

Treasure Island Pedagogies Episode 29

Podcast Transcript

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Tünde Varga-Atkins

Hi, this is Tünde Varga-Atkins and this is. Episode 29 of our Treasure Island Pedagogies podcast series from the Centre of Innovation. In education at the University of Liverpool, where we share our light bulb movements, teaching props and pedagogies as we cohabit our Treasure Island, the space for contact time with students, we have 3 guests today, Karen Clinkard, Louise Younie, and Russell Crawford. And can I ask everyone of you to please just briefly? Introduce your name and your role.

Karen Clinkard

Hi, I'm Karen Clinkard. I'm a principal teaching fellow at the University of Southampton and I teach marketing.

Louise Younie

Hi there. I'm Louise Younie. I'm a GP and a professor of medical education at Queen Mary, University of London.

Russell Crawford

Hello there. I'm Russell Crawford. I'm an associate professor of education at Falmouth University. And Pro Vice Chancellor of academic services.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Great. Thank you, everybody. And we look forward to our discussion. And so let's let's hear some of your light bulb moments. As we said, light bulb moments is is when you have as an educator or yourself as a learner that that experience of of people are getting it. What? Not learn that particular learning episode is about and. Can you share some of these with us please some of? These moments.

Karen Clinkard

So do you want? Me to go first. OK, so it was actually when I was there, I used this term pracademic, A practitioner academic. Being a student myself. So as somebody who'd worked in marketing in various technology companies including IBM and being. Need redundant. I needed a new way of life and the university. I was recruited by was actively looking for people who had relevant professional background to come into. And none of the trade of of teaching. So I was doing my PCI did that and then I was doing a masters in research methods and I was at the time the course leader for three undergraduate cohorts, marketing, marketing with psychology and digital marketing students, which was a new programme. So we started to qualitatively research and interview those students who came back from placement to ask them what had they learned, what had they developed, what was different in their experience between pre replacement during placement and now what were their aspirations for the final year. Pre graduation and listening to their stories was my like bold moment listening to them exploding my assumptions and presumptions about what they would say about working in either a very small business context. Or a very. Large, well known business context and I thought they would say widely different things and they weren't. And that's what then helped me develop my thinking and approach. And it's always been something I want to be able to do the the premise of of this broadcast was something along the lines of being on a Treasure Island with students. So I would want to have a conversation. I really understood what had they experienced and what difference did it make. Is in my normal classroom teaching contacts. I don't always get time to have those one to one kind of real story telling opportunities. So yeah, that's neat.

Russell Crawford

Would you mind if? I go next and please like to come back to the pre academic thing. Something that very much interests me coming from a in a creative arts background that we get an awful lot of our staff are in that area. So my lightbulb moment was teaching other teachers so my although my original degrees pharmacology and biomedical science. Teaching them I've been I've been spent many years doing academic development and teaching and designing postgraduate certificates in higher education and Masters in education and my all time favourite thing. And it still is my all time favourite thing to do is essentially a lecture on how to give a. Picture and that's setting a very dangerous bar cause a you've got to do it well, you're absolutely walking the walk, but you spend the 1st 15 minutes giving them what they think is the most boring lecture in history. And then what you do is you do a Derren brown Esque twist 15 minutes in and deconstruct what you did for 15

minutes. And in way of teaching everything from the fact that nothing is random, that their body language and their slide selections and the laser point. There and the the psychology, the biology, the pedagogy, all coming together there. It's really interesting for teachers that are fairly new to teaching at higher education to realise you don't just rock up and start talking, that there's a lot of preparation and there's a lot of awareness of how technology can bite you in the backside if you're not careful. And when it fails, what's your Plan B and the reality you have to have a plan. B. So it. Was one of my all time favourite things to do because at the end of it, what? It what it? Highlighted was that it wasn't as easy as. It looked to give a lecture.

Louise Younie

Yeah. And maybe maybe I'll come. Sorry in on that, just on the on the stories thing picking up the sort of story thread, I guess. Uh, uh, my light bulb really was, UM, well, I thought to be a good doctor. You had to know stuff. You have to be able to diagnose and treat. And the light bulb kind of came. I became an academic and a GP at the same time and it. Came as I realised that it's very complex and messy and there was a lot of things that did not fit into the the tidy little boxes that I had been taught and and. And and then going back into being an academic and an educator and wondering how do I educate students for the messiness and complexity of practise? And I'm not sure how to do it. So we started using the arts and, Umm, started exploring what I call creative inquiry methodologies and through that sort of enabling both student stories and patient stories and. And to be honest, it's been light bulb. After light bulb after light bulb, even to you know 20 plus well, 20 years down the line and I'm sort of this week been looking at the things that students were saying and it's it's and the things that they're going through and the challenge and what I discovered is as I tried to humanise the patients. The students also were humanised through these creative inquiry methodologies, and so I've been exploring person centred care. On the one hand, while that's where I started and then I've ended up with human flourishing and trying to move the ball from resilience towards human flourishing for the clinicians. So that's that's my sort of light bulbs.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Heavy on pick all three because I think you're really mentioned really interesting approaches and I guess I don't know whether in reverse order just because UMI think the connection seems between Karen and Louise yours that you you talk about the human as in the whole students and then we could come back to Russell to your lecture approach as well so. Lewis, can you give us a little bit more detail about your creative inquiry approach?

