

“Poetry, Practice & Potential –

A Heuristic Inquiry into the potential of poetry

for the reflexive coaching practitioner”

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between poetry and reflexivity to support the development of professional coaching practice. The primary methodology was Heuristic Inquiry, working with co-researchers through two rounds of interviews, emails and phone calls to consider personal experience of using poetry to develop reflexive practice. Heuristic Self Search Inquiry has also been used to review researcher poetry, written over a three-year period. Embracing HI supported by HSSI acknowledges considerations of role tension between I-researcher and I-participant whilst enriching experience and learning. Data was analysed using thematic analysis to identify patterns on reflexivity and the potential use of poetry in its practice.

Writing poetry emerges as a source of reflexive support for the coach practitioner, enabling access to unconscious and prescient ideas in responding to and influencing next steps, acting as an emotional release and facilitating insight, learning and self-care. Whilst the benefits of writing poetry or engaging with a more creative writing approach are acknowledged, poetry is not a creative choice for everyone since the research indicates it is personally demanding.

The importance of a clear appreciation of reflexivity and its contribution to self-care, personal growth and ethical practice emerges from the research. The role of reflexivity as an ongoing practice with accountability for personal approach and application, resides with the coach. The value of the coach practitioner engaging with reflexive practice is rooted in concerns about awareness and accountability for self-leadership, whilst addressing potential limitations to personal growth, considering options and proactively optimising supervision.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce the background to my research question, and outline its relevance and contribution to coaching practice and potentially the wider coaching community. I also share the rationale behind my interest in using Heuristic Inquiry and Heuristic Self Search Inquiry to explore my research interest and to share how these methodologies support my research study. Finally, an outline of each of the remaining chapters in my thesis is provided.

Discovery through curiosity

Following an exacting coaching session, I noted that two weeks later, I had not started writing a learning log – a mandatory element of my MSc and something which I typically enjoyed doing and found immensely rewarding. The previous day, I had attended a Creative Methods workshop and as someone who had not read, let alone written a poem for some thirty-plus years, found the idea of metaphor and rhyming stanzas interesting, but was sceptical as to the value it might offer coaching or a business coach. Against this backdrop, I headed to class early to avoid traffic, grab a coffee and enjoy some personal respite. What to do with this gift of time and space? I opened my laptop and wondered whether it might be possible to undertake the learning log in the form of a poem. What to focus on? As I recalled my prep for what I anticipated might be a difficult meeting, I remembered the mantra I had created for myself: 'Be Present'. This proved to be the starting point for what became a poem of six verses in rhyming stanzas, written in quite a short period of time but which reflected two weeks of 'in-my-head' busyness. As I considered my musings, I felt a sense of achievement and delight: no matter what anyone else thought of the quality of my poetic effort, it afforded me emotional gratification and a sense of closure.

Over the course of many coaching sessions and associated learning logs, I found the writing of poetry afforded distance and catharsis. Occasionally I shared my poetry with other people and it appeared to resonate, but I had no illusions about poetic quality, no interest in reworking, but rather embracing poetry as an enabler of reflection and debrief. Discussing possibilities with other coaches, it became clear that people were curious regarding the use and potential of poetry in executive coaching. From these early beginnings emerged my research question, with its attention to the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice.

Finalising my research question emerged through intense self-dialogue, discussion with supervisors, course colleagues and vitally, other coaches. Such a social constructionist approach supported decision-making regarding selection of Heuristic Inquiry as the primary methodology and defining the specifics of my research interest. My thesis reflects the blending of me as a human being and in a variety of professional roles as a researcher, a participant, a systemic transformational coach and a business consultant.

1.1 The Research Context

There is a considerable body of evidence endorsing the use of creative approaches as a means of moving beyond the logical and rational aspects of self by '*developing our whole selves: mind, body and spirit*' (Davidson & Schwarz, 2011, p.217). Embracing and engaging with expressive and creative arts-based approaches supports access to deeper, more intuitive aspects of self that are typically clouded by the day-to-day reality of life, which in turn support innovation, change and development. In the ambiguity and complexity of the twenty-first century knowledge economy, organisations and senior executives face unrelenting demands to access ways of knowing that deliver results in a global market (Broussine, 2008; Kaplan & Norton, 2001). Within such a demanding environment, the potential for creative approaches and in this research, specifically poetry, to develop a mindset that explores possibilities, develops creative solutions and expands capabilities, appear exciting and multifaceted.

For an executive coach working with leaders and senior managers, the challenge lies in mirroring the same creative process in support of personal and professional development and optimisation of professional coaching practice (Cox, Bachkirova & Clutterbuck, 2014). Poetry is proposed as an arts-based approach which facilitates perspective, insight and learning by offering the potential to connect to experience and unknown aspects of self, bringing forth fresh perspectives and learning (Grisoni, 2017).

Consideration of the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity, as part of the development of professional coaching practice, is the focus of this study, using Heuristic Inquiry (HI) as the primary research methodology (Moustakas, 1990). Moustakas developed HI as a process to reveal the true essence of lived experience and lead a more authentic life (Ozertugrul, 2015). Sela-Smith (online) developed Heuristic Self Search Inquiry (HSSI) as an extension of HI to focus upon self as '*the participant in his/her own internal inquiry.*' With HI and HSSI attending to healing and growth, HSSI addresses a criticism of HI as to the potential for role confusion. By

embracing HI supported by HSSI, a clear differentiation is offered between my role as researcher and as participant, thereby addressing concerns relating to integrity and rigour. Embracing a social constructionist, interpretivist, and humanistic approach to the collection and analysis of data, I worked with seven co-researchers to distil the essence of their experience in response to the research topic and to explore emergent ideas and conclusions. HI supports my existential worldview and is enriched by HSSI to explore three anthologies of autobiographical poetry written over a three-year period. Embracing HI and HSSI supports curiosity and inquiry that might or might not reveal something of interest and endorses a concern regarding the importance of a coach practising upon his/herself before adopting the practice with clients (Cox, Bachkirova & Clutterbuck, 2014). My research findings are analysed embracing Thematic Analysis and my conclusions and suggestions as to possible next steps are also presented (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

This study implicitly focuses upon the potential relationship between poetry and reflexivity in support of the personal and professional development of the coach and his/her ability to understand and use the self in coaching. The importance of embracing a reflexive mindset in support of coach development and maturation offers an enhanced level of credibility and sophistication to the practice and development of coaches in a complex profession (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011). The importance of ongoing continuous professional coach development in an unregulated and emerging profession is viewed as a shared core professional value by many of the professional bodies (Iordanou, Hawley & Iordanou, 2017). An individual's approach to professional development informs '*ethical professional conduct*' and is regarded as an inherent part of identity and authenticity (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.19). It also reflects a demonstrable commitment to ethical practice and the upholding of professional standards for which the individual coach is personally accountable (Brennan & Wildflower, 2014). The research aims to make an original contribution to the professional coach and coaching supervisor community by enriching knowledge and appreciation of reflexive coaching practice. Additionally, the practical use of poetry, in support of reflexive practice and as a development tool for coaches, is explored.

Coaching is a relatively youthful profession, which may account for the lack of a single definition or consensus amongst the professional associations, academics and professionals. Cox *et al.* (2014) propose that coaching is a process of inquiry focused upon enabling personal awareness, improvement, development, growth and the

optimisation of an individual or team's potential. As an Executive Business Coach working in an unregulated market where anyone can set up a business and present him/herself as a coach, it makes commercial sense to differentiate oneself to facilitate client choice. My definition of coaching reflecting my interest, style and approach, proposes that coaching is based upon a one-to-one partnership and attends to the optimization of individual potential whilst identifying areas for development, practice and productive learning in the wider system (Hawkins & Smith, 2006). It is a *reflexive process* whereby through facilitated dialogue, a coachee moves beyond reflection to raise an individual's consciousness as to who they are, how they operate and behave at a day-to-day level, what patterns they carry that both motivate and limit their potential, and how and where they position themselves within the coaching relationship (Bachkirova, 2016). Consideration of context, influences, assumptions and values and how these affect and direct perceptions and decision-making, with a view to creating alternatives, form the bedrock of the coach's work (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cox *et al.*, 2014).

