

*Do you want to
hear a story?*

**Adventures in
COLLECTIVE
NARRATIVE PRACTICE**

by David Denborough



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Dulwich Centre Publications

Adelaide, South Australia

Chapter 3

Tracing the roots of the Tree of Life narrative approach

It was Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo's idea to combine narrative practices with the metaphor of the Tree of Life (Timmel & Hope, 1984). Neither of us could have imagined where this idea would lead! Over the last 10 years, the Tree of Life narrative approach (Denborough, 2008; Ncube, 2006) has come to be used by counsellors and community workers in many different contexts with people of all ages (see www.dulwichcentre.com.au/the-tree-of-life/).

Significantly, practitioners from diverse cultures and religions are continually transforming this way of working by embedding it in local cultural traditions and community practices. This is beautifully illustrated by the recent adaptations by Muslim practitioners Ola Elhassan and Lobna Yassine (2017).

Also noteworthy is how many Tree of Life initiatives are peer-led or co-led through partnerships between professionals and community members. In Sweden, for example, Torbjörn Vennström trained parents whose children are in foster care to facilitate the Tree of Life with their own children and arranged for the foster carers to act as outsider witnesses to this process.¹ This is a sparkling example of how the Tree of Life narrative approach is being used as a way of empowering community members as facilitators. This is also true in peer mental health work in the UK (see pp. 67–69) and in Australia (Swan, 2016).

A number of practitioners have used the Tree of Life as a departure point to create their own distinct methodologies. The idea of combining local folk cultural metaphors with narrative practice has now sparked the development of a wide range of metaphoric innovations.² A recent example is Vanessa Davis's Aboriginal Australian methodology, 'My Meeting Place' (2017). These are all developments that we could not have predicted.

With so many different initiatives currently under way, it seems an appropriate time to trace the histories or 'roots' of the Tree of Life narrative approach. There are four reasons why I have chosen to do this:

- I hope that by unpacking the thinking that informs how metaphor and narrative practice are intertwined in the Tree of Life this will

assist those who are currently developing their own metaphoric methodologies.

- Transparently documenting the histories of any concept or method is a factor in seeking to avoid psychological colonisation or the imposition of any methodology from one context to another without adaption and/or transformation.
- I hope this telling of history will acknowledge some lesser known contributions. This chapter began as a letter I wrote to Sally Timmel after the death of Anne Hope³ to acknowledge Sally and Anne's vital contributions to the development of initial Tree of Life exercise.
- Having seen the Tree of Life narrative approach become embraced by so many people, I have become intrigued about why this has happened. This piece seeks to acknowledge some of the diverse and profound cultural resonances that I think partly explain why this particular metaphor is so meaningful to so many.

Histories

Just over 10 years ago, the Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI),⁴ an influential organisation that works throughout southern and eastern Africa to support communities to respond to vulnerable children, invited a number of us to visit Masiye children's camp in Zimbabwe.⁵ This invitation was particularly instigated by Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo, a Zimbabwean psychologist who was studying narrative approaches to therapy and community work at Dulwich Centre here in Australia. Ncazelo was hoping to find ways of engaging with narrative practices to enhance REPSSI's work with vulnerable children (see Ncube, 2006).

During our stay at Masiye Camp, Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo, Noreen Huni, Siphelile Kaseke, Carmel Gaillard and others from REPSSI introduced us to the worlds of the children who were attending the camp, many of

whom had lost multiple loved ones due to HIV/AIDS and were now living in profoundly challenging circumstances. We witnessed the dedication of the camp counsellors, all formerly 'vulnerable children' themselves, and saw how the children treasured their time at Masiye.

We also witnessed how the camp counsellors were using a Tree of Life metaphor to assist children to speak about their lives. Ncazelo had been introduced to this metaphor by a friend and colleague, Jonathan Brakarsh, when they were collaborating to find ways of facilitating community conversations about the psychosocial needs of children. At the time, I did not know where this idea had originated.⁶ But later, I learnt that this was linked to the highly influential popular education handbook by Sally Timmel and Anne Hope, *Training for transformation* (Timmel & Hope, 1984).

