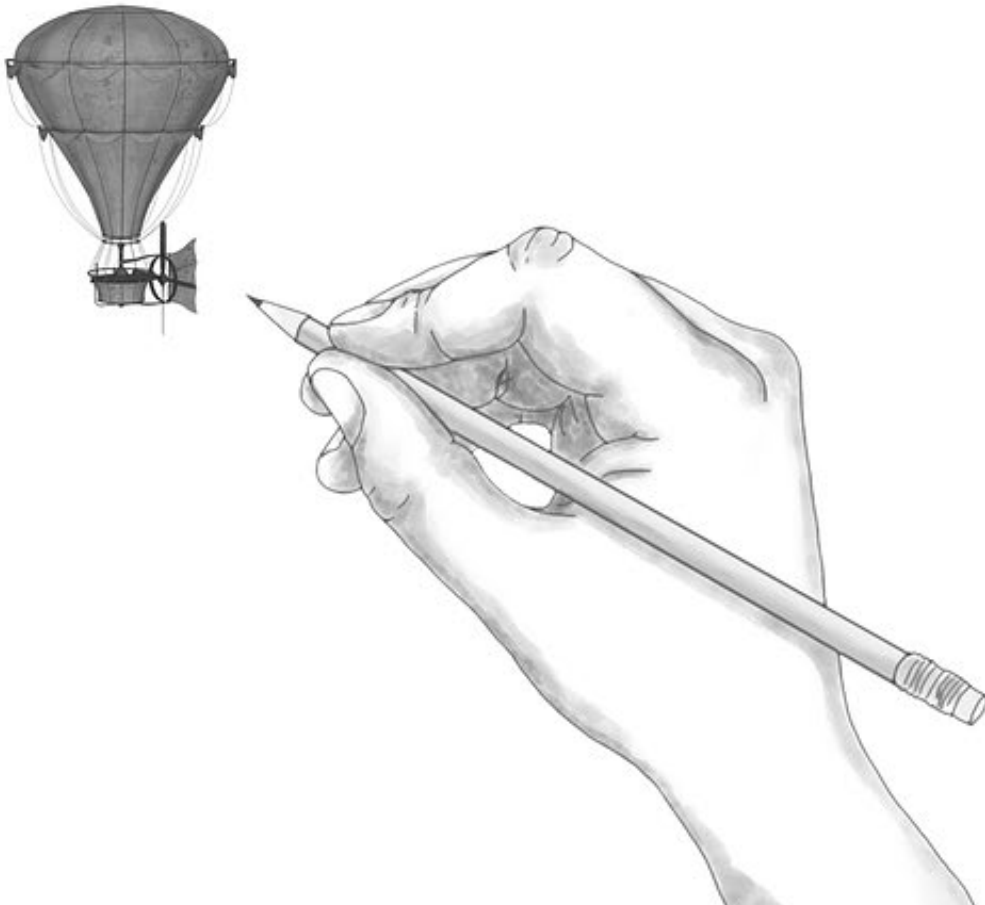


Doing practitioner research:

A case study in the use of subjectivity and the self as research instrument in theory building



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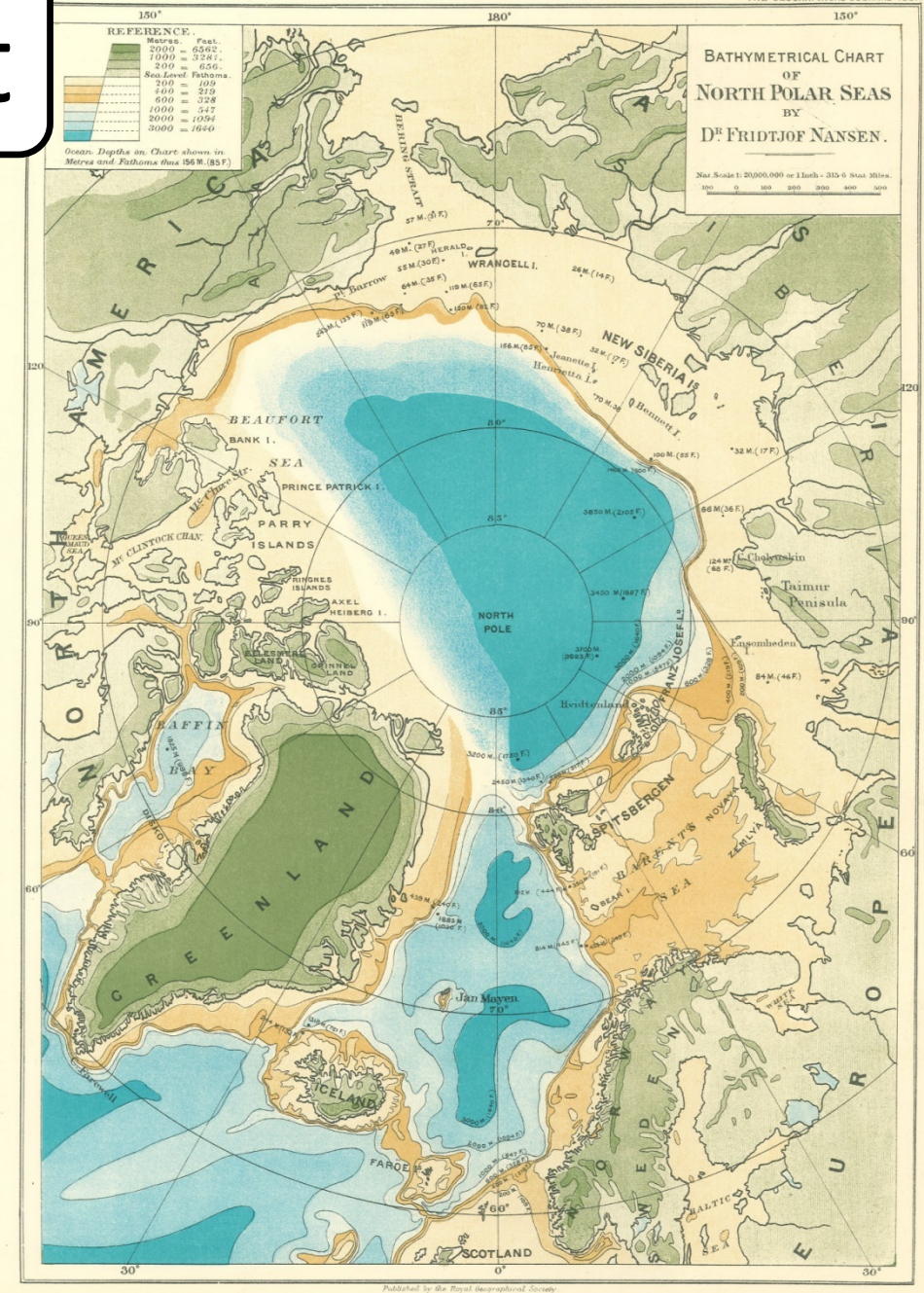
The project