Louise Younie

Which? Yeah, so it started by exploring. Well, I did my masters as I designed a course. So it's like a two week course with students. I've been running it for over 15 years where I engage with arts therapists, arts for health consultants, drama, music, whatever. And I also facilitate. And I set up the environment. I do a lot of work around making it safe. Talking about process rather than product, I talk about vulnerable leadership. I think about being an artist of the invisible as you try to hold a transformative space. And so students engage with all of this. And I I'm just setting up for the next course in February. So I've been running it many times and it's where I've learned the most about students and creative inquiry and where I've explored and experimented. So they have an opportunity to hear how the arts are used with patients, but the biggest bigger part of the journey is where they do their own poetry, for example, and then reflect on it. And what I've discovered is there's no faster way that I found to get people talking about the human dimension of healthcare. So, you know, they learn all the stuff that they're supposed to know and all the things that they're supposed to do. But actually how we are with patients and and engaging with that human so. I know, for example, the trauma that people go through the how you know how that leads to mental health problems. Often people are boxed up, so it just opens things up and the students themselves open up. So it's it's really profound. And I'm just reading a piece from last week that the student talking about resilience and how that that. Sense of how you have to really be tough and they all feel like they have to be that and macho and actually that there might be another way. So I've constructed. A flourishing a little flourishing uh five point model that I sometimes explained well, I explained to the students and we explore.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I wonder if you might have an example of some of this. So is it the poetry with the students that you that they write on some particular topics or things that they come across as an issue as a as a GP candidate?

Louise Younie

Yeah. So it's all medical students across the and. And so I do it in different ways and the special course there are different. Topic so it could be on addiction, it could be on the wounded healer. It could be on trying to think we have a photographer that comes in and talks about patient lived experience. It's all lived experience essentially and so they might write poetry. They might collage, they might do some kind of artwork, they might sculpt. And then I also invited across the year group with uh people on GP placement

and so they have an option of rather than just writing a written reflection, you know how students just make things up to sound or they get chat GP to write it. So I invite them to actually do a creative inquiry piece where they and basically it means that they have two languages. So not just written. So they have to do the written reflection with it, but they create something as well, so inviting that creative process to get at. The whole. So I can share examples but.

Russell Crawford

Isn't that a great example of diversity of assessment, though, in a different way? Because you're essentially giving them a chance to demonstrate their learning, where it's not necessarily traditional written piece or even the traditional performative piece, but they can pick and then picking that tells them it gives them a reflective opportunity. But it also gives them a way to demonstrate their understanding. Of the learning that you're trying to impart.

Louise Younie

That's amazing. I've never. I haven't quite sort of pushed that that boat, but I love that I've been doing it since I've invited that since 2004 and I've never used the words I'm doing diversity of assessment. So thank you so much. That's wonderful, but what I did discover is, you know, so lots of medics and even GPS might think this is a waste of time. And why would you do this? But actually, after about six years of running this course and feeding it in and putting on the website and sharing it back, about 90% of students were choosing it in general and quite a few of those were not all profound, but quite a few, you know, really profound.

Russell Crawford

Well, if you think about it, what it does is it neutralises language barriers. Start so if I can. If I can elect to to go through the motions of your course and not have to write a lot. And that's not my confident area, but I can sculpt instead. Or I can give you some sort of image based interpretation. You've you've just welcomed and and again we're we're all seeing post post COVID the sense of belonging is a big thing you've just welcomed. People to your course, but going actually, it's not really how well you write in English based on your background, but it's it's how much you can impart those ideas of the hesitate to use a phrase, but the the the gain in learning that they've had across your course.

Louise Younie

I'm writing this down. This is really helpful.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

For me, yeah, I was. I was going. OK. I'm sorry.

Karen Clinkard

Go on. I was going to say that actually, I'm. I'm having a bit of another light bulb. My myself because I'm thinking fine. I haven't connected that. In my own research, because very selfishly. I was thinking when you come to the question about what's our chosen pedagogy, I was going to propose my own, which is very simple and very self promotion, but then I'm a marketer, so I forgive my. Yeah, but when I connect what you're both saying, although this is my notebook, I'm thinking what I'm asking students to do is very narrative based. It's very much right. And tell me a story of a time when you have demonstrated XYZ and those XYZ's are five point models and.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Of course we do.

