups for the recognition of indigenous and/or particularistic knowledge alongside mainstream knowledge** (i.e. minority groups, ethnic groups, women, gay people, have nots, differently abled people, etc)
- 3. The emergence of a ‘post-truth’ world** – Oxford dictionaries 2016 international word of the year (perceptions, thinking, decisions & actions are based on emotional appeal & personal beliefs are disconnected from verifiable evidence)

PART 2: THE KNOWLEDGE TREE – A METAPHOR TO FRAME THE DIALOGUE ABOUT KNOWLEDGE



- Tree location = the Context
- **Fruit = (including flowers, seeds, spores) = knowledge value-add**
- Branches & leaves = knowledge blueprint & objects
- Trunk = knowledge Meta-framework
- **Soil = knowledge Community of Practice**
- Roots = foundational Concepts



SOCIAL WORK AS DISCIPLINE– OUR KNOWLEDGE TREE

- Tree location → 4 Cultural Morphologies (GENE)
- Soil → SW community of Practice
- Roots → Values, principles, code of ethics
- Trunk → Core knowledge for its workers
- Branches & leaves → Sub-fields or specializations
- Fruit, flowers, seeds & spores → Value-add/new knowledge for the society & its beneficiaries



ENABLING QUESTIONS FOR THE DIALOGUE - TO PRODUCE LOCAL, VALID, INDIGENOUS & CURRENT KNOWLEDGE

- 1- **Who are believed to be the beneficiaries of the SW Discipline ?** (a beneficiary analysis is important vs a narrow interest of those in power – that are expected/obliged to produce research)
- 2- **What is believed to be the discipline's contribution as science and practice to its beneficiaries ?** (what makes up the curriculum/LP and what is the link between academic research and satisfying local societal needs)
- 3- **What lasting, worthy legacy does the discipline aspire to leave behind for current & upcoming generations of beneficiaries ?** (or is it handing out blankets or grants for the poor only ?)



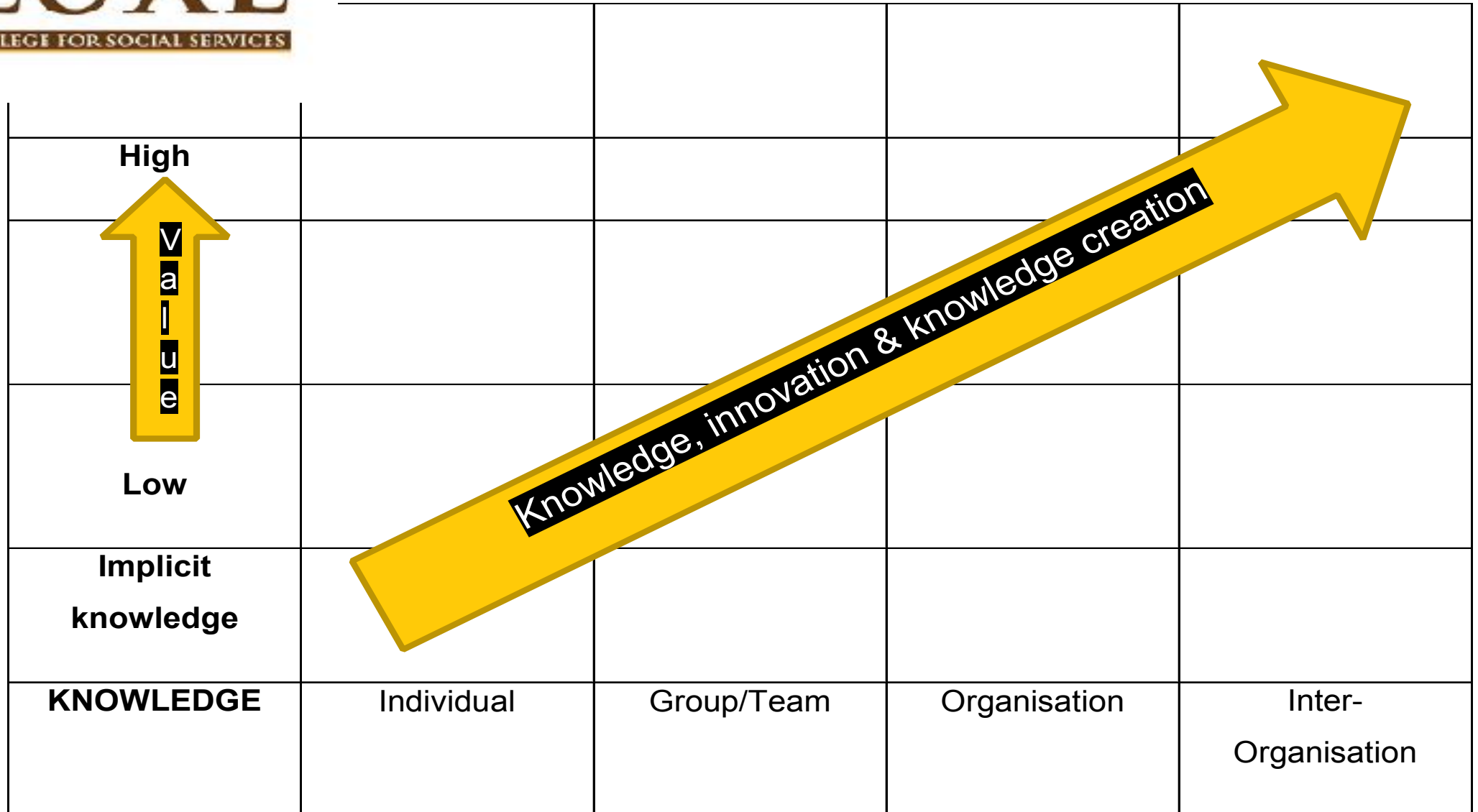
PART 3: INTEGRAL RESEARCH (IR) INCLUSIVE OF ALL FOUR WORLDS