While the children clearly enjoyed drawing their trees, we also came to vividly appreciate a number of concerns that Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo had about some of the inadvertent effects of the process (see Ncube, 2006). Two aspects of Tree of Life process (as it was being used at Masiye Camp at that time) seemed particularly fraught. The 'leaves of the tree' were being used to represent friends and family members, but anyone who had passed away was being represented as a 'falling' or 'fallen' leaf. When it came time for children to then speak to others about their tree, we saw quite heartbroken children with relatively bare trees surrounded by many fallen leaves. These retellings seemed to be leaving children bereft. We also saw that the image or concept of 'bugs' was being used to represent difficulties or problems faced by the tree. As these were written directly onto the tree there seemed little distance between children's identities and any problems they were facing.

Other aspects of the tree making and sharing process seemed to be working well. Most significantly, the children clearly felt significant connections with trees, connections that I assume were not only personal, but perhaps also, to differing degrees, collective, cultural and spiritual.

We had been invited to work together with Ncazelo, REPSSI, the camp counsellors and the children at the camp to try to fashion a way in which the children could, in the words of Aboriginal Elder and narrative

practitioner Aunty Barbara Wingard, 'tell their stories in ways that make them stronger' (Wingard & Lester, 2001).

Having watched what was already working, and what was inadvertently 'retraumatising',⁷ I proposed a number of additions or changes to what had been taking place:

- altering what particular parts of the Tree of Life represent
- finding ways to use narrative practices to richly story preferred identities throughout the Tree of Life process
- creating a four-part process: Tree of Life, Forest of Life, Storms of Life, Ritual of Celebration.

I'll just briefly explain the thinking that informed each of these changes and additions, and how the process now works.

Altering what particular parts of the Tree of Life represent

The two most significant changes related to the 'bugs' and the 'leaves'. First of all, I suggested removing the 'bugs' or problems from the metaphor entirely (problems and difficulties are now spoken of collectively in the Storms of Life section). Second, we now ensure that within the 'leaves' section people who are no longer living are represented in the same way as those who are living. This means that connections with and contributions of the no longer living are richly honoured.⁸

Significantly, if at any time during this process children talk about treasured people who have passed away and are upset about this, we provided the camp counsellors with the following three questions to ask:

- Did you have lovely times with this person? Can you tell me about these?
- What was special about this person to you? What did they give to you?
- Would this person like it that you remember them and that you put them on your tree?



Figure 2. A Forest of Life from Ltyentye Apurte School in the Northern Territory, Australia ('Ltyentye Apurte' means a small grove of trees)

Grief is never only about loss; it is also about honouring. These questions, and a Tree of Life process that includes the no longer living as leaves remaining on the tree, gave the children a chance to honour those who have passed away, and to consider the ongoing contribution that they can make to a loved one by remembering them and by placing them as a leaf on their Tree of Life. This has significantly altered the sense of heartbreak that was associated with the ‘fallen leaves’ metaphor.

Finding ways to use narrative practices to richly story a sense of preferred identity throughout the Tree of Life process

The ways in which the tree metaphor is now structured enable us to make rich back-and-forth linkages between the roots (heritage), trunk (what is valued, skills) and branches (hopes and dreams). We encourage practitioners to ask questions about the histories of values and skills, and about the histories of dreams. This, in turn, can unearth previously unspoken or unrecognised heritage, which is then written on the trees’ ‘roots’. What is named as a present skill, value or dream may now become linked with legacies carried forth from grandparents, ancestry or community. This interweaving between present, past and future contributes to what we refer to as a ‘reauthoring’ of identity (M. White, 2007).

Creating a four-part process: Tree of Life, Forest of Life, Storms of Life and Ritual of celebration and acknowledgment

The most significant change to what was previously occurring at Masiye Camp was to place the creation of individual Trees of Life into a wider four-part process. After children make their individual trees these are now gathered together into a ‘Forest of Life’ before any individual retelling takes place. This generation of the Forest of Life involves the ‘invention of unity in diversity’ (Freire, 1994 p. 157).⁹

Within the Storms of Life section, we seek to provide a context for conscientisation (Freire, 2000). This is facilitated by externalising the difficulties or hazards faced by children and by using metaphor to do so. First, we consult the children about their knowledge of the difficulties and

dangers that trees and forests face in their contexts and in different parts of the world. Through metaphor, we learn of many difficulties. Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo reported that children in Soweto listed the 'burning of trees, cutting trees down, wee weeing on trees, kicking trees, too much rain, lightning, aging: trees can get old and die, and having no water' (Ncube, 2006, p. 13).