Karen Clinkard

To Louise, if we didn't hear what your model is, I will come. But it's it's called agile AGI LE so I I tried to beam from those interviews with those students. What what kind of areas that seem to be ones where which would help students if they wrote a story about it and they perhaps came to an interview with someone to give them an example. That they could prove they were a adaptable, D8GA gatherer of people or ideas or resources. I that they have an understanding of their current past and future aspiration, identity and what communities of practise do they want to belong to or do they need to belong to in order to achieve that new identity? To what extent then does that need them to leverage being a lifelong learner and then the final? One is E to what extent they could demonstrate they've been enterprising of some way, so opportunistic creative problem solving critical thinker. Not just that, they've done some kind of start up challenge at some point in life, so thinking about more more. Conversely, go ahead, Russell.

Russell Crawford

Well, I'm just thinking what you're doing there is outlining A reflective model, a brand new reflective model and one of the biggest challenges certainly in my career across several universities is getting staff and students to use a reflective model as a scaffold because everybody thinks they can reflect until you try and then they can't reflect or they find that it's very superficial. But your agile model is a really tight little reflective model in practise, that'd be quite interesting to see how that that was tested.

Karen Clinkard

Very much happy to share it. It is a reflective narrative tool. I've got seminar guidance to you to guidance, student guidance, journal papers the lot. So yeah. Self promotion. There we go.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah. Is there anything that current that you wanted to pick out maybe? Well we here we can might as well talk a little bit more about it because I think that's your broad pedagogy as well for the islands.

Karen Clinkard

Yeah, because I think if we're connecting all these pieces together and hopefully I'll remember all the different pieces because I didn't write notes, but. If we're thinking about reflection, yes, there's lots of different ways to do it, and the typical models we teach students can do it in a very kind of surface, not very deep, not very insightful level if it's done, if, if the assessment guidance is given in a fairly surface way. So if students should be forgiven for that. So. If it's then going to be more of a conversation. So you mentioned the word assessment. I've used agile both within assessed learning first year undergraduate students on business programmes, about 600 of them secondary students who are just pre placement application thinking about the personal professional development. I've not used it with final year students. I've used it with a cohort postgrad students, but I've also had it as a kind of sideline, just a conversation starter between myself and my personal two Tees, so it doesn't have to be part of the assessment either. So I think maybe taking our pedagogies and our learning and our understanding of of that kind of. Empathy journey really actually taking time to listen to someone else's story. And so I'm taking away from what Louise was saying. Maybe I adapt the model to include ways for people to be more diverse and inclusive in coming up with different approaches to sharing their narrative with me. But I hope that then it there's two things it then becomes. Something they can go back to and edit because it's an online cloud sharing

like a Google form Microsoft form server. They they can choose to share it with a placement, tutor Careers Officer, interview. They can put it into their social media profile, they come back and change it over time, future employers. But secondly, it becomes then for us from the research side kind of a thesaurus, a glossary of terms expressed. In the way in which students talk about employability and entrepreneurial skill development, because we use the term employability in higher education, the students don't talk about career poor employability. It's just not their language. So the more students share their narratives with me, the more I'm learning. Thing then ways I should talk about it that are more relatable. When I'm in that conversation, so I'll stop there.

Russell Crawford

It's interesting the potential for that over longitudinally isn't it, because in essence what you're getting is a reflection of the change in the sector and the change in the expectations for employers as they, the students, because you're right, the students don't understand or really. Use that language very much, but they do. Bit and in that longitudinal development phase, what you'll get is a is A is a reflection of what the employers are asking for, what the students understand by that, they're going into employment over time, which is in any given 3-4 year status could it's typical life expectancy of a standard higher education course. Stick a stick a crisis in. The middle. Whether that's cost of living, whether that's anything else, and you'll see a change in in, not.

Karen Clinkard

I have got pre and post COVID data actually. Yeah, very good point. But I think also I want to emphasise that it's not only about being employed because it can also be being a freelancer, being a consultant, being self-employed or working for a very micro business as well where you may be a founder or a shareholder or. So creator. So it's not not only about going out there and working for someone else.