- Our **minds have been colonised** according to Lessem & Schieffer, 2012) with the **traditional research methods** (Quantitative and Qualitative research)
- We need **a double research trajectory** of not only analytical research but also transformative/ innovative research
- IR-resourceful; it provides more sources of knowledge creation in the **four cultural morphologies** of humanism (being), holism (becoming), rationalism (knowing) and pragmatism (doing)
- **African collective learning model** (Mbigi, 2015) complements the IRA (ask individuals Qs; have group discussions; resolutions)

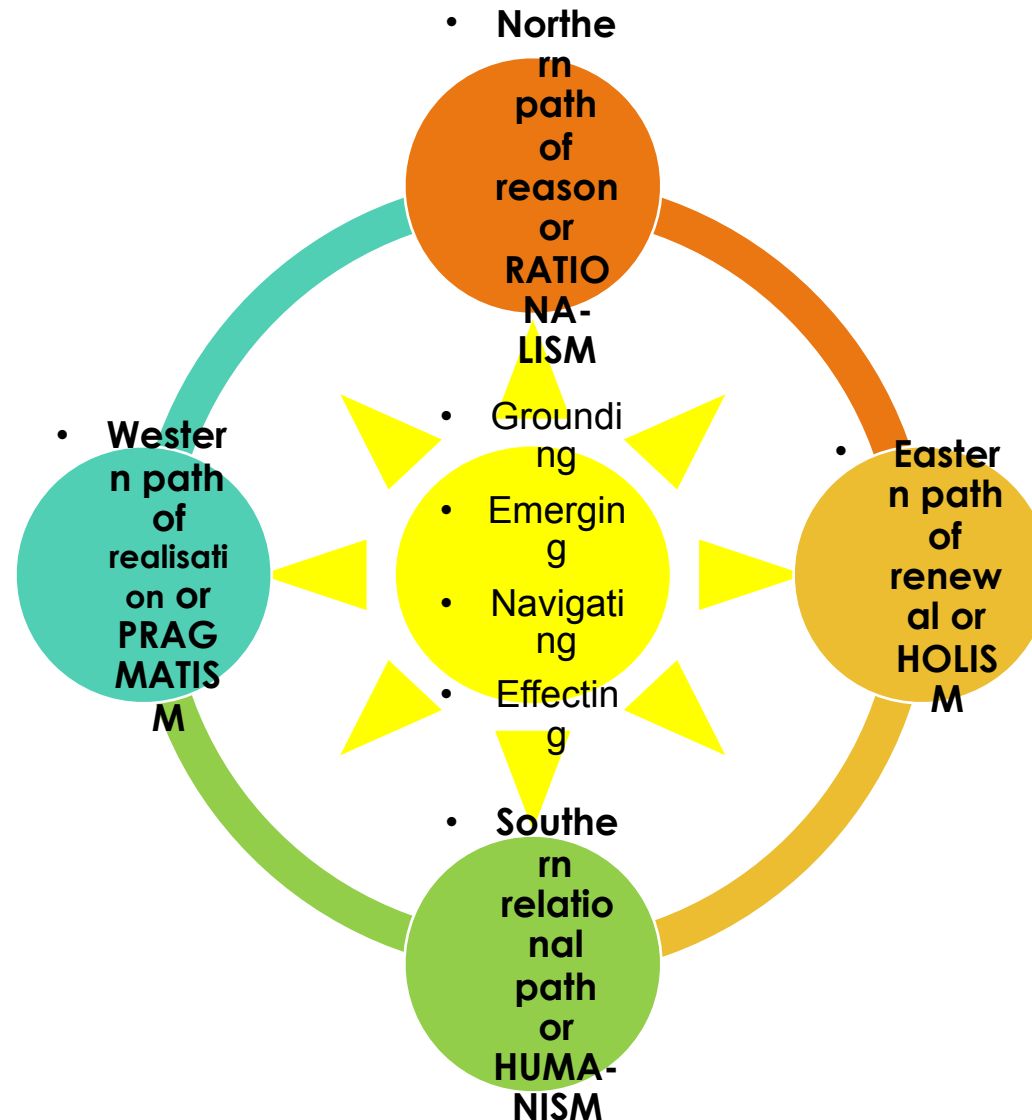


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MBIGI'S MODEL (2015)



THE GENE MODEL AS PEDAGOGY IN SOCIAL SERVICES TRAINING



INCLUSIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

Southern paradigm

- Southern relational path
- Humanism
- Steve Biko
- Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu
- I am because you are
- Being

Eastern paradigm

- Path of renewal
- Holism
- Buddha
- The detached self
- Becoming



EXCLUSIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

Northern paradigm

- Path of reason
- Rationalism
- Descartes – radical doubt
- Know thyself
- I think therefore I am
- Thinking

Western paradigm

- Path of realisation
- Pragmatism
- Locke – radical empiricism
- The intentional self
- Individualism vs collectivism
- Survivor
- Doing



INTERVIEW WITH EX-STUDENT: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AT THE COLLEGE

- **G** – did you feel **grounded** validated and respected as an individual student?
- **E** – do you feel that you have grown/**emerged**/been transformed as a person?
- **N** – were you supported as a learner/student in **navigating** through all the new knowledge and professional jargon?
- **E** – do you feel equipped & competent to go out and practice/**effect** the community as a SAW?

- **Sources of the growing crisis** in today's knowledge society
- The Disciplinary SW **knowledge tree as a metaphor to frame the dialogue** for continuous knowledge creation
- Integral research as **an inclusive approach to pedagogy** vs an exclusive traditional approach
- **The GENE model is resourceful** and it grounds researchers & practitioners to become social sciences entrepreneurs
- Where **all 4 worldviews** are represented and the GENE model is applied, you have inclusivity, originality, validity and acceptance/appreciation of knowledge



FINAL QUESTION: WHO ARE YOU AS A PERSON AND AS A SWR IN YOUR CONTEXT

- Be more specific/particular for example I'm French Canadian, African American, Zulu African, Sotho African, European African, etcetera
- Be more clear i.r.o. your contribution as a SWr for example expertise as a specialist, an academic, a practitioner or as an entrepreneur