Having spoken of the difficulties faced by trees, we then consult the children about their knowledge of the dangers and difficulties that children face in their context and in different parts of the world. This is not seeking individual disclosure, but rather collective disclosure:

These included: rape, being abused, abandonment, swearing at children, neglect, denying food, chasing children away from home, kidnapping, killing children, children living on the streets, children smoking glue, children having to sell their bodies for sex, and children not listening to their parents and caregivers. (Ncube, 2006, p. 13)

Importantly, we also enquire of children whether trees are to blame for the difficulties and hazards they encounter. After children have stood in solidarity with trees – 'NO, trees are not to blame!' – we then invite the children to stand in solidarity with each other in stating that 'NO, children are not to blame' when these Storms of Life make an appearance.

Within the field of narrative practice, Michael White (2006b) drew attention to the ways in which children are never passive recipients of hardship or trauma (this is also true for adults and communities). Finding ways to make their responses to hardship more visible and acknowledged can contribute to possibilities for further action. In order to make it more possible for children's *responses* to the Storms of Life to be identified and spoken about, we initiate a discussion about how animals respond to storms. A long list of ways in which animals respond to storms can be generated. This might include skills in hiding, protecting each other, flying away, running away, burrowing deep in the ground, building a nest, huddling together and so on. Children are often very knowledgeable

about these sorts of things! By acknowledging and speaking about how animals are not simply passive when storms hit forests, this makes it possible for children to consider the ways in which they are not simply passive in the face of difficulties in their lives. Once the facilitator has a sense that the children are ready, the group can then be asked, ‘Okay, well these are some of the ways in which animals respond to storms, what about how children respond to storms that come into their lives? What do children do when these hazards and storms come into their lives? Are there ways that they respond? Are there things that they do? Do they try to protect themselves and others like the animals do?’ We can also ask what children, young people, adults and communities can do together to address and prevent these storms, and thereby use this process as a spark for broader social actions.

This is particularly relevant because the final part of the process involves a broader ritual to which key adults and community members are invited.

Children’s ideas about ways of responding to ‘Storms’ have been featured in Reclaim the Night feminist antiviolence marches here in Australia. I’m really interested in how these processes can spark broader community conscientisation.



Figure 3. The first graduates of the Tree of Life narrative approach (Soweto)

Source: Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo

Once we had developed the four-part Tree of Life process during our visit to Masiye Camp, Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo facilitated this process in Soweto (see Ncube, 2006). REPSSI then created a freely available manual¹⁰ and began to offer training workshops throughout southern and eastern Africa. And the approach also began to be taken up by narrative practitioners in different parts of the world.¹¹ So much so, there are now over 2500 members of the Tree of Life Facebook group!¹²

Linking back to Sally Timmel, Anne Hope and the field of popular education

A couple of years after our time at Masiye Camp, I managed to track down a copy of the highly influential handbook, *Training for transformation: A handbook for community workers, Book 2* (Timmel & Hope, 1984). It features a Tree of Life trust-building exercise, which I assume was the spark that led the camp counsellors at Masiye to use this metaphor. All the developments I have mentioned here are therefore linked to this work! Here is the original version (see p. 65).

To my knowledge, this is the first published version of the use of the Tree of Life as a group work process and it evolved from the field of popular education. I'm hoping we might forge more connections between narrative practice and popular education.

Honouring cultural, spiritual and secular histories

Of course, the Tree of Life is an ancient concept, embedded within so many cultures, spiritualities and religions. The Tree of Life is mentioned in the books of Genesis and Revelation as a life-giving tree planted by God in the Garden of Eden to enhance and perpetually sustain the physical life of humanity.¹³ The earliest image and text version that I can find is of a Hebrew Kabbalistic tree of life¹⁴ by the Jesuit scholar Athanasius Kircher, produced between 1652 and 55 (Lima, 2014, p. 18). No doubt Indigenous

TRUST BUILDING

4. TREE OF LIFE

A tree, like a river, is one of the universal symbols of life. This exercise helps people reflect on their own lives in greater depth.