As part of the overall coaching process, the coach needs to be cognisant of how his/her being is influencing the discussion in real time (Cunliffe, 2004; Rosenberg, 1990). Such heightened self-awareness will afford an opportunity for behavioural modification during the process, whilst offering consideration(s) for development and growth. Such awareness and understanding of self appears vital for ethical, professional practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Peltier, 2010; Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Despite widespread encouragement to embrace reflexivity, most of the practical guidance appears to focus upon writing diaries, logs or journals in a narrative format (Bolton, 2009). Whilst encouraging the professional discipline of reflexivity, such formats may reduce reflexivity to a technique as opposed to being an integral part of a coach's professional practice (Cunliffe, 2004). Hawkins and Smith (2006, p.171) state that '*for too long the themes of continuing development and supervision of coaches and consultants have been neglected*', suggesting that continuing professional development may be a cornerstone supporting ethical and competent coaching practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). As detailed consideration of coaching supervision is outwith the remit of this study, my research interest directly attends to the individual coach's interests and responsibilities in leading his/her own growth and development through reflexive engagement. Against this backdrop, consideration of the coach embracing ongoing deep, critical exploration and analysis of assumptions, values, personal ways of being, thinking and knowing, whilst exploring a creative way to do so in support of learning and growth, appears valuable.

As society shifts from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy, with increasing demands in terms of sustainability and change (Kaplan & Norton, 2001), so it appears that arts-based approaches offer a rich subtext to words as they communicate and invoke deeper engagement and understanding. Page and Broussine, writing in Broussine (2008, p.158), identify the potential of creativity whether in the form of drawing, poetry, creative dialogue, story-telling or masks and theatre in the quest for knowledge and '*multiple ways of knowing*' as experienced through visible and invisible sensory mechanisms. In this postmodernist world of ambiguity, uncertainty and plurality, it appears that poetry, with its unique ability '*to encapsulate the art of the unsayable*' (Grisoni, 2007, p.345) may be of value in research and knowledge creation, in exploration and innovation, in the learning and development of individuals and organisations (Morgan, 2010; Grisoni, 2007).

1.2 Relationship Considerations

Poetry in business is particularly valued as a means of enabling development, (Coleman 2012; Grisoni & Darmer, 2011; Morgan, 2010; Gioia, 2007) and executive wellbeing (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Morgan, 2010) whilst offering observations, perspective and commentary on organisational life (Knight, 2015; Gioia, 2007; Windle, 1994). Each writer builds a case for the power of poetry in observing, challenging, making sense of and throwing into relief the past, present and the future plus the rich, nuanced ambiguity and complexity and even the absurdities of day-to-day corporate life (Knight, 2015; Morgan, 2010; Windle, 1994). Nevertheless, there appears to be little written about how the creation of poetry supports reflexive practice to achieve a deeper level of awareness, insight, learning and growth. As a Systemic Transformational coach practitioner, I envisage these relationships as 'wheels within wheels', oiled and tended by personal accountability, responsibility and a commitment to increasing self-awareness, self-leadership and self-coaching (Hawkins & Smith, 2006).

The relationship between reflection and reflexivity and its contribution to self-awareness and personal growth is an ongoing aspect of this study. Kolb's (2014) model encourages experiential learning by reflecting upon an experience, moving to a more critical and meaningful evaluation, with a view to enriching practice through informed selections and choices. Whilst many coaches apparently consider such an approach sufficient, it is worth exploring whether it is enough to enable ongoing competent professional practice and personal growth. As a '*single loop*' (Argyris & Schon, 1974, p.19) learning process, with a focus upon problem-solving by creating

order and making connections, Kolb (2014) offers much in terms of learning from a specific experience. However, it is questionable whether such an approach, with its focus upon presenting issues offers support to the ongoing drive for personal growth and professional coaching skills development to which Hawkins and Smith (2006) refer. Such growth may emerge from the challenging of deeper, underlying issues that are inherently more cognitively and emotionally demanding and which afford opportunities for choice, change and growth. Educators (e.g. Kolb, 2014), academics (e.g. Cunliffe, 2004), psychotherapists (e.g. Rogers, 1965) and organisational behaviour theorists and practitioners (Hawkins & Smith, 2006; Rosenberg, 1990) highlight the importance of moving to a deeper, more reflexive level of self-awareness and personal insight with implications for professional practice. Reflexivity moves to a deeper level, focusing upon an awareness of personal assumptions, values, beliefs and practices and attending to the recursive nature of feedback and influence upon the individual, relationships and practice (Cunliffe, 2004).

1.3 Overview of the Research Study

Chapter Two considers literature relevant to my research interests and specifically attends to notable contributors in the fields of poetry, reflexivity and coaching. Each of these fields is examined further in terms of wider, underlying elements, relationships and interconnectivity as informed by my research question.

Chapter Three attends to the philosophical influences that guide my approach as a reflexive researcher (Cunliffe, 2004) and are reflected in my use of HI (Moustakas, 1990) and HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002). *'Accuracy, utility, feasibility and propriety'* are proposed as the hallmarks of qualitative research (Patton, 2002, p.400) and my quest to embrace these elements is considered throughout this chapter.

Chapters Four, Five and Six explore the three integrated themes to emerge from the analysis, discussion and integration of my HI co-researcher (CR) data and my HSSI data. Chapter Four considers 'The Coach as an Individual' and reflects upon the uniqueness of the individual against the backdrop of professional accountability for personal being, development and growth. Chapter Five explores 'Reflexivity, Poetry and Growth' as an integrated theme and considers the potential of poetry as an arts-based craft supporting reflexive practice, learning and growth. This chapter examines inter- and intra-related relationships between these concepts and the influence and opportunity that each brings. Chapter Six focuses on 'Self-coaching and Self-

leadership', not as a replacement for supervision but rather in support of investment in self-leadership, self-care and self-development.

Chapter Seven concludes with the rigorous analysis, discussion and integration of each of the three integrated themes by applying four lenses that have also been utilised throughout my HSSI analysis to each one. This supports explication and extrication of the key research findings to be identified in terms of an understanding of the role that identity plays alongside the associated personal narrative embraced by an individual and how this might inform personal and professional development considerations.

Chapter Eight considers these findings by questioning, discussing and exploring each to clarify potential and contribution to the coaching community. The limitations to the study are explored alongside possibilities for future research.

1.4 Contributions

My conclusions make contributions to the professional practice of coaches and coach supervisors by offering a practical example of reflexivity supported by poetry. My research also reflects methodological innovations focused upon the enrichment of HI (Moustakas, 1990), using HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002) and data analysis that draws upon social software and mind mapping (Buzan, 1974).

My research brings forth developmental choices that are available to coaches through differentiating between reflection, with its attention to competences and skills development and reflexivity, with its focus upon capability and growth. Such differentiation offers individual coaches, supervisors, professional associations and training providers choice, with respect to what type of coach identity might wish to be embraced, alongside the narrative and investment required in development, supervision and learning. Thus, to focus upon the development of coaching skills and competences will necessitate a specific form of training and skills development whilst the quest to become a reflexive coach practitioner will require a different intensity of investment in ongoing reflexive practice and learning.

By highlighting the coach's accountability for congruity and demonstration of a '*profound coherence*' (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015, p.130) between personal coaching identity, narrative and growth, choice and opportunities are brought forth to support and enhance '*ethical coaching practice*' (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.105).

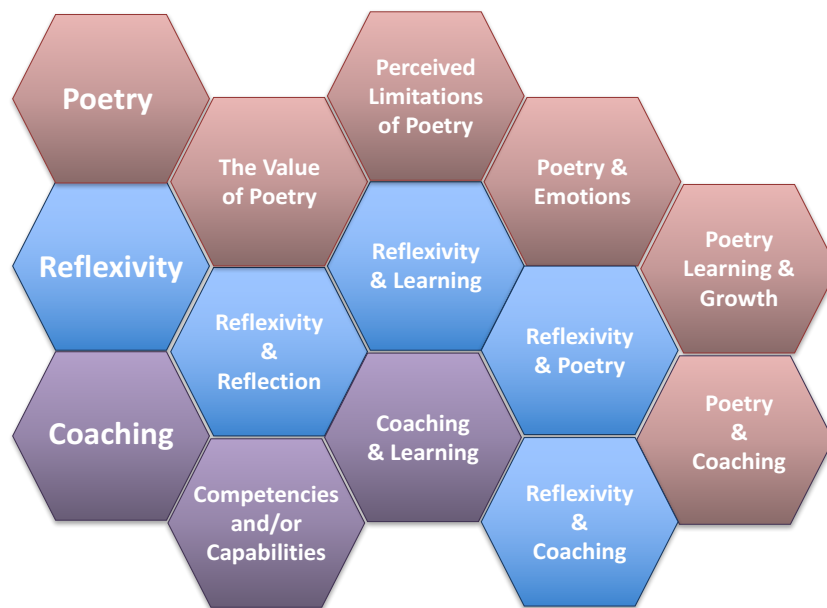
Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.1 My Approach to the Literature

This chapter reviews the literature, which has informed this study on the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice, as demonstrated in diagram 2.1

An Overview of Chapter 2

Diagram 2.1



Three primary areas of literature are pertinent to this study: poetry, reflexivity and coaching. These primary areas emerge from a breakdown of my research question rather than affording any privilege to one area. Consideration is afforded to the ‘*dynamic connections*’ (Hawkins & Smith, 2006, p.87) within and between each, supporting an exploration of possible inter- and intra-related relationships and underlying cycles of influence. Such a systemic approach appears relevant for a research study cited within the postmodernist business world of ‘*complex adaptive systems*’, plurality and intersubjectivity (Hawkins & Smith, 2006, p.102).