Russell Crawford

My chosen pedagogy just because I think it it links. Sorry. Today it links very well with that is gamification for learning. So not all of learning because that's gamification of learning. Is things like snakes and ladders top Trump's sticking a sticking a leading context on gamification is designing the game to the bit of learning that you need. That that's terrifyingly flexible because it can be anything. And so I'd say to bring a a wipeable deck of cards with me

because there's not a lot you can't do, whether reusable marker or a set of blank cards, whether that's text based or image based. And that's something that my research. Things and I in this space are very interested in what's the difference in understanding. You can show a picture of a bicycle or a pen, but if you actually write the words and you get all the context and the connotations and the understanding and all the surrounding context, take that into a a game and the the the one I'm thinking of here we've called. Oracle is about listening. Skills, negotiation and listening skills and what happens with Oracle is a deck of cards with words on it. In this case, although we're working on an image version, it's played around sets of people, and we've tried this with all sorts of age ranges to create collaboratively create a narrative story. Now, at first you're doing. Listening skills because you're trying to remember where the story's going, because you're coming up and you're around and it goes. Regular and, but then eventually at the end you're starting to collaborate, and in some cases, what's the term collaboration? It gets collaborative, but it's also competitive at the same time. But it to collaboratively create this collaboration collaboration.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Say it again.

Russell Crawford

But that, that, that. Gamified learning. We've got games on listening, communication skills, games on ethical decision making, games on deductive reasoning, and they're designed to the piece of learning that you need, and I think that's where the quality comes in. Then you get a game that does a thing very well, although you know, certainly I'll share on this one we had. A pharmacology based game. The very first game was pharmacology based match up the drug mechanism with the name of the drug, with its side effects, and you've terrifying how many people got that wrong. Even at the, you know, the at the staff level right up until the first exposure to the first set of. I think it's third year medical students turned it into a drinking game against their will. It's not acceptable. You're not allowed to turn other people's educational games into drinking games. We had to actually make that announcement.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Especially with with healthy pharmacologists, yeah.

Louise Younie

So so can I ask a question? How are you designing the games? And now that ChatGPT has arrived, is that very different cause you mentioned like a deck of cards, which sounds not very chat. GT that sounds.

Russell Crawford

We were lucky when we started on the gamification. It was well, well, pre covered and so we were into physical games. So the cards. The boards the the sort of interactions and the the the physicality, mainly because that that scaled very nicely with the size of the group playing 345. Folks around then, when COVID hit that became very problematic and we tried to and we did make some electronic versions of our games, which were were really worked, but in a different way. And that's and you're either going to make a decision there, either all your educational research is now going to be how it works differently in an online or versus an in person context. Or you let enough oceans flow enough under enough bridges and you get back to what you were really after, which is does a communication and listening skills game measurably improve both of those metrics? And that's sort of where we we ended with it. So they're physical games, low tech. Easy to do, easy to replicate, to keep cost down as well. And one of the one of the eye openers for us when we started the the games collected games are called brain slip games with a colleague from Keele University. One of the big eye openers was that we were anticipating a university buying copies and copies and copies of these games down the line. In reality, the students wanted their own copy and the 2nd that came on deck, you could not start charging students a lot of money for for game they if it's adding their learning then it's OK that's a different ethos. You started to become a bit more student centric and that ethos.

Louise Younie

And how did you get into it? I don't. I'm still interested in this gamification. I'm allowed to ask.

Speaker

It was. It was.

Russell Crawford

The need, I mean my, as I said earlier, my degree is pharmacology and one thing and you might you might disagree, but one thing first and second year medical students struggle with is the pharmacology because they start to

learn it in a line that now seek them all has this mechanism. If you can agree on it and this set of side effects, and So what we wanted to do was test that learning by actually swapping it around, I'll give you the mechanism. You tell me the name of the. And when we did that, you could you should see the the success rate for the knowledge and there's the same drugs just just reversed overnight and then the side effects at the pharmacy students loved the side effects. They got them right all the time. But the medical students were a bit more hit and miss some of the side effects. And So what they were doing is learning patterns because yeah, OK, a lot of early years. Undergrads is pattern recognition and applying it. What the game forced them to do was understand. Actually this is what Propranolol does. And that you either you don't have to then learn it in this linear way and if you test it in a linear way, which is what our assessment at the time was. Doing you get the. Answer But goodness help you if somebody tested it in a non linear way. Next thing you know, performance on that exam question not so good and and even worse performance on the knowledge in a clinical environment not so quick. So that was where but we we designed the game to the the learning need rather than come up with the game first.

Karen Clinkard

And interestingly, I took the idea of gamification when I was first researching this whole agile tool as well, and I thought about an online platform almost like a mixing deck where students would be able to see one another and would be able to see one other scores, not necessarily their narratives that could be.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

OK so.

