

On being-in-community: A phenomenological explication of the experience of being-in-community, in the context of the CBW and business.

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This research poses the question “*How does the experience of participating in a Community Building Workshop run within a small business, effect the experience of the individuals comprising the business unit?*”

This project focuses on M. Scott-Pecks innovative model of Community Building, which has been adapted by organisational consultants for business use. Community Building Workshops have been shown to have success in strengthening human relationships at work at the same time as increasing the businesses performance structurally and economically. To my knowledge no research has been conducted as to how this model of community building engenders the changes in individual employees that consequently inform the changes to the business.

A qualitative phenomenological method of enquiry is used. Phenomenology is ideally suited to the investigation of the non-material, non-quantifiable aspects of personal experience. Phenomenology is also implicitly concerned with ‘human flourishing as it asks what is the nature or essence of an experience so that I can better understand what this particular experience is like for the people experiencing it (Van Manen, 1990, p. 10). A series of unstructured interviews will be conducted with consenting adults who have participated in a Community Building Workshop within their business. A number of open-ended questions, designed to uncover the individuals experience of community, will be asked. The resultant analysis of these interviews will form the basis of the research thesis.

Preliminary research suggests that findings will inform the following areas: a) the role of communications in building organisational community; b) the possibility of community building as a healing process; c) community building as a self-awareness process; d) increased capacity for, and tolerance of, human difference; f) greater individual capacity for self and communal responsibility. The overall aim is to contribute new understanding of the dynamics and potential of this model of community building as a unique and accessible intervention change strategy for business and other organisations and institutions that is specifically focused on human flourishing. The project is interested in the societal or community aspects of business and is conceived as one way of assisting business to orient its focus towards the human aspects of conducting business with equal priority given to human flourishing, profit making and economic development.