Procedure

- a. Ask each person to close their eyes and imagine what kind of tree represents their life as they experience it now. It might be a very strong oak, a weeping willow, a faithful mango tree or a young sapling.
- b. Ask each person to draw the tree of their own life.
 - i. The roots represent
 - The family from which we come,
 - Strong influences which have shaped us into the person we are now
 - ii. The trunk represents the structure of our life today
 - Job
 - Family
 - Organisations, communities, movements to which we belong.
 - iii. The leaves represent our sources of information
 - Newspapers
 - Radio, television
 - Books
 - Reports
 - Friends and contacts
 - iv. The fruits represent our achievements
 - Projects we have organised
 - Programs
 - Groups we have started or helped to develop
 - Materials we have produced
 - v. The buds represent our hopes for the future. Thorns can represent the difficulties in our life
- c. Give the group about 20 minutes to do this.
- d. Share in groups of 3–5. If possible, it is good to do this in an open-ended session (e.g. in the evening) when groups can continue to share for as long as they wish.



Time At least one hour
 Materials Paper and crayons for all participants

Figure 4. *The Tree of Life* exercise from *Training for Transformation*
 Source: Timmel & Hope, 1984, p. 38

cultures in Africa, Australia and beyond have been using tree metaphors for far longer. Aboriginal practitioners here in Australia are now engaging with and adapting the Tree of Life approach for their contexts as part of a broader project of decolonisation and developing culturally relevant and resonant practices for language reclamation (Johnson, 2015) and community healing and transformation (Dulwich Centre Foundation, 2008).

Secular and ecological uses of the Tree of Life metaphor have also been influential. Charles Darwin, for example, used the Tree of Life in 1859 to describe relationships between organisms (see Pietsch, 2013).

The significance of people's connections to trees continues to surprise and move me. When I was teaching in Kurdistan, I was alerted to the Arabic book, *The tree of being: An ode to the perfect man*, by the great Islamic scholar, Ibn 'Arabi (1165–1240). Kurdish colleagues made links between Ibn 'Arabi's writings and the ways in which they readily see life through tree metaphors:

Our life in Kurdistan is just like the life of a forest that has been destroyed many times by the previous Baath regime. They destroyed Kurdistan villages, forests and agricultural lands. They created fear; terror in the mothers and their children.

But after the process of the liberation of Kurdistan, there is now regrowth ... new ground, new trunks, branches and leaves.

In Kurdistan, the tree is a symbol of life and of hope. Trees represent endurance, stability, power and continuation. They are deeply rooted into the earth and they reach into the sky.

In autumn, we see the leaves falling from the trees, but we know before too long there will be new leaves, new life. And when we see this new life, it brings relief and comfort.

Trees also provide for Kurdish families. They give us fruits and are a source of income for those who trade in the mountains.

There are spiritual meanings too. In the Holy Koran, there are olive trees and fig trees. In religion, the tree is sometimes a symbol of a good, reputable family.

And traditionally, trees are placed on people's graves.

What's more, we resemble trees. A tree begins as a child, and day by day it grows. Like the hopes we build in our hearts, a small tree needs protection until it grows.

And trees in Kurdistan must be strong to survive the elements. Trees teach us how to resist.

In fact, the symbol of the Kirkuk Centre for Torture Victims is a tree.

~ The counsellors of Kirkuk Center for Torture Victims¹⁵ (Kirkuk Center for Torture Victims & Dulwich Centre Foundation International, 2012, p. 11)

In reflecting on these histories, and in talking with Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo, we're now thinking about creating a tree image and text to represent the diverse histories of the Tree of Life narrative approach. The children of Masiye Camp and Soweto would be written on the roots, as would the camp counsellors of Masiye Camp, REPSSI, Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo, David Denborough, Noreen Huni, Siphelile Kaseke, Carmel Gaillard, Anne Hope and Sally Timmel, Paulo Freire, Michael White, David Epston, Cheryl White, Jonathan Brakarsh, Barbara Wingard, Shona Russell, the Just Therapy Team and Dulwich Centre.

The branches of the Tree of Life represent hopes, dreams or wishes. I hope this short history can spark yet further adaptations and the creation of new forms of metaphoric narrative practice. I hope it might encourage you to notice some aspect of treasured local folk culture in your own context, craft this into metaphor, infuse it with narrative practice principles, and in so doing create your own form of practice.