Interrogation of online databases included Emerald Insight, PsycINFO, Business Source Complete and Academic Source Complete. The key search terms of poetry, reflexivity and coaching returned journals such as The International Journal of Evidence based Coaching and Mentoring, the Journal of Poetry Therapy, The Learning and Organisation Development Journal, Management Learning and Harvard Business Review. Each database carries a significant number of online resources so balancing

breadth and depth was vital to ensure a clear and continual focus on my research question against the demands of time and deliverables (Patton, 2014).

Alternate perspectives of core terms (e.g. poetry as organisational poetry; organisational poetry and reflexivity; poetry and coaching; poetry and learning), highlighted opportunities relating to my research interest, identifying specific reading material. Whilst there was a considerable body of literature exploring poetry and the creation of poetry, the volume of literature attending to poetry and individual learning in coaching is considerably smaller. The reference lists of *'my intellectual mentors'* (Hawkins & Smith, 2006, p.37), were also fed into my reading. By engaging in a snowballing-type exercise, I considered the work of key influencers and thought leaders, which created a platform from which to consider individual elements of the research question and the potential for inter/intra relationships. Professional conferences and poetry workshops supported refinement of my research interest.

2.2 Poetry

Poetry, is typically *'a form of representation'*: observational, descriptive, or lyrical, with its emphasis upon *'moments of emotion'* (Armitage, 2014, p.27). My research is focused on how the writing of poetry facilitates reflection upon lived experience and how such experience impacts upon self in terms of challenging assumptions, patterns, and beliefs and supporting personal growth and professional coaching practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cunliffe, 2016; Bolton, 2014; Ryan, 2005; Cunliffe, 2004).

Armitage (2014) discusses the role of poetry in reflecting the experience and reality of the business world as interpreted by the poet, who subsequently creates a composition that adheres to conventions of rhythm. Poets are skilled at observation and with words, connecting with the sensory experience about which they write, allowing their imagination to take hold whilst working with the reality at hand, exploring and expanding their thinking, interpretation or initial assessment of an experience (Morgan, 2010; Gioia, 2002; Whyte, 1994). Armitage (2014, p.26) acknowledges that *'poets see things as they are through sensuous experience'*, which is interpreted and communicated through written word or narration, and subsequently interpreted further by the audience. Poetry offers an opportunity *'to fold meaning into the simplest elements and allow complexity to emerge'* (Whyte, 1994, p.271), creating space for writer and audience to communicate and construct individual and/or shared meaning. Poetry offers a perspective on the world, a snapshot of an experience, an insight into

the author and a window into the world of the reader (Morgan, 2010; Windle, 1994). Reflecting upon his own *'journey of poetic discovery'*, Armitage (2014, p.28) uses poetry to bring to life something of his personal journey and relationship with others as they live in the verse and in the shadows of the narrative.

When consideration is given to the potential of poetry within organisations, various authors appear to place different emphasis on its potential contribution. Armitage (2014), Gioia (2007) and Windle (1994) apparently embrace an *observational* stance, focused on using poetry to achieve specific outcomes (Black & Plowright, 2010). Such outcomes appear to reside in forging a connection between the head and the heart, the scientific and the creative, the reality of the positivist and the interpretations of the postmodernist, with emphasis on the *outcome* being sought. Meanwhile Grisoni & Darmer (2011), Morgan (2010) and Whyte (1994) appear concerned with poetry as a facilitative *process*, enabling learning and humanity. Wherever the emphasis, consensus emerges that poetry subtly makes things happen as it stimulates expansion, encourages exploration, enhances perspective and communication, whilst prompting creativity and innovation. Such credentials may reflect an 'active' as opposed to 'passive' concept; a view endorsed by Rukeyser (1949), who posits poetry as a change agent. As a facilitative mechanism, poetry appears valued for its prowess in bringing tacit knowledge into the light, integrating it with explicit knowledge, thereby creating fresh perspective and insight. Such qualities suggest a more dynamic process than might be implied when considering poetry as an observational instrument.

Whilst there appears to be broad agreement that poetry has the potential to play a vital role in making sense of the ambiguity and uncertainty of a postmodernist world, Gioia (2007) highlights the responsibility of the poet to ensure the relevance and contribution of the work to the reality of society at large. Such poetic responsibility is apparently supported by Bennis (2009, p.322) referring to *'Poets (as) our original systems thinkers'*, with the potential to *'examine and contemplate the complex and the mysterious and to reduce them to the sublime'*. Such views appear significant within the reality of organisational life with its roots in the positivist, scientific industrial economy of the nineteenth century as it faces into the dynamic unpredictability of the twenty-first century. This tension is endorsed by Morgan (2010) and affords opportunity, I suggest, to those coaching and working as *'trusted leadership advisors'* (Wasylyshyn, 2015, p.280). The tendency is to *'oversimplify coaching practice and therefore to misrepresent it'* rather than acknowledging the reality of ambiguity and chaos as the hallmarks of our current postmodernist world (Bachkirova & Lawton

Smith, 2015, p.130). The challenge for the coach is to embrace contextual reality and to work with the coachee to understand and make sense of it and the individual's role within it. For a '*trusted leadership advisor*' (Wasylyshyn, 2015, p.280) whose coaching engagement has evolved into a '*long term consulting relationship*' based upon mutual trust and respect, the focus is to sustain value. Hawkins (2015, p.2) suggests value emerges by retaining independence of thinking whilst engaging and '*listening in parallel*' to explore the challenges directly with the client. Value for the individual and wider community appears to emerge through dialogue with the client whilst accepting the complexity of their current reality. Poetry can act as a '*projective technique*' (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, p.58), objectifying experience, supporting the management of apparent ambiguity and uncertainty whilst facilitating perspective and choice.

Sometimes regarded as a '*rarefied*' and '*inaccessible*' (Grisoni, 2017, p.1) form of narrative embracing meter and rhyme, poetry is generally valued for its aesthetic subtlety as much as its semantic or apparent meaning (Whyte, 1994). Poetry's unique qualities are widely recognised within the literary fields of social science (for example Furman, 2005) and therapy (Haertl, 2014, Baker & Mazza, 2004). However there appears to be more limited endorsement in the business world. Grisoni and Darmer (2011), attending to organisational and management application, propose five possible applications for poetry, each focused upon the facilitative nature of the process. When consideration is afforded to the poetic audience and its purpose, resonance with the outcome-focused orientation of reflection as suggested by Black and Plowright (2010), emerges. This may create a tension with Orr's (2002) suggestion of the creative process as an end in itself, whilst connecting back to my research question and the potential of poetry as a reflexive vehicle or a recursive means to an end, as opposed to a conclusion. Given the reflective nature of the creative process, sensitivity to the purpose of a self-penned poem and its potential sharing with a wider audience is vital, since external validation or otherwise of the output may serve a different agenda (Black & Plowright, 2010; Orr, 2002). My research leans towards Orr (2002) since attention is paid to what poetry reflexively enables for the author, as opposed to the quality of the poem.

2.2.1 The Value of Poetry

Three key themes emerge around the value of poetry:

Sense-making i.e. it facilitates understanding and insight at an individual or wider perhaps systemic, level (Morgan, 2010). Here, poetry facilitates conversation and dialogue, creating a platform for exploration and engagement.

Tapping into the unconscious by '*giving name to the nameless so that it can be thought*' (Lorde, 1985, p.36). Whyte (1994, p.4) regarded by many as the key exponent of the value of poetry in the corporate world, focuses upon the integration of the dark and the light, the corporate life and '*the soul life*' or humanity, '*preserving a desire to live a life a man or woman can truly call their own.*' (ibid., p.16).

Organisational Learning emerges as a third value from Grisoni and Darmer's (2011) research, drawing upon five identified applications. Within these applications, poetry is positioned as an enabler of choice and change based upon the creation of plausible narrative and sense-making by forging connections between the known and the unknown (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Whyte, 1994) or '*the hidden worlds of organisations*' (Armitage, 2014, p.1).

