***One of life’s most precious gifts: time or scope?***

[Marieke.vanasten@fontys.nl](mailto:Marieke.vanasten@fontys.nl)

*Marieke van Asten (Quinta Kools )*

Professional development of teacher educators is an important topic, because teacher educators need to maintain and enhance their expertise in order to educate our future teachers (Kools & Koster, n.d. ; Dengerink, Lunenberg & Kools, 2015). How do teacher educators fulfil this task, especially within the hectic timeframe of everyday work?

I asked four colleges to participate in a group to share their experiences, actions or behaviour in the organisation about their development in their profession of being a teacher educator. My purpose is to bring awareness and movement into that group.

My research focusses on teacher educators in a large teacher education department in the Netherlands and the opportunities for action available to them. During this study we are currently creating a learning environment in which mutual cooperation increases the learning potential of all participants. In this group participants take or make time to learn, giving words to their scopes . Researcher and participants discuss and explore on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual understanding.

By deploying methods borrowed from ‘Appreciative Inquiry’(Massenlink et al., 2008) the enthusiasm of a study group is raised and the intrinsic motivation of the participants stimulated. Our study group will convene three times. Its goal is to stimulate cooperation among teacher educators through optimisation of existing qualities, a method that could be described as empowerment, or a process of collective reinforcement ‘To learn’ involves experiencing that what one does really matters, as well as developing one’s own persona in the local community.

Intervention, action, reflection and study group meetings alternate in the course of our research. In addition to audio and video recordings, data consists of reports drawn up on the basis of member checks. Data is analysed qualitatively by coding the interview texts and reports. After applying the codes, the researcher discusses the coding in a research group and with the participants of the study group (membercheck). Working collaboratively can offer learning challenges that catalyse growth as a professional, teacher educators become acquainted and approach each other from the perspective of their respective professional and functional responsibilities.

This study offers perspectives for other teacher educators to recognize these possibilities in their own situation. Moreover the study offers a description of a way to organise collegial exchange. The research is related to the RDC professional development of teacher educators.