Dreaming of mobile counselling teams in South Africa

In recent years, Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo has continued to develop creative narrative practice methodologies. These have included combining the Suitcase Project (Clacherty, 2006; Clacherty, Suitcase Storytellers, & Welvering, 2006) with narrative practice and journey metaphors (see www.dulwichcentre.com.au/suitcase). More recently, working in partnership with six women living in informal settlements in northern Johannesburg, Ncazelo has developed the COURRAGE methodology. COURRAGE is a collective narrative way of working that has been developed to privilege the alternative stories of women who have faced significant hardships. It seeks to honour the strengths, skills and courage women show and use in the face of sorrow and grief. This methodology draws significantly from the work of Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) in which she describes 25 indigenous projects. Through the organisation PHOLA, Ncazelo is working to create mobile therapeutic counselling and development services that can reach the most disadvantaged and marginalised communities. By the year 2020 she aims to bring hope and restore the lives of at least 10 000 women and girls using the COURRAGE methodology. To learn more about this and/or to support this initiative, please contact ncazelo@yahoo.com

How REPSSI has used the Tree of Life

In 2005, REPSSI and Dulwich Centre published a manual for the Tree of Life. This project was led by Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo of REPSSI and David Denborough of Dulwich Centre. REPSSI works

in 13 countries in eastern and southern Africa using the Tree of Life. REPSSI has trained a significant number of skilled facilitators among REPSSI's implementing partners. For example, in Swaziland, the Tree of Life has been used in kids' clubs to help vulnerable children to identify and discuss their social connectedness, and to explore their strengths, skills and talents. In the same country, the Tree of Life has been used in training caregivers who work in neighbourhood care points. The Tree of Life has enabled the caregivers to understand the individual children they work with, and to identify the social relationships (within peer groups, families, clans and communities) that can be harnessed to maximise the care and protection of these children. In Botswana, the Tree of Life has been used extensively for retrospection and introspection before introducing other approaches. It has been used during psychosocial support camps for group counselling with children. In Tanzania, it has been used extensively as a self-awareness tool for facilitators before introducing other modules. Also in Tanzania, the Tree of Life has been used to support abused children who are passing through the casualty department. Save the Children in Tanzania uses the the Tree of Life as a case management tool to strengthen child protection processes. Finally, in South Africa, Tree of Life has been used in an after school club in Soweto to strengthen bonds and understanding between grandmothers and the grandchildren they are raising. The challenge for the grandparents was communication with their grandchildren who were misbehaving. The other challenge was that most of the children did not understand why they were being raised by their grandparents. The Tree of Life helped the children and grandparents to appreciate each other and enhanced communication.

Diverse Tree of Life initiatives in the UK

Many different communities in the UK have embraced the Tree of Life narrative approach in sparkling ways. So much so that there have already been two conferences held in London to showcase local Forests of Life! What has perhaps been most significant is that many of these initiatives have involved partnerships between workers and community members and have been peer led or co-led. For those wanting to know more about this, I've included here a number of references and links.

Adults living with HIV

The first Tree of Life project in the UK was a community project initiated by Georgia Iliopoulou and co-led with adults living with HIV:

Iliopoulou, G., Jovia, Kenny, Lucy, & Sandra. (2009). The tree of Life in a community context. *Context*, 105, 50–54.

Building on this initiative, Georgia Iliopoulou, Heleni Andreadi and Glenda Fredman have offered training in the approach.

Peer and community mental health work

Angela Byrne was then inspired to initiate the Trailblazer project in collaboration with African and Caribbean men in the UK:

Byrne, A., Warren, A., Joof, B., Johnson, D., Casimir, L., Hinds, C., Mittee, S., Jeremy, J., Afilaka, A., & Griffiths, S. (2011). "A powerful piece of work": African and Caribbean men talking about the "tree of life". *Context*, (October), 40–45.

Since then, service user co-produced Tree of Life groups have been formed within South London and Maudsley adult acute in-patient service: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ep9H4xL7lPo

Other peer mental health initiatives have been led by Yasmin Kapadia, Moeva Rinaldo and Cerdic Hall through Camden and Islington Recovery College.

Links with Uganda

The Tree of Life has been used to empower peer mental health champions in Uganda through Butabika–East London Link and Heartsounds Uganda:

Hall, C., Baillie, D., Basangwa, D., & Atakunda, J. (2016). Brain gain in Uganda: A case study of peer working as an adjunct to statutory mental health care in a low income country. In R. White, S. Jain, D. Orr, & U. Read (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook for global mental health: Sociocultural perspectives*. London, England: Palgrave MacMillan.