Karen Clinkard

You know, privately owned and then not so that it's a race to. Be the top will be the winner and be the strongest or have the highest ranking skills, but more of an opportunity to learn well one. Why have you ranked yourself as really high in this aspect, but really low in that aspect where I'm the opposite? So what could I learn from you so it could be a peer sharing? Thought I did also think about the the monetization of it and the idea that, you know, I don't know. The HEA advance HG would buy it and it would suddenly become a UK wide tool and it would be sharper. Yeah, he never really went that far. I I think with the if there can be. Benefits and values of the kind of open cloud sharing iterative machine learning environment that

we're in. My understanding is. AI tools. The more it's fed useful information, the more likely it is to spit out or produce better, more informed output, and so it should be a sort of a self fulfilling prophecy. Eventually we're going to go through lots of different phases where there's going to be. Kind and over reliance of some students on the content that it's given as first draught. Or I'll just take that, I'll whack that in and that will be good enough. But then eventually what they're getting out will be better, but I think it's really important for us that this kind of juncture to to be emphasising to students that we still need you to apply origin and genuine authentic self and understanding and your informed arguments. Around why this content is what it is and. And how can you improve it? How can you make it better so it it's a bit of a strange environment worrying, but I think being totally anti all of those tools is not the way forward because we have to accept it's it's our new reality.

Speaker

It's it's here.

Karen Clinkard

It's the the analogy I use is calculators. Mathematicians didn't stop doing.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, I'm guessing, Karen.

Karen Clinkard

Maths when calculators came out, yeah.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah. And I I'm guessing if you were using your approach to listening to what students are doing for real, then that's would be the reality. We would be hearing. And as you say that development of the critical capability in the students is the important thing, so. So we have started growing towards the islands without teaching props and pedagogies, so we've got Karens reflecting tool and Russell's gamification for learning, especially with the back of card example. What other teaching props or pedagogies would you like to bring to the island?

Russell Crawford

Or can I get? Can I put my favourite one in there? The one that's just the absolute best? We gotta bring a laser pointer. Even even on about Ireland, there's nothing more liberating than how invisible you are when you've got a laser. Printer because you're directing the psychology of attention is really interesting thing, but you're directing attention with that laser pointer wherever you put it and whether the analogy is cats on YouTube following it around the room or whatever. If you want to be invisible as an educator, grab a laser pointer and start pointing it almost anywhere, including ideally somewhere where there's some information that's relevant. With them, and Oh my goodness, I always got one in the pocket for that reason. It's fantastic. You can disappear. I can binge you with a laser pointer.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, that's an oxymoron, isn't it? Because you are disappearing but appearing. Because by calling attention. So. So I love that I love that. OK, great. So yeah, we've got a laser pen. Anything else?

Louise Younie

Can I? Yeah, I'd. I'd like to bring a set. I have a little set of. Collected postcards of all different kinds of images from and some old photos. Some student images that they've created over the years. Some actual postcards or whatever. And they're so it's such a powerful way into the creative inquiry space because people, particularly medics, perhaps or people that think that they're not in the not creative initially, can sometimes be a bit nervous when you start talking creative inquiry, but just about anyone could pick a postcard and I frame it and set it up quite well. But but just as a very simple. Exercise of like choose. Choose a postcard that resonates with your lived experience as a medical student and or as an educator or as a clinician, or as A and it it it very power. And then in small groups to discuss and the metaphor and that you know people. Just always enjoy that, Neil. Not not everyone, but most people really enjoy the kinds of conversations that then so you'll always end up on the on your Treasure Island. You'll always end having being in spaces where people are having really interesting conversations.

Karen Clinkard

I think our dad, in terms of playfulness, our dad in some kind of writable board, whether that's a virtual whiteboard or a physical one with lots of pens of different colours. So that not only eye but students in the room can add notes and add drawings and play with the content that we're think. About I I really find it compelling when I've got even a very large postgraduate set of

students in front of me in in a more traditional lecture setting, but I'll draw some sort of comical, seasonally relevant random drawing it whilst I'm waiting for the students to settle down and and, you know, get get ready for the set. And I'm not very good at drawing, but I just click my hand and do a few bits and you hear a chuckle and you can hear people sort of just calming down and and starting to look forward and thinking, ohh, that's fun. And then they get their phones out and they take an image of it. And and when they ask you a question. So I think keeping playfulness. And in every environment would be really helpful.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Definitely. That sounds great, actually. Yeah. And. And also, just again that you're paying attention to where students are in terms of their being as they arrived. You're so having that almost like a liminal space between their previous. Existence and then coming to your class and how you transition them to focus. That's really interesting. OK. Any other would you like to do any bothering between your items or anything in addition that we could? So we've got laser pointers that reflective tools, I'm guessing Louise you might have in addition to your postcards, lots of arty, crafty things on the islands. So that the students could do their creativeness. Anything else.

Russell Crawford

Definitely. Yeah. Well, can I suggest that we take it all and put it in a big pile in the middle of the island, sort of like a sort of a nice educational Hunger Games. And then people can. People can run up and and pick. The the style of teaching tool they want.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

You're bringing that competition again back.