However, to achieve such value, Whyte (1994, p.71) posits that poetry demands that the author step away from the familiar and into the unknown, '*of experiencing life with an ever-increasing depth*' whilst indicating '*the first steps along the creative path almost always involve awakening in Dante's dark wood*' (ibid., 1994, p.70), perhaps hinting that some of the anxiety generated by poetry may be intuitive and catalyse the resistance to poetry. Whyte (1994) appears to be proposing poetry as an approach to address and embrace personal fears that emerge in everyday settings however typically such introspection is subject to awareness and emotional maturity. For a coach, such self-awareness is vital in support of development (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Resistance to poetry will be explored further in Chapters 5 and 7.

My research interest is in the role of poetry in engaging with reflexivity in support of professional coaching practice. It is in this context that individuals and organisations interested in embracing coaching as a means '*to assist and develop talent*' (Peltier, 2010, p.xv) might already have moved to a uniquely personalized and creative approach. This carries implications for coaches who have a critical role in supporting the reflexivity of coachees if coaches are to uphold the integrity of personal practice in alignment with their coach identity (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016).

Challenging traditional parameters, Windle (1994, p.1) asserts that with business and work playing such a vital and time-consuming part in people's day-to-day lives, it is important *'to reconcile these competing demands of the corporate and the fuller life'*. At the same time, Whyte (1994) focuses upon tapping into the soul of the corporate enterprise as a means of preservation and growth. One of the limitations of embracing poetry in business may be the perception of an apparent gap between the genre and business. The gap may appear too dark, too intimidating and dangerous to explore.

Grisoni and Darmer (2011, p.12) propose the importance of poetry residing at *'the margins of management'* to protect and ensure its survival in the world of business. In suggesting such an approach, Grisoni and Darmer (2011) are apparently affording poetry privilege and protection, whilst maintaining something of its mystique. This runs the risk of compromising relevance and accessibility, as highlighted by Gioia (1991), who posits the importance of poetry and poets moving to more central ground as a survival issue. Gioia (1991), like Grisoni and Darmer (2011), is concerned to optimise the value of poetry for the benefit of a much wider audience: the difference lies in how best to approach such a task.

Whilst Gioia (1991) may be critical of academics who hold and promulgate an apparently elitist attitude to the art form, there are examples of academic leaders using poetry for practical purposes within academia and business. Grisoni (2008, p. 108) acknowledges that *'using poetry as a creative research method is possibly the least researched method'*, which can support the forging of connections between and within organisations and organisational life. Knight (2015, p.12) uses poetry to explore *'in poetry form the role of poetry'*. Morgan, (2010, p.19) acknowledges *'the best way to draw people into poetry is by working with a poem'* and like Grisoni (2008), Morgan (2010) offers case studies of group *working* throughout her book.

Grisoni (2008, p.122) offers an example of a *'Contemplative Researcher'*, who works with links between psychoanalytical processes and poetry, using poetry as a problem-solving tool to enable healing from a psychotherapeutic perspective (Haertl, 2014). Psychotherapists see poetry *'as a kind of parallel universe that ... illuminate states of mind they must deal with in their work'* (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003, p.xiv). My research considers how embracing poetry can support engagement with reflexivity and the complexities of professional coaching practice. Such complexities arise from the intertwining of the professional and personal being of the coach and the emphasis of coaching on the relationship between the coach and the coachee (Bachkirova,

2016). By creating poetry as a process to facilitate sensemaking, tapping into the unconscious and learning, my study is curious as to what emerges from this experience for my CRs and myself as coaches (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1994). As a psychotherapist, Canham in Canham and Satyamurthi (2003, p.190) acknowledges the relationship between critical reflection and poetry as *'the revelation of self to self'*. I am curious as to what emerges over time from reflexive consideration of my poetry as I consider the *'interiority of ... experience'* and implications for professional coaching practice (Sela-Smith, 2002, p.54).

2.2.2 Perceived Limitations of Poetry

Despite the apparent benefits, one limitation to the use of poetry in business is resistance that the genre apparently begets. *'Can Poetry Matter?'* enquires Gioia (2002) whilst despairing of its loss and marginalization to a 'subculture' of specialist journals and discrete readings resulting in minimal critical evaluation and highly selective readership. Grisoni (2017, p.1) acknowledges that poetry is perceived as *'rarefied'* and *'inaccessible'* whilst Gioia (1991, online) posits that poetry has *'lost the confidence that it speaks to and for the general culture'* and by implication, it has become something of an elite irrelevance.

Mazza (2006), referencing a study undertaken to explore 'Poetry in America', revealed that people who do not engage with poetry usually fail to do so based upon personal experience. Such personal experiences may have been limited to a school setting where the focus was on classical poetry, typically *'less accessible'* and *'less relevant'* to its audience (ibid., 2006, p.193). Orr (2002, p.1) develops the perceived challenges of accessibility, intimidation and elitism that poetry engenders by noting the emotional response engendered and defined as *'fear'*. Such fear may be rooted in notions of *'failure'* or worth as reader or author, with connections to intellectual or emotional prowess (Orr, 2002, p.1). Such fear might be compounded by the challenge of sophisticated poetic forms, ranging from sonnets to haiku, with each carrying implied notions of sophistication (Grisoni, 2008; Orr, 2002). Poetry can also act as a conduit to that which is hidden and unknown to self, which may also prompt fear or resistance (Whyte, 1994). Whilst resistance may be a counter-process to change and play an important part in supporting equilibrium, resistance can also be a limit to growth (Senge, 1994).

Based on such experience, the genre may be tarnished in terms of relevance and/or value. People may have failed to update their 'mental models' of poetry and/or their own abilities with respect to the creative process, resulting in intimidation, apprehension or fear (Plutchik, 2001; Senge, 1990). Rukeyser (1949) argues that poetry is a resource available to all but denied by many because of its ability to access deep emotions, potentially clouded by day-to-day reality. Rukeyser (1949) acknowledges that whilst emotions support sensemaking, such sensemaking may be resisted since it can invite additional difficult or challenging emotions and/or questions. Such fear of the power of poetry may lead to silence and denial, whether of sensemaking, emotions or poetry as a resource. The potential for resistance is acknowledged, with counter-proposals for voluntary engagement and a relaxed and trustworthy environment (Grisoni, 2017; Mazza, 2006; Pennebaker, 1997). Emphasis is placed on the creative process, dialogue prompted and connections made, rather than judgement of the poetic output (Wall, Rossetti, Scott & Bloomfield, 2017; Grisoni, 2017).

The literature whilst citing the benefits of engaging with poetry and expressing a call to action appears to be underpinned by two assumptions: -

- people are emotional beings (Plutchik, 2001; Ekman, 1992); and
- people want to learn and grow (Knowles, 1988).

I suggest acknowledgement of each assumption is required as part of the foundation and consideration of my research question, with its focus on the role of poetry as a reflexive catalyst, supporting personal growth and professional coaching practice. The literature appears to indicate that for those willing to explore their creative powers or explore that of others, the rewards might be great.

2.2.3 Poetry and Emotions

The theory of emotions sits beyond the scope of this research; however, considering the expressed relationship between poetry and emotions, it is important to acknowledge those whose work has influenced this study (Plutchik, 2001; Ekman, 1992). Whilst the study of emotions continues to evolve, it is generally accepted that emotional expression is a vital part of cognition and what it is to be human (Plutchik, 2001; Ekman, 1992). Whilst Plutchik (2001) and Ekman (1992), amongst others, propose basic emotions as the platform upon which all other emotions are constructed, there is limited consensus as to the specifics or the rationale for inclusion or exclusion. Additionally, there is contention as to the identification of certain emotions (Ortony &

Turner, 1990) proposed as basic or primary (Plutchik, 2001; Ekman, 1992). As a researcher, the concept of 'basic emotions' affords an invaluable framework to organise and embrace the uniqueness of a discrete set of basic or universal emotions, (Ekman, 1992). Ekman (1992) proposes a small number of basic or universal or families of emotions, each of which carries unique and distinctive features with connections to evolution. Meantime, Plutchik (2001, p.346) draws upon evolution to offer a definition of emotions as a *'complex chain of loosely connected events that begins with a stimulus and includes feelings, psychological changes, impulses to action and goal directed behaviour'*. Reflecting a systemic, cause-and-effect perspective that resonates with my existential philosophical paradigm, Plutchik (2001, p.344) suggests that *'language itself introduces ambiguity and does not make it easy to describe mixed emotions in an unequivocal way'*. Such sentiments reflect the underlying orientation of my research question with its interest in poetry as a reflexive conduit or enabler of deeper cognition, as to how I influence, and am influenced by, the emotions, actions and behaviours of others.

