From Student to Graduate: Four Learners’ Perspectives of the Professional Doctorate Journey

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Background and Context
Webinar Aims

• To discuss our experiences and perspectives, as four female academics, of the Professional Doctorate programme

• To consider how the doctorate process fostered relationships and supported us in reaching our end goal
• shared journey but initially working alone whilst trust is established

- shared goal
- valued learning together
- valued collaborative relationship
- openness and honesty
Thesis Stage

- Close connections, interwoven experiences, strength in the relationship
- Qualities of trust, shared goals, shared experiences, mutual respect, safe space to discuss and debate deepened.

honesty  frank exchanges  invested in each other’s work  mutual respect
As others achieved the Doctorate wider membership to the group, shared experiences unite us.
Constructing the paper

- Looser connections but shared experience of the Doctorate has connected us together

Methodology –
- collaborative autoethnography
- qualitative methods using narratives
- context conscious which focuses on self (Ngunjiri et al., 2010)
- critical self reflection (Denzin, 2014) alongside of working as a team
- providing support and integrating ideas together (Chang et al, 2013).
Theory

- Community of practice (Wenger, 1998)
- Utopian relationship (Wickett, 2016)
- Positioning theory (Davies and Harré, 1999)
- Identity (Burr, 2003)
- Transformation (Mezirow, 1991)
Implications for Supervisors/Programme Leaders

• Acknowledge the importance of time and spaces during Professional Doctorate sessions to facilitate relationships

• Recognise and support identity change and transformation (Branacle and Mewburn, 2010)

• Recognise the importance of the social element of the programme as a knowledge community is not the same as a community of practice (Seeman, 2008)

• Encourage students beyond the thesis to continue with developing identities and research careers within safe dialogic spaces with peers
References