'On psychosomatics and the maps in our hands: Modelling change over twelve months of counselling practice'
University of Leeds (2016 – 2020)

Dr Jane Cahill, Dr John Lees (University of Leeds),
Professor Dawn Freshwater (University of Western Australia)

Four participant clients:
Lou (f/30s),
Michael (m/40s),
Jennifer (f/60s), and
Myrtle (f/60s)

Multi-case study and autoethnography: 'the thesis beneath the thesis'



A driverless car

Tuesday, 27th February 2018



Maps and I-positions



I-position: a 'version' of self, performed in a certain context, to a certain audience (Hermans et al., 1992)

Cognitive map: Internal representations of self and world made up of congruent cognitions and behaviours (Tolman, 1948; Bowlby, 1971).

River of time

Saturday, 12th November 2010



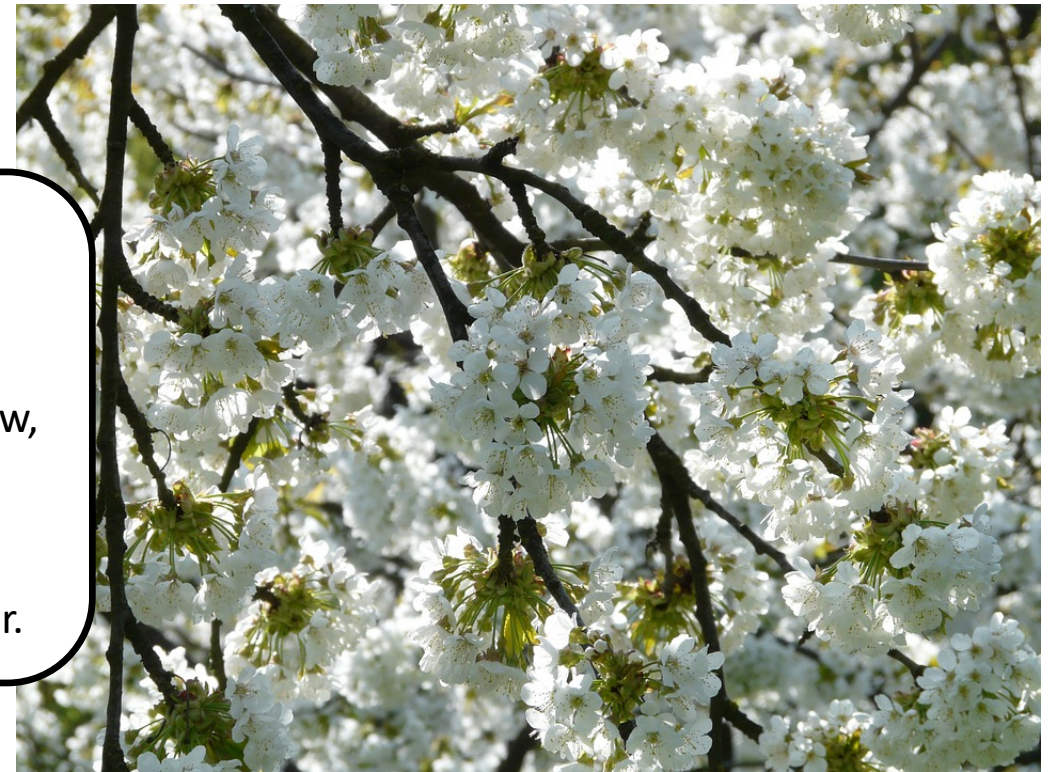
The emergent thesis

Innovative Moments (Ribeiro & Gonçalves, 2010)

Cognitive maps as platforms for therapeutic change.