A considerable body of literature from a wide variety of disciplines endorses the value of emotional expression through writing, specifically in therapeutic (Haertl, 2014; Baikie & Wilhelm, 2005; Baker & Mazza, 2004), education (Wall *et al.*, 2017) and social care (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003) settings. In Table 2.2, I draw upon the work of psychologists and educators (Mazza, 2006; Baker & Mazza, 2004; Pennebaker, 1997) plus promoters of poetry in business (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1994; Windle, 1994) to compare how poetry is being used in these different modalities with a view to transferring and sharing experience and learning. Table 2.2 also reflects the use and benefits of *drawing upon* existing poetry in business, alongside consideration of the benefits of *expressive writing* and the *writing* of poetry in the helping professions to support someone in therapy or in an education (Morgan, 2010; Mazza, 2006; Pennebaker, 1997).

A comparison of the use of creative writing

Table 2.2

Approach	Use of (existing) Poetry in Business	Expressive writing in Therapy	Creating and Sharing (Performing) Poetry in Therapy
The Power of the Process	Catalytic opportunity	Cathartic enabler	Development process
Intervention Rationale	Part of development approach	Adjunctive to wider therapeutic process	Assessment instrument Targeted emotional development
Environment	Enabling/stimulating	Safety/honour/self	No judgement re literary form/merit
Emotional vessel	Processing	Trauma acknowledgement	Stimulus
Participation	Client centred	Voluntary choice	Educator lead
Intervention Sensitivity	Resistance	"Complaints"* masking fear	"intimidation" > pleasure
Lived Experience	Subjective/objective	Personal	Objective/subjective (self/others)
Writing	Objectification Creates a distance	Control resides with the writer	Self expression Sensory experience Creates a sense of order/structure
Reflective	Recognition/awareness	Validation of self	Forging personal connections
Perspective	Understanding	Clarity of perspective	Suspend judgement/conclusion
Sense Making	Fresh insights	Resolution	Connect theory & experience Connect objective & subjective
Reflexive	Deeper level processing	Transformative	EQ development
Action	Capability enrichment	Empowerment/closure	Expansive/extensive
Opportunities that each approach brings	Case study/agenda setting Team building Engagement Innovation EQ development	Trauma recovery On going mental health benefits On going physical health benefits	Family/Group cohesion Validation and Feedback Trauma recovery Emotional & cognitive development Supervision (counselling)

Based upon: Morgan (2010); Mazza (2006); Cunliffe (2002); Pennebaker (1997)

As a psychologist working in therapeutic settings, Pennebaker (1997) offers a body of evidence that considers the management of emotions and evidences the value of disclosure through expressive writing on the health and wellbeing of its participants. Mazza (2006) presents a range of examples from the social work and education sectors, as do Wall *et al.* (2017), in which creating poetry has a track record of supporting wellbeing and personal development. Self-expression through creative expression appears to facilitate the processing of experience by forging deep personal connection with lived experience, associated emotions and linguistically capturing the emotion (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003).

The rationale or purpose of such an approach appears to carry direct implications for the next step in the process. If the development or creation of a piece of creative writing or poetry serves as a means of enhancing self-awareness and personal EQ/coaching capability related development (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Goleman, 1995), then an opportunity emerges for a self-reflexive review of the work. The focus may be upon finding one's voice, identity and '*a pathway to a strong and*

clear sense of self' (Cameron, 1995, p.15) within the creative expression. Briggs (2012, p.33), citing Heaney, highlights that finding one's poetic voice is a process of *'very intimately connecting with the poet's natural voice.'* In such circumstances, control still resides with the author as to whether to share what has been written (Pennebaker, 1997). To avoid challenges of countertransference whereby the author may be confronted by the emotional reactions and interpretations of the reader to the material, the choices of language and topic around the experience are vital (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003). If the intention is to publish and share the writing (narrative or poetry) with others, then consideration must be given to the associated personal and social exposure alongside the judgement of others (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003). Acceptance of such considerations creates a platform from which to forge connections with the reader and falls to the author through *'elements that are common to all humanity through time and space'* (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003, p.36). Such considerations carry implications for the reflexive coach practitioner as s/he must have a heightened awareness as to the purpose of creating and/or sharing personal poetry since *'any intervention has the potential to reinforce or disrupt ethical values, standards and behaviours'* (Wall, 2017, p.2).

Embracing an interdisciplinary approach draws upon medicine, psychiatry, psychology, counselling and social work; libraries, educational and rehabilitation centres, and correctional institutions allow opportunities for learning and practice (Good Therapy.org, online; Lapidus.org.uk., online; Bolton, online). Lapidus (online) focuses on the wellbeing that can emerge from writing, whilst highlighting the importance of not judging the material, but rather nurturing the processes of writing and creativity (Wall *et al.*, 2017). Work in these areas has given rise to the emergent field of Medical Humanities which attends to the potential of a formal interdisciplinary relationship between the humanities, social science, the arts and their application to medical education and practice.

If the experience of creative writing in interdisciplinary settings is extended to the world of the executive coach, then potential opportunities for development and emotional wellbeing emerge. As my study is specifically interested in the writing of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice, drawing upon the experience of other modalities expands opportunities for knowledge-sharing and learning. The role of the poet is *'to speak to the times'* (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003, p.37), so optimisation of resource apparently speaks to the plurality of the postmodernist world in which this study is written.

The use of poetry in business is approached by different authors from a variety of perspectives. Grisoni (2017) focuses on research into work/life balance whilst Norton (2017, p.1) draws upon an auto-ethnographic study of poetry, embraced as a '*pathway towards critical reflexivity*' and sensemaking. Melzer (2015) explores the creative process within education and like Morgan (2010) considers the general use of poetry in working life and business.

Each author draws upon qualitative data, typically working with participants in a research or client setting, each having a clear purpose attending to skills development or personal growth. Each author brings forth his/her unique focus by attending to wider creative processes: Grisoni (2017) the *collaborative* creative poetic process, Norton (2017) the creative process of *poetry*, and Melzer (2015) the creative process of *art*. Only Morgan (2010) specifically attends to the use of poetry as an *instrument* for wider skill development. Melzer (2015) acknowledges the potential initial resistance to taking part in arts-based approaches and offers a proactive model to manage this, whilst Norton (2017) highlights the importance of embracing a social constructionist or collaborative approach to support wider considerations and perspectives that challenge and support individual learning. Grisoni (2017), Melzer (2015) and Morgan (2010) each attend to the potential of poetry, as an enabler or '*pathway*' (Norton, 2017, p.1) to deeper consideration, understanding and insight.

These authors (Grisoni, 2017; Norton, 2017; Melzer, 2015; Morgan, 2010), approached their research with different methods, assumptions, and creative interests; however, the results reflect considerable support for the potential of arts-based methods in support of healing, development and growth (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Bolton, 2014). Coaching, too, is underpinned by a focus on learning so drawing upon such diverse research brings forth potential opportunities for the coaching community and supports my research (Cox *et al.*, 2014). A consistent message emerges, suggesting that the creative process of writing poetry, collaboratively and individually, influences human connection and wellbeing (Grisoni, 2017; Wall *et al.*, 2017). Through poetic inquiry, different perspectives are revealed, facilitating development and change. Reflexive engagement drawing upon poetry appears to offer a platform for analysis of meaning, attending to learning for self and potentially for others. Sensitivity to the potential resistance or fear that can be generated by proposed engagement with arts-based inquiry is required, irrespective of modality, including coaching (Orr, 2002).

The potential of research into the poetic creative process and the associated narrative implicit within the poetry is highlighted (Grisoni, 2017; Norton, 2017). In coaching, writing poetry affords an opportunity for additional perspective(s) to emerge through sharing, testing, considering, reflecting further and exploring beyond, by reflexive engagement with the creative process and the output (Melzer, 2015). Such engagement supports embracing the totality of self, including our intuition as a means of examining assumptions and beliefs and enhancing self-awareness as to who I am and how I am with myself, with others and in practice (Morgan, 2010; Cunliffe, 2002). The potential of poetry to act as a bridge or conduit, supporting exploration, feedback and learning appears clear. Such value may offer opportunity in supervision where through dialogue, an exploration of the coach's internal world and the coaching context takes place, with a view to learning about self, relationships and practice (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011; Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Such an approach may rely upon self-leadership and a proactive approach to supervision and its purpose (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011).