To learn more about the broader Butabika–East London Link and Heartsounds Uganda see this video: www.thet.org/media/videos/butabika-east-london-link-mental-health-peer-support-champions

With older adults

Clayton, M., Fredman, G., Martin, E., Anderson, E., Battistella, S., Johnson, S., Milton, A., & Rapaport, P. (2012). Systemic practice with older people: Collaboration, community and social movement. *PSIGE Newsletter*, 21, 20–26.

With people with learning disabilities

Baum, S., & Shaw, H. (2015). The tree of life methodology used as a group intervention for people with learning disabilities. *The Bulletin*, 13(1), 14–19.

With children and young people

Casdagli, L., Christie, D., Girling, I., Ali, S., & Fredman, G. (in press). Evaluating the Tree of Life Project for Children and Young People living with Type 1 Diabetes at UCLH: An innovative way of engaging young people with Diabetes. *Diabetes Care for Children and Young People*.

German, M. (2013). Developing our cultural strengths: Using the 'Tree of Life' strength-based, narrative therapy intervention in schools, to enhance self-esteem, cultural understanding and to challenge racism. *Educational and Child Psychology, 30*(4), 75–99.

Hughes, G. (2014). Finding a voice through 'The Tree of Life': A strength-based approach to mental health for refugee children and families in schools. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 19*(1), 139–153.

With parents

McFarlane, F., & Howes, H. (2012). Narrative approaches to group parenting work: Using the tree of life with 'hard-to-reach' parents. *Context, 123*, 22–25.

Believe it or not, this is only a small glimpse of the diverse community Tree of Life initiatives in the UK! We are very much looking forward to seeing what continues to emerge in coming years.

Notes

1. See www.dulwichcentre.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/using-the-tree-of-life-in-family-work.pdf
2. These include: the Team of Life (see www.dulwichcentre.com.au/team-of-life; Denborough, 2008), Seasons of Life (Abu-Rayyan, 2009), Recipes of Life (Rudland-Wood, 2012), Crossing the River (Hegarty, Smith, & Hammersley,

- 2010), *Kite of Life* (Denborough, 2010a), *Narratives in the Suitcase* (Ncube-Mlilo, 2014), *Smartphone of Life* (Tse, 2016), *Bicycle of Life* (Leger, 2016), *Beads of Life* (Portnoy, Girling, & Fredman, 2015) and *Mat of Life and Fair Winds* informed by wrestling and sailing metaphors developed in Brazil by Lúcia Helena Abdulla and *Recycling Minds*.
3. To read more about the life of Anne Hope see www.iol.co.za/capetimes/anne-hope-a-woman-of-substance-in-anti-apartheid-movement-1964986
 4. See www.repssi.org/about-us/
 5. The Dulwich Centre team consisted of Michael White, Cheryl White, Shona Russell and me.
 6. In her influential paper, 'The Tree of Life Project: Using narrative ideas in work with vulnerable children in southern Africa', Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo describes how she had been introduced to the 'Tree of Life' by a colleague and friend, Jonathan Brakarsh (Ncube, 2006, p. 6).
 7. I hesitate to use psychological terms developed in the West to describe experience elsewhere, but the scenes of the children retelling their trees, bereft of leaves, did seem to be quite a harrowing experience for both the children and witnesses.
 8. This is linked to what are known as 'saying hullo again' (M. White, 1988a) or 'remembering' conversations (M. White, 2007) in narrative practice.
 9. Sally Timmel and Anne Hope were profoundly influenced by Paulo Freire and the field of popular education has involved the practical implementation of Freirian principles. Our work at Dulwich Centre Foundation is also influenced by Paulo Freire. Although I am sure Freire would challenge us about whether we do enough to ensure that our ways of working are relevant to and resonant with the most marginalised, and also whether we are doing enough to speak and sustain social movement beyond the status quo (see Denborough, 2008; Freire, 1999).
 10. Jonathan Morgan from REPSSI was influential in putting together this manual, which can be found here: www.pacificdisaster.net/pdnadmin/data/original/REPSSI_2007_Tree_life.pdf
 11. See www.dulwichcentre.com.au/tree-of-life
 12. See www.facebook.com/groups/TreeofLifeNarrativeApproach/
 13. To read about the biblical Tree of Life, see Lanfer (2012).
 14. According to Manuel Lima (2014, p. 18), a key element of Kabbalah wisdom is the Tree of Life, 'an image composed of a diagram of 10 circles, symbolising 10 pulses, or emanations, of divine energy'.
 15. This centre has now changed its name to the Jiyan Foundation: www.jiyan-foundation.org