Russell Crawford

So I said it I. Said it, I said in a nice way. Collaboration.

Karen Clinkard

The whole games idea of it. That's quite good. I I I know that in the planning for this session I you asked what was our luxury item? I don't know. That's what you're asking now. But definitely for me music, the ability to have music during the session during the time in the background. I'm a huge fan of soul music and Motown. So that's my go to.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yes. Shall we? No, I mean, we can. We can morph into now. Yeah.

Karen Clinkard

And I also am rather secretly, but not very secretly in love with Dan. Girl and the Foo Fighters. So any chance I can to kind of bring in? I'll play a video because it's thematically relevant to the lecture topic and I shoehorn it in and talk about my love of the man. So yeah, my husband's well aware.

Russell Crawford

Karen, you're making me feel old. I used to let my medics into every lecture and I play them the war of the world. The the eve of the war on the way in and then 70s funk every other time. Let me just say that the the generation in the early 2000s didn't appreciate it the same way I did.

Karen Clinkard

And I think it's it's part of our role as educators to also educate them on really good music. That's a contextually relevant point.

Russell Crawford

They they get. Biggest mistake I've made as a brand new teacher way, way back when Saint Andrews Medical School in the 90s and I'd showed a picture of from Ghostbusters until I realised no, not a single person in that room was alive. Ghostbusters was was new and it was a whole you learn a valuable lesson as a teacher about currency without being too hit, but definitely some of the some of the older stuff goes over their heads.

Karen Clinkard

Ghostbusters has had a revival.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

OK. So in terms of, so this is sort of as I love this idea of almost like bringing your luxury item because you're bringing your identity as an educator. We talked about listening and having an understanding of students experience while also connecting with the students. I think that's so valuable. In terms of, let's also talk about. Relaxing. So this is you off duty as an educator. So what

would you do away from teaching and and I, I guess, Karen, you would dance to the end of time. So that's not a problem. But any any other?

Karen Clinkard

Sing loudly. No one's listening. Dance like no one's watching. Absolutely. Yeah. And. And I've learned when? When I've done an online lecture.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

So any other luxury items? Yeah, go ahead.

Karen Clinkard

With the Dave Grohl and the Foo Fighters and the video, and I'm sitting in the background forgetting that my camera is still on and my mic's still on and it's gone recording. I've got ohh on. No need to go back and take the notice. So embarrassing it's.

Russell Crawford

Just authenticity. Just call authenticity. That murder. I think. I think if you're doing all the dancing. Then the music. I'll be 1 beach over trying to very quietly build Lego. Which is great because I've taken up fairly recently as a mindfulness at all. It doesn't matter. It can be anything, doesn't be like it could be. Knitting could be anything at all. But yeah, something to. Take your mind out of. The current in a way and somewhere else I just find it so relaxing to do that and it doesn't hurt that Harry Potter Lego was really, really cool.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I was gonna ask, do you have sets to build some particular things or do you just take your Lego sets and create whatever?

Russell Crawford

I think. I think that's that's highly personal today. So again. In the lines right now is a full size Hogwarts Castle in Lego. It's it's getting out of hand. I might need an intervention.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Sounds great. OK, Louise, any luxury items for you?

Louise Younie

Yeah. Well, I I I couldn't nail it down to one, I'm afraid. So there's sort of crosses over all of the different things you said. I've I'll bring my guitar, which I hardly ever get around to playing or not as much as I'd like to. So I could bit of singing and playing and bring my bike to get around. I love. Cycling. I do. That's not really a break. I do that all the time. But chocolate? I'm allowed to bring something nice to eat and maybe maybe some kind of crocheting will work. Knitting easy. Something to like? Yeah, so.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Sounds. Yeah. Sounds idyllic for the island. So we will be plenty for with music, Lego, and all sorts of crafts and things, yeah.

Karen Clinkard

I'm liking this collectively. I'm I'm there when when are? We going? Yes. There's chocolate, there's music. This crocheting here.

Louise Younie

It's we're talking about flourishing, aren't we? We're back on the flourishing tracks, like making a space for flourishing.

Karen Clinkard

Just imagine if you could just go completely white. Sheet blank sheet. Start again and every single class time interaction had all of those things in. The middle of. The room. And then you started your session. Yeah, but you tried to engage in that. I suppose the only one downside I'm seeing is I'm thinking about the example of Lego on why really lovely friends. Tammy. China she's developed a range of learning and IT tools around using. Ago and my husband's passion is landscape photography, but he now is a photographer of properties for his business. So there's that. Divide between keeping something that you really enjoy for yourself that helps take you away from work and not wanting to bring that into work. You know there's there's a a line between it. It suddenly being part of work instead of part of your personal downtime.