Broad consensus emerges around the value of poetry '*as a kind of parallel universe that they can use to illustrate and illuminate states of mind they must deal with in their work*' (Canham & Satyamuthy, 2006, p.xiv) whether in the world of coaching, business or therapy (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010; Mazza, 2006; Whyte, 1994). The literature appears to indicate the value of poetry resides in its versatility and power as a mechanism to support deeper personal engagement, insight and learning from experience, development and wellbeing (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Kolb, 2014; Grisoni, 2008; Argyris & Schon, 1974) – all outcomes that might be relevant to coaching (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Paradoxically, the power of poetry may also be its limitation if the coach or coachee do not wish to participate; however, it may be valuable to explore such resistance, its ownership and its rationale (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003). Poetry has a strong tradition, in written and oral form around the world. In the Middle East, India and China, countries where I have worked, it is a rich form of storytelling, reflecting insight and wisdom (Orr, 2002). In its earliest forms, poetry was embraced as a form of narrative, enabling communication and collaborative thinking (Hardy, 2002). From a coaching perspective, embracing poetry may offer a potential opportunity for the Western world as the challenges of postmodernist reality impact at the level of the individual, team and organisation.

2.2.4 Poetry, Learning and Growth

The literature addressing the use of poetry in business appears to reflect a call to action akin to that which challenges existing approaches to coach development (Grisoni, 2017; Hawkins, 2015; Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1994). Hawkins (2015) challenges current thinking with respect to the purpose and potential contribution of coaching to society and the wider stakeholder community alongside current approaches to coaching and coach development. Such literature appears to reflect two key assumptions respecting humans as emotional beings, with an ambition to learn and grow (Plutchik, 2001; Knowles, 1988). This section will attend to the possible relationship between poetry, learning and growth.

When considering poetry in business, much of the literature focuses upon the reading and interpretation of poetic works, as in Whyte (1994), and Windle (1994), leading proponents of the broader role of poetry or the poetry of business life. My research interest is rather more specific as I am curious as to the potential of *creating* poetry as an enabler of reflexive practice in support of the development of professional coaching practice. From this perspective, it is interesting to read Orr (2002, p.5), who states:

... in the act of making a poem at least two crucial things have taken place that are different from ordinary life. First, we have shifted the crisis to a bearable distance from us; removed it to the symbolic but vivid world of language. Secondly, we have actively shaped and made this model of our situation rather than passively endured it as a lived experience.

Orr (2002, p.8) goes on to reveal the core purpose of such endeavour

the experience of hope and pleasure was revelatory to me then and still underlies my understanding of an essential purpose and meaning of lyric poetry.

Orr's (2002) experience of writing poetry reflects the kernels of my own experience and the rationale behind my research. As a poet, Orr (2002) reflects upon his own experience of the benefits writing and reading poetry has afforded him in navigating life, whilst acknowledging its developmental and transformative potential.

Claims regarding what poetry offers in terms of transformation and '*unusual*

connections between things and the modalities of abstract thought' (Morgan, 2010, p.212) appear meaningful and valuable. Grisoni (2017), Morgan (2010) and Whyte, (1994) are each enthusiastic about potential benefits at the individual, team and organisational levels as they reflect upon what can be learnt about self as reflected back through the creative process and the creative output. Norton (2017) expands such thinking with an encouragement to embrace personal narrative and personal poetry as lived experience, with an emphasis upon the experiential nature of reflexivity.

For individuals, the mental health benefits from expressive writing identified by Pennebaker (1997) and Mazza (2006) are expanded by Wall *et al.* (2017, p.1) who highlight the *'the gift of deeply transformational equipment through the use of words and writing'*, affording deeper levels of personal insight and awareness. Like Grisoni (2017) and Norton (2017) in organisational settings, Haertl (2014), Mazza (2006), and Orr (2002) suggest the developmental and transformative potential of poetry for individuals.

Therapeutic and poetic literature plus research highlight the importance of drawing upon lived experience when writing poetry (Haertl, 2014; Mazza, 2006; Orr, 2002). However, each author embraces the use of poetry for different reasons whilst delivering slightly different outcomes. Orr (2002) regards emotion as a reflexive, intuitive response and encourages the objectification of emotional experience through language, shape and form in order to appreciate the emotion. Mazza (2006) draws upon lived experience and the associated emotions enabling a cathartic release to facilitate the stabilisation of emotions. Such an approach to managing emotions apparently enables a sense of order to be fostered. Haertl (2014, p.6), like Canham (Canham & Satyamurthi 2006), uses poetry as an *'expression of inner self'*, acting as a bridge to transcend the conscious and access the unconscious. With varying interests rooted in therapy, poetry or expressive writing, each espouses a deeper, more reflexive approach to the use of poetry. Their shared purpose appears focused upon the healing potential of poetry and writing, which enable transformation, with implied insight and growth.

Whyte (1994, p.4) challenges the apparent austerity and perceived sterility of a corporate world where everything is black or white, with humanity and emotions marginalized, leading to a schism *'in the human psyche'* and reflected in *'the voice, like the eyes and the face ... traditionally a window to the soul'* (ibid., 1994, p.124). As in the therapeutic literature, Whyte (1994, p.295) appears to focus on the healing potential alongside the reclamation of *'all those human soul qualities sacrificed on the*

altar of organisational survival', including, in common with Morgan (2010), qualities of creativity, and innovation. Similarly, Bennis (2009, p.322) identifying *'poets as our original thinkers'*, Grisoni (2007) and Senge (1990) emphasise the recursive relational and inter-relational aspects of the wider system of which the poet is part. Such notions of systemic thinking and learning are in a quest for knowledge and development. Whyte's (1994) humanist perspective appears to be arguing for a richer, textured, soulful day-to-day organisational experience for the individual. Meanwhile Morgan (2010) and Grisoni (2007) appear to be embracing an organisational perspective as to how poetry can support the optimization and contribution of people and knowledge within such a structure. The business and poetry literature focuses upon an approach that delivers value for all parties: reader and writer; organization and individual; and the individual within the organization (Grisoni, 2017; Knight, 2015; Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1994). 'Value' is defined slightly differently subject to perspective, so within an organizational setting, Page, Grisoni and Turner (2013) consider the contribution to sensemaking and learning; Grisoni and Darmer, 2011 focus on organising and management processes; whilst Morgan (2010, p. 13) attends to *'the value of poetry for the business strategist'*.

2.2.5. Poetry and Coaching

Individuals who embrace coaching are typically addressing *'a live work-related issue or challenge'* (Hawkins & Smith, 2006, p.36) whilst seeking to improve, develop and/or grow within a corporate setting. Hawkins & Smith (2010, p.xiii) suggest coaching's core purpose is *'to enable ongoing learning, development and change in individuals and wider systems'* with coaches required to engage in their own *'personal developmental journey ... as well as an ongoing development of interpersonal change skills'*. The practice of ongoing continuing professional development is proposed as a vital competency for the ethical coaching practitioner (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Continuing professional development might include, but is not limited to courses, conferences, podcasts, literature and supervision. In an unregulated emerging profession, such development is self-regulated and self-determined by the individual practitioner. Reflection and reflexivity are regarded as essential enablers of professional development in the complex business of being a coach with its demands upon the human aspects of the coach as a professional and human being (Bachkirova, 2016). With poetry valued for its innate ability to inform and guide self, I am interested to explore the potential role of poetry as a reflexive vehicle to support the personal growth and professional practice of a coach within a business context.

The therapeutic literature (Haertl, 2014; Mazza, 2006; Baker & Mazza, 2004) offers evidence that poetry supports reflection, transformation and growth as it looks back on challenging and difficult experience(s) or trauma. I am interested to consider what can be learnt from a therapeutic setting and applied within a related but distinct helping setting (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Compared to therapy and counselling, business coaching is forward-looking, attending to an exploration of possibilities and choices, the optimisation of individual potential, and the action required to achieve personal goals, ambitions and learning (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Additionally, I suggest coaching is a dynamic process whereby the coach is supporting the coachee to embrace reflexivity in real time as they explore the coachee's lived experience, unconscious or practical limits to growth including established belief systems, influence(s) and options going forward (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cunliffe, 2002). As a coach, poetry offers a route into reframing the conscious and exploring the unconscious, whether by creating personal verse or reading the poetic work of others. As Grisoni and Darmer (2011) indicate, embracing poetry as an *instrument* of improvement creates an opportunity for the achievement of personal and organisational goals by tapping into and enriching the creative language and competencies of the enterprise. Poetry affords a platform for interpretation and sensemaking; for transformation and choice; for attending to identifying and unlearning established patterns and limits to growth; and redefining a way of being in role, in team, in the organisation and the wider community (Hawkins, 2015). Reflecting my research interest, this section has explored the potential of poetry in support of reflexive practice and learning within the coaching context.