Functions of maps are orientation and navigation; i.e. where we are now, and how we get to our destination.

Motifs of navigation along roads, rivers and in flight, symbolising directionality (Cooper, 2019) and the role of therapist as fellow traveller.



Binocular vision

Tuesday, 6th September 2016



Lou – The Peacemaker

Panic attacks with vomiting, waves of exhaustion.
(Which ended during our time together)

30 sessions

‘The Peacemaker’ vs ‘Fire in my Belly’

- redressed power imbalances between her and her significant others.
- “I don’t have to do this”
- people did not die when she asserted herself



Michael – Keeping my head down



Self—consciousness about spasms and tremors relating to cerebral palsy symptoms. (Subjective relief/less distressful during our time together).

10 sessions.

Lowry painting – my reverie

Therapeutic exposure – symptoms in session.

Michael introducing 'two shoulders' and 'inner being' reflecting my I-positions modelling

'Standing taller', openness – transformation of self and world

Jennifer – The Hand in the Bucket of Water

Social anxiety. Chronic fatigue with nausea.
(Subjective relief/less distressful during our time together)

6 sessions

‘There is no indispensable man’ by Saxon N. White
Kessinger: *Take a bucket and fill it with water, Put your hand in it up to the wrist, Pull it out and the hole that’s remaining, Is a measure of how you will be missed.*

‘My thoughts are my personal belongings’
(reflecting metacognitive modelling: thinking about thinking)



Myrtle – The Scapegoat



Fibromyalgia (subjective relief) and ectopic heartbeats (almost complete cessation). 5 sessions.

Witnessing: 'crystallisation of discontent' (Hayes et al., 2007)

M: *Even if I've got pain I'll still go to my dance class, because your mind is on something else, so...*

J: *And you're enjoying it?*

M: *Dance class? I love it! I'm absolutely rubbish but I do it!*
(laughs)

Contradicting 'listen to your body' approach to pain

Directionality (Cooper, 2019)

(as embedded within cognitive maps)

An evolving model of change

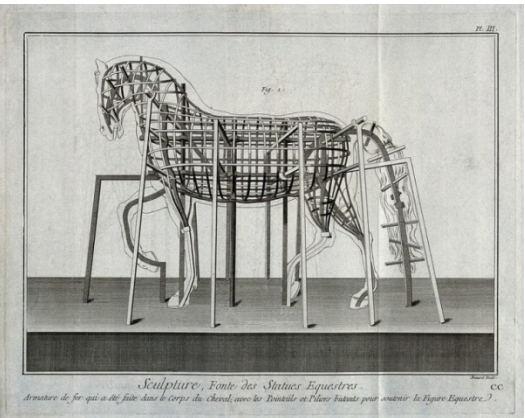
①

(November 2017)

Migration between dominant and alternative I-positions

‘All the World’s A Stage’

Dreams: Falling not Flying



②

(August 2018)

Mapping a longitudinal model of change onto the migration between I-positions

Echoes of earlier ideas in Indices of Change paper, presented to International Symposium in Salamanca (2017)

Steve’s approval of my ‘migration model’ (second synthesis) and offering the armature analogy.

③

(November 2018)

The generation of cognitive maps

Dad’s memorial – ‘a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies’; Ouroboros



④

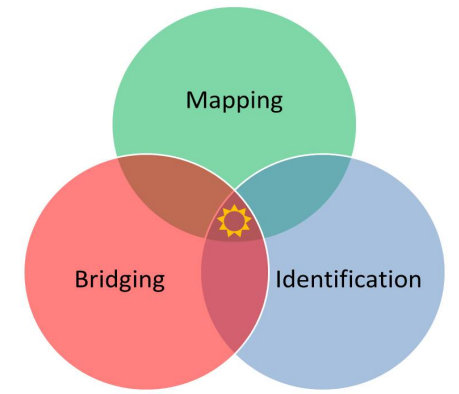
(April 2019)

Dialogism in the therapeutic relationship

Dad’s Twins’ piece – dialogue between us



3 state-based model of change



Identification

'This is my part; this is what I'm doing' (reflective)

Patterns of relation; priming



Bridging

'This is one of those moments we've been talking about in therapy' (reflexive)

Moments of true novelty. An 'innovative moment' (Gonçalves et al., 2009; Ribeiro and Gonçalves, 2010)




Mapping

The mapping out of congruent cognitions and behaviours from emerging I-position (reflective)

Developing a frame of reference – names, imagery, narrative

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- ‘The Rush’ by LS Lowry (1964)
- ‘Wheatfield with Crows’ by V Van Gogh (1890)
- ‘The preparatory iron armature for an equestrian statue’, engraving by Robert Bérnard (18th century)
- ‘Ouroboros’ from German physician Michael Maier’s Atlanta Fugiens Emblem (17th century)

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