Russell Crawford

I don't understand what personal downtime is, Kevin. It's it went the way the dodo were. Long time. I do like the idea though. If you put all that in the same

classroom. What would the exam look like? It wouldn't look like we call it knowledge. It would look like understanding and comprehension. It would look like collaboration and the way it measured that it wouldn't be factual recall.

Louise Younie

I mean, well, we got to do all the factual recall, but it would be good to kind of be able to. Build understanding of the. As I started with the complexity and the messiness of what we're trying to do so. We do more good than harm, perhaps.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I mean, Russell, that's what you were talking about as well, that with linear learning, the difference between linear and applied learning, I guess as well, so how you how you can nurture that with whatever tools you have available available.

Russell Crawford

Mean. I just remember years past arguments with colleagues, professional arguments with. Things around problem based learning, which is a way that sometimes other not just medics but other other people learn and it's it's a great way to teach, but it's a really difficult thing to ask. Yes, because the definition of problem based learning is this. The group sets their own learning goals. So how do you assess that you can't have an exam that's unique to every 12 people. You've got to have as accessible learning outcomes at the end. And I sometimes think that the the way the system's wired up right now, it doesn't actually reward enough of the reflection of the confidence. Of the the journey, when you're when you're so focused on the end point and yes, OK, there's an employability or or sort of graduate aspect to that, but they'll get that on route anyway.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I mean, Louise, do you have anything from your perspective? Cause I guess with your approach with the medics that you will have to do some of the professional body requirements to meet for the students. So it's but it it's more. Yeah.

Louise Younie

So. So obviously they do need to. I mean, I was joking about facts and skills. They do need to have the. Facts and skills. They do need to be able to practise in professional ways. I think. UM, we do a lot around teaching those and you know, we could do better on that. But I think the thing that's always feels to be missing and is a challenge to do in in clinical practise. Is around understanding that human dimension so. We overvalue. The pharmacology, for example, overvalue the drugs and the treatments, and we undervalue the things that people can do to help themselves and the the ways in which inequity and injustice and other things are impacting impacting people. So it's very easy for medics to become very tunnel vision and then it takes to sort of. Years of practise before you realise that there's the picture isn't as quite as clear cut as that. So that's the bit that I'm working on and also to kind of I I think at a time where there is massive burnout, massive lack of belonging, loneliness, certainly within medicine, there's a huge kind of burnout with for medical medical students. And it's a real worry. And then this sort of narrative of resilience and how you have to tough it through, you need to be strong and push through. Which actually is causing more, I think trauma and anxiety and and people then don't share their challenges and their needs and they feel like they have to be tough. And so I'm trying to come in and maybe that work is almost more important. It's becoming that that is more important almost than the person centred work. Because, you know, students are so relieved when they can, so one of them, I didn't go through the model, but one of the the one that I have that other people don't have is shadow work I have in my flourishing model. I have connection and meaning and all those other things that other people have, the shadow work engaging with that, which is that we're uncomfortable about in our situation or in ourselves and the arts and the creative inquiry in a safe space. In a group where people are listening to each other, where people. Find actually, it's very, very powerful and you realise that lots of people are suffering with imposter syndrome. Lots of people are worrying about the exam. They haven't all got it all together and actually by just diffusing all of those expectations and tension is very powerfully healing. And so. So that's where, that's where I'm sort of trying to come. In I suppose it's interesting.

Russell Crawford

That when you open up that well. Miller, what's sitting under it? Because more and more of the literatures pointing at personal effectiveness and well-being rather than necessarily like resilience or handling stress or however you, what's your coping strategies, actually what, what does it take for you to be personally effective? What does it take for you to self? Decide. Actually, this is too much for me. I'm going to take a step back or this is stressing me

out and triggering me and why? And I do like that. Idea. It sounds like an interesting, interesting model.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Think it's so powerful, what you know is that example because as you say, this partly, uh, a tool for them to use with patients. But as you said, it's also for themselves. And then just when you talked about putting perhaps some of those emotions that you have to they they. Have to come across as as doctors by the trauma patients experience and then turning into poetry. So it's there. There seemed to be a lot of. Emotional or other ways of accessing knowledge that they can work with that seems quite powerful.

Louise Younie

For me, it's kind of head, hand and heart and will. So William Osler talked about that many, many years ago. But you know, we often get stuck just in the head, but that isn't, you know, when where do we put the emotions, you know, where do we? We can't. That's probably. You know, you're more likely to die of liver cirrhosis. As a doctor than your patient. But I think part of that is this is my theory that it is the pressures and the stresses and we have nowhere to put those. We don't think we should. Deal with those emotions and then how do we help our patients deal with their emotions if we are sort of shut up and can't deal with our own. So it feels like it's a double whammy if if we can start being human with ourselves, then we can help our patients realise the impact of the things that they've been through.

