Promoting Core Reflection in Teacher Education

Workshop with Prof. Fred Korthagen

Background and aim of the workshop
New developments require that we rethink how best to build linkages between theory and practice in teacher education. In this context, reflection is a central concept. The Core Reflection approach, developed by prof. Fred Korthagen and his colleagues, aims at promoting a deep and transformative kind of reflection in the coaching of students and teachers, or other professionals. It represents a shift from a focus on problems and deficiencies toward a focus on strengths. What are people’s strengths and talents? How can they be used? How can you support people in overcoming obstacles, and help them act upon their strengths (their ‘psychological capital’)?

Core Reflection builds on people’s ‘core qualities’ and aims at overcoming internal and external obstacles to use one’s best capacities in practice. It uses recent insights from positive psychology, and notions from Almaas’s Diamond Approach, psychosynthesis, Gestalt therapy, and the ‘Courage to Teach’ work of Parker Palmer. Research has shown its strong impact on the professional development of students in schools, novice teachers, experienced teachers, school principals, and other professionals. Core Reflection appears to create ‘flow’, inspiration and high quality in work. Publications on Core Reflection have appeared in important academic journals.

Aims
The workshop will provide a foundation for participants to apply strength-based coaching based on Core Reflection. Participants will also learn how to use their own personal qualities more optimally and to recognize and overcome internal obstacles to bringing out the best in themselves.

Workshop facilitator
Prof. dr. Fred Korthagen will be the facilitator of this workshop. He is an emeritus professor of education, currently working at VU University, Amsterdam. He specializes in reflection and self-directed learning as key aspects of personal and professional development. He has a not only a background in teaching and teacher education, but also in approaches such as Gestalt therapy, NLP, and psychosynthesis. He has given workshops and professional courses in many European countries, as well as in the US, Canada, Japan, and Australia.

Evaluations of former participants
- Personally, [I have gained] a set of skills I feel will be empowering, professionally a set of connections to people and ideals which I feel will deepen and lighten my experience of work.
- The biggest benefit for me has been learning new tools for refocusing problems and obstacles into strengths.
- A gained a sense of self-identity, freedom from limiting beliefs, empowerment to fulfill my life purpose.
- To function from a place of strength, to affirm the qualities in self and other, and to have language that is approachable are all incredible valuable.
Since returning, I have told colleagues and students that in my many years as an educator, I think this has been the most powerful and transformative experience I have ever had.

- I see this workshop as a tremendous gift.
- The techniques of core reflection are really limitless in their application.
- This has been the most profound, influential workshop I've ever had in my life. It presented me with, no, immersed me in an ideal vision for my work, my teaching and my way of being that.

Key Publications