2.3 Reflexivity

This section will focus upon exploring the '*what*' and '*how*' of reflexivity in consideration of a potential relationship with poetry and application within coaching. Bachkirova (2016, p.145) offers a definition of reflexivity that implies its dynamic, proactive, contemporary qualities: '*a unique human capacity of being conscious of one's own actions, thoughts, feelings and the effects of these.*' The 'in-the-moment' and retrospective self-awareness implied by the definition above, is considered the cornerstone of ethical, professional coaching practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Within coaching, Spinelli (2010) argues that in the face of life's uncertainties, self-awareness is vital for the integrity and enrichment of coach and the profession. Enhanced self-knowledge, insight and learning are potential outcomes of a deeper, more reflexive consideration of self and context both dynamically and retrospectively. Attending to

deep learning whilst taking responsibility for self, is a professional coaching capability endorsed by several key researchers (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Whilst the academic literature specifically exploring reflexivity within health and social care, education and pedagogy, and anthropology appears extensive, the literature attending uniquely to reflexivity as a concept in the coaching area appears less so. Within the coaching literature, writings about reflexivity typically address the concept within and in support of another topic, such as coaching related research. By contrast, my research focuses upon reflexivity as a concept within coaching practice.

With encouragement for coaches to engage with reflexivity in support of development of self and professional coaching standards (Bachkirova, 2016), engagement in doing so typically takes the form of logs, diaries or journals. Cox (2006) distinguishes between each of these media as the logging of an experience, attendance to feelings in a diary or sensemaking using a journal. Passmore (2015) suggests that learning through journaling is in harmony with a wider, contemporary approach to self-managed learning within organisations. Such an approach in support of reflection and reflexivity, is challenging and demanding in terms of time and discipline however for those who engage, *'the benefits are numerous and high'* (Passmore, 2011, p.282). Whilst journaling typically embraces words and pictures, my research interest extends beyond writing to specifically consider how poetry might support engagement with reflexivity. The poetry might be recorded wherever suits the author to facilitate reflection, criticality, learning and development.

When considering the value of poetry as a sensemaking instrument, the emphasis is on reflection, drawing upon observation, experience and insight (Armitage, 2014, Bolton, online). Such an approach seeks to provide a platform for the voice of the individual within the wider organisational system. Whilst complementary to my research, such an approach serves a different purpose. My research is focused upon the potential of poetry as a means of engagement with *reflexivity*, with little apparently written about how poetry might support deeper consideration of who I am, how I am and the recursive influence of myself on others, self-coaching and learning. The benefits of poetry as a *reflective* vehicle in support of a wider therapeutic intervention appear well supported (Haertl, 2014; Mazza, 2006; Baker & Mazza, 2004).

Whilst reflexivity with its critical attention to self lies at the heart of the HI (Moustakas, 1990) and Heuristic Self Search Inquiry (Sela-Smith, 2002), no definition of the term is offered by either author. Both methodologies will be embraced in this study and

discussed in Chapter 3; however, at this stage, defining the concept and its role within coaching is the priority.

2.3.1. Reflexivity and Reflection

Reflection and reflexivity are terms that are often used interchangeably, perhaps implying that differentiation is unnecessary (Passmore, 2011; Black & Plowright, 2010; Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000). However, the conflation of the terms reflection and reflexivity appears to drive confusion and reluctance to engage with what might be regarded '*as a purely academic pursuit*' (Wall et al., 2014, p.2). Clarity may be as vital as defining the differences between mentoring, coaching, counselling and therapy, since such differentiation respects similarities and differences whilst enabling focus, optimisation, professionalism and ethical practice for coach and coachee (Iordanou et al., 2017; Hawkins & Smith, 2006). In the world of business, differentiation is a vital, strategic enabler of growth, attending amongst other things to purpose, focus, priorities, approach and branding within the marketplace (Kaplan & Norton, 2001). Differentiation supports the uniqueness of the enterprise in the market place, enabling financial investment, product and customer choice and prioritisation of internal infrastructure.

From a coaching perspective, Cox et al. (2014) suggest that differentiation has an important part to play in defining and articulating identity and approach as a coach. Developing an appreciation of personal coaching style, interest and values alongside an awareness of professional skills and knowledge affords the opportunity to embody a '*model of practice that is congruent to this self*' (Bachkirova, 2016, p.145). Such consciousness and self-awareness enable choice in support of personal and professional growth and ethical practice that benefits the coach, coachee and the coaching profession (Iordanou et al., 2017). Building upon such congruity requires the coach, who has a primary role in catalysing the reflexive practice of his/her coachees to first practice upon self (Iordanou et al., 2017; Cox et al., 2014). Reflexivity is suggested as fundamental for deep personal change, learning and '*ethical coaching practice*' (Iordanou et al., 2017, p.38; Hawkins & Smith, 2006).

Using a shared set of characteristics that consider reflection and reflexivity, Table 2.3 synthesises each approach, drawing upon a range of authors (Bolton, 2009; Ryan, 2005; Cunliffe, 2004) in support of differentiation and clarification of the two approaches.

Difference through the Lenses of Shared Characteristics

Table 2.3

Reflection		Reflexivity
Separate	<i>Knowing/Being</i>	Integrated
External	<i>Learning</i>	Internal (whole body)
Mechanistic	<i>Leadership</i>	Systemic
Objective	<i>Reality</i>	Subjective
Depositing	<i>Teaching</i>	Enabling
Provided	<i>Skill Development</i>	Personal Responsibility
Delivered as Theory	<i>Bias</i>	Developed ex experience
Singular	<i>Interpretive Paradigm</i>	Plurality
Interpretivist	<i>Philosophy</i>	Social Constructionist
'Outside In'	<i>Theories of the Universe (Cunliffe, 2004)</i>	'Inside Out'/Own Voice
Professional Development	<i>Growth (Ryan, 2005)</i>	Personal Growth
Pinpointing what happened	<i>Focus (Bolton, 2009)</i>	Impact/influence/omissions

Reflection appears to be a competence or skill focusing upon the achievement of a specific outcome e.g. development or learning (Kolb, 2014; Black & Plowright, 2010; Moon, 2009) whilst Cunliffe (2004) posits reflexivity as a way of being. Iordanou *et al.* (2017, p.97) propose reflection and reflexivity as '*parts of a spectrum*' whereby reflection starts by developing an appreciation, awareness and understanding before evolving to reflexivity as a recursive process that probes, tests and questions our deeper assumptions, cognitive processes and behaviours. The shared set of characteristics identified in Table 2.3 draws upon different epistemological (emotion, physiology, cognition and intuition) and ontological underpinnings and my reading and interpretation of the authors cited.

2.3.2. Reflexivity and Learning

Cox *et al.* (2014, p.6) propose learning as '*the implicit theme*' for any coaching intervention, which taken in conjunction with Knowles (1988, p.63) encourages adults

'to take increasing responsibility for their own learning', supporting a paradigm where coaches are responsible for their development. Building upon such ideas, Iordanou *et al.* (2017, p.43) propose that ongoing professional development, supported by supervision and a reflexive orientation form the cornerstones of understanding self and is *'conducive to the development of ethical maturity'*. Whilst an exploration of coaching ethics sits outside the scope of this study, professional ethics are influenced by reflexivity, development and professional coaching practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Congruent with a person-centred coaching approach where *'the richest resources for learning reside in the adult learners themselves'* (Knowles, 1988, p.57), this speaks to the 'inside out' nature of reflexivity (Cox *et al.*, 2014; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Cunliffe, 2004). From a coaching perspective, appreciating the differences between reflection and reflexivity and the increasingly intense considerations of exploring potentially unfamiliar aspects of self, create opportunities to consider appropriateness of intervention, style and support for self and the coachee.

Reflection is typically considered a *'single-loop learning process'* (Argyris & Schon, 1974, p.19), attending to presenting issues, *'problem-solving and identification and correction of errors'* (Cunliffe, 2004, p.412). There is broad consensus regarding reflection as a retrospective or anticipatory process for creating order, forging connections and supporting improvement and learning, focused upon a specific purpose whether experience, performance-related or something else (Moon, 2009; Mezirow, 2009). *'Reflective analysis draws on traditional assumptions that there is an objective reality that we can analyse using logic and theory'* (Cunliffe, 2004, p.414). For a coach, embracing reflection as sufficient in terms of development or ethical practice, may be a limit to growth, since focusing on what is known, avoids the unfamiliar and the unknown.