Karen Clinkard

And all of this, I think comes back. To to sharing. Opportunities to if we go right back to the start of our conversations, but listening and hearing the stories. But quite often, if you're stressed with something, having a moment where someone else asks you a question, whether it's directly, explicitly about the thing you're concerned about or it just comes out as part of the conversation. And hearing yourself say it out loud. Would is quite often an opportunity either whether you want it or not for the person to respond gives them advice. Make a recommendation, as we all know, it's easier to, you know, advise someone on their own problems than it is to deal with their own. But hearing yourself express what it is you're challenged with is an opportunity for you to actually become aware of it. And then perhaps have a conversation that goes further or just start some thinking that you take off and do on your own about this. So that whole kind. I would use the word empathy again. The idea that you know you're trying to make connections. I

think the other thing I've seen with a lot of students, particularly undergrads who've had this very unusual journey into higher education because they had an odd GCSE. Final year or they had an odd a level final year or they had first year impacted where they were put completely virtual and didn't meet their fellow students. And due to the pandemic, there's a lot of anxiety and a lot of social concern. And and some of that isn't always sort of seen or understood. And so having those moments where you do get to take off, your army, university lecturer and just be a human being or a a parent, you know, not a parent to then, but you're a parent yourself. So you have that level of empathy for someone who's going through the journey.

Russell Crawford

It's an interesting, isn't it? There's a there's a phrase in psychology literature, inattentional blindness, and it's like most of most of life is going past it at 1,000,000 miles an hour, and you don't really need every piece of information you're exposed to. How much of listening to someone else's story are we filtering through? Need to know, might need to know later. Actually, that's not relevant to me. And just the just the whole application of that inattentional blindness and attention, it's a, it's a limited resource and listening to someone else's story is exhausting and it takes a lot out of you, but it's rewarding at. The same leisure. And it's it's maybe this new generation need a bit more direction on that?

Louise Younie

And I think maybe getting into so getting into flow and having so through the creative expression just actually having that we talked about mindful, but actually through their writing a poem or you know constructing A collage or whatever. So many of them write about it being a spy. This to breathe a space to process a space to reflect, because it's going at 1,000,000 miles an hour for them as well. It's like someone described it a few years ago as starting university. It's like as a medical student. It was like a light has switched on the whole time and this course was a chance to kind of switch off the light and just like, but actually then process some of the things that are bothering them and and. So it's that sort of shadow work then, because you don't have to fully say it through the, you know, like when you're expressing, you don't have to nail it out and like, write it all out. So it makes it safer to kind of touch around the edges of the bits that feel potentially a bit difficult.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I mean visually what I have in mind on this island is coming. Continuing Russell's laser pen metaphor, that red light that because, Louise, you were talking about this creating a safe space where where the students can have their own bubbles or a space where you create it between you. So like the this listening safe experimental space, when they sort of had can hang up that. I'm a student. I have to do things I have to do assessment, but having this creative space to be to become and to almost like process things as a learner and process things in their own life. And that's not that's not a space in our exam driven school that students have had too. So almost like I can imagine. Creating or we have created this space on the islands you are you are creating these spaces so I think that sounds like a really, really important space for for students and for ourselves as well. But if you listen to.

Louise Younie

I'm calling it. I'm calling this flourishing spaces, so I'm trying to create spaces in higher education for flourishing spaces, so like students, staff art exhibitions or, you know, creative inquiry space doesn't all have to be, you know, it can be just where you're really doing really good listening and sharing or or whatever. But flourishing spaces, and I think they do need to be built in more than ever because everything else is going so fast we actually.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

OK, great.

Louise Younie

Need to. Thankfully, bring them into place, so I'm sort of trying to research and explore what they are. I don't you know, and, but I think it's a.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Useful concept, so maybe we can call out for our listeners as well to share some of the their flourishing spaces or the spaces that they have created and maybe we could gather these some somehow together. We are actually doing.

Louise Younie

That would be amazing.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Our annual islands of Innovation festival in May the 10th, so I can sort of call attention to it. So maybe. We could call call all all on all. Sorry. Call on all of you who are doing something on this and any of the any of the other examples you've mentioned to come and present and bring your ideas to share with others at the at the festival. So that probably concludes I think that's a lovely image to conclude with this flourishing. Based on. Our uh treasure islands. Thank you everyone for listening. If you enjoy the episode, you can subscribe to our podcast and to join as a guest. You can fill out our expression of interest form on our Liverpool Unici website and where you can also access all the previous episodes and goodbye for now and finally. Nick, thank you for your guest for our guest today. Thank you very much. Goodbye. Bye. Bye.

Louise Younie

Thank you.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I'm just gonna stop the recording. That was lovely.