'Double-loop learning' focuses upon behaviour, considering *'espoused theories'* alongside *'theories-in-use'*, testing for congruity between underlying beliefs, assumptions and values whilst exploring new possibilities (Argyris & Schon, 1974). From a coaching perspective, this may involve the surfacing and consideration of dilemmas, tensions, paradox and defensive behaviours at the level of the individual, team or organisation (Argyris, 1990). Reflexivity focuses on accepting responsibility for the construction of subjective reality, thereby offering challenge, choice and opportunity for growth (Cunliffe, 2004). Reflexivity as a process and a practice in real time and retrospectively, enables wider considerations to be observed, tested, challenged and reframed (Cunliffe, 2016; Alvesson *et al.*, 2008; Fook, 2002). Iordanou

et al. (2017, p.98) note that '*one of the fundamental roles of the coach ... is to facilitate reflexive agency in others*', which can be positioned, I suggest, as a 'triple-loop' approach to learning recursively examining deeply entrenched and potentially unfamiliar or unknown assumptions and behaviours. This may also be considered as engaging with a deeper, '*richer perspective*' of self (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.98).

The learning that emerges from a triple-loop learning strategy is potentially transformative and supports the unlearning of established personal norms (Hawkins, 2015; Mezirow, 2009; Cunliffe, 2016; Kember *et al.*, 2000). Unlearning and reframing existing personal paradigms facilitates consideration of the impact of such change on the wider system of which the individual is part. It is Cunliffe's (2016) continuous, real-time relational and inter-relational nature of reflexivity which I suggest, differentiates it from Mezirow's (2009) view of transformative learning, with the recursive interplay being presented as a triple-loop learning experience. My research considers the potential of poetry in supporting engagement with reflexivity by objectifying lived experience, creating a sense of order and a platform for exploration and examination of influences, assumptions, patterns and how they manifest practically (Argyris & Schon, 1974). Triple-loop learning seeks to expand the individual through richer self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-leadership (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015).

A key issue to emerge from the literature is the importance of moving beyond reflection to a deeper, more considered level of self-awareness and insight by surfacing and exploring personal contradictions, dilemmas and possibilities to enhance personal, professional and ethical practice (Bachkirova, 2016; Cox *et al.*, 2014; Cunliffe, 2004). Reflexivity is proposed as the cornerstone of '*philosophy driven practice*' (Cunliffe, 2004, p.408) with Iordanou *et al.* (2017, p.98) proposing that together, reflection and reflexivity '*form the foundations for ethical practice.*' Cunliffe (2004) acknowledges that it takes time and practice for reflexivity to become second nature.

As a coaching practitioner, embracing reflexivity as a triple-loop learning process is likely to result in the expansion and evolution of a coach's way of being, with implications for personal and professional practice (Bachkirova, 2016; Cunliffe, 2004). Embracing reflexivity as part of a coach's identity is in support of leveraging personal accountability for personal development and growth whilst enriching the supervision experience (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Effective supervision is considered a vital enabler of coach learning, development and effective coaching

practice (Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Whilst supervision is self-managed, practitioners, scholars and professional associations argue it is vital to support the wellbeing and personal self-care of the coach, ongoing professional development, and by paying attention to professional standards, is *'by extension, an ethical coaching practice'* (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.74). Ethical coaching practice emerges as an outcome of ethical maturity, correlating with personal maturity and personal growth.

From a research perspective, Willig (2001, p.10) argues that *'qualitative methods can be differentiated according to the extent ... they emphasise 'reflexivity'*. Academics including Alvesson *et al.* (2008), Etherington (2004) and Cunliffe (2004) present a clearer delineation between the modes of learning which I summarise as follows: -

- the lowest level of **reflection** is a descriptive, superficial effort (Moon, 2009), which might lead onto
- **'critical reflection'** essentially focuses upon problem-solving (Bolton, 2014) and/or the surfacing and understanding of assumptions and 'presuppositions' that may be *'socially restrictive'* (Fook, White & Gardner, 2006, p.4). Such understanding emerges from surfacing deeper, (un)conscious assumptions and forging connections. Such connectivity enables new, more empowering ideas, practices and choices to be made, bringing forth the potential for the power of emerging insights to be applied leading to transformation (Fook *et al.*, 2006). Notably Fook & Askeland (2007, p.13) position critical reflection specifically with the purpose of enhancing *'professional growth and social change'*, and then potentially dive deeper into
- **reflexivity** - a relational and inter-relational 'way of being' (Cunliffe, 2016) which attends to an appreciation of self (in terms of personal being, role, identity and influence, both past/present and future); relationships with self, others and the wider world plus consideration of personal being and influence upon context and vice versa. Meanwhile Alvesson *et al.*'s (2008, p.148) view of reflexivity as a dynamic product of *'linguistic, political and institutional influences'* – constructed, informed, shaped and embedded by research/institutional context reflecting the recursive influences impacting upon cognitive and emotional ways of being.

Drawing upon Mezirow (2009) and Kember *et al.* (2000) plus Ryan (2005) and Cunliffe (2004) enables a synthesis here in Table 2.4, which drops down below the superficial, presenting issues into the deeper, darker territory of the unknown. If reflexivity is acknowledged as a vital role within the coaching relationship, then this synthesis appears to be in harmony with a definition of coaching *'as a safe place to have difficult conversations'* (Peltier, 2010, p.xxviii) and an approach to coaching that potentially

supports 'systemic transformational' practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Hawkins & Smith, 2006).

Table 2.4 reflects a process, colour coded in shades of grey, moving from the single loop learning of reflection through to double-loop learning (Argyris, 1990) and critical reflection, and then reflexivity as triple-loop learning. Self-awareness and emotional maturity (Goleman, 1995) emerge as vital constituents in the enriched process of reflexivity: acknowledgement starts at the level of 'Introspection' (Mezirow, 2009) and becomes increasingly present through to an increased level of sophistication in 'reflexivity' (Ryan, 2005). It appears possible to reflect in isolation of reflexivity, but impossible to be reflexive without reflecting. Within a coaching context, Bachkirova's definition of reflexivity (2016, p.145) as

*a unique human capacity of being conscious of one's
own actions, thoughts, feelings and the effects of these*

apparently supports the practice of coaching and the quality and practice of reflexivity enabling sensemaking, connecting with the unknown, development and learning. As poetry supports sensemaking and engagement with the unconscious, so as a reflexive vehicle, poetry and reflexivity appear to be mutually supportive to enhance capability and learning (Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1994).

Principles based upon Mezirow, 2009	Descriptions based upon Kember et al., 2000	Enriched thinking courtesy of – in bold
Habitual Action (Mezirow, 2009)	A regular activity, learnt previously which by means of regular use evolves to become an activity performed unconsciously or with little thought	Non-reflective actions eg riding a bicycle. Argyris & Schon (1974, p.13.) refers to this as 'theory in use'
Introspection (Mezirow, 2009)	Awareness and appreciation of personal feelings and views of self and others (post-event)	Emotional intelligence (Goleman , 1995)
Thoughtful Action (Mezirow, 2009)	By drawing upon existing knowledge, learning is rooted and rationalised within existing sensemaking and knowledge frameworks	A cognitive-based approach e.g. school book-learning
Content Reflection - (Mezirow, 2009)	Attends to a subjective view (see /think/feel/act upon) as to 'what' took place	Reflective thinking – refining, being curious about and expanding personal frames of reference
Process Reflection (Mezirow, 2009)	Focus is on a subjective view as to 'how' i.e. personal approach or style	Reflective thinking – refining, being curious about/expanding personal frames of reference
Content & Process Reflection (Mezirow, 2009)	Content and process join in an integrated approach enabling the formation and learning of new frames of reference	Linkage of both the elements above
Premise Reflection (Mezirow, 2009)	A deeper level of subjective awareness which attends to 'why' or what motivates perceptions, thoughts, feelings and actions.	Critical reflection implies consideration and exploration of underlying values, beliefs and assumptions re choices and possibilities being made to a transformative level of personal change (Senge , 1990)
Reflexivity (Ryan, 2005) (Cunliffe, 2004)	Examine one's belief system (<i>epistemic</i> and behavior/praxis /methods (<i>methodological</i>) and embrace ambiguity, paradox, uncertainty, and 'critically informed curiosity as to how others perceive things as well as how I do and flexibly to consider changing deeply held ways of being.' (Bolton, 2009, p.14) <i>Giving up</i> existing views as much as <i>taking on</i> fresh perspectives. (Hawkins, 2015)	- 'systematic reflexivity is the constant analysis of one's own theoretical and methodological presuppositions' (Coughlan & Brannick, 2005, p. 6). - 'hyper reflexivity' as the deconstruction & analysis of personal praxis (ibid., p.6) - 'unlearning' / 'learning' 'in serving the wider stakeholder world' as much as 'human development' (Hawkins, 2015, p.4)

Like coaching, within the research process, awareness of self and what is perceived and experienced must be understood as a unique interpretation of what is at hand, based upon an array of influencing factors, including history, culture and linguistics (Willig, 2001). Such statements highlight the importance of the reader being sensitive to personal readership selection, whilst being mindful of authors' contextual considerations in term of culture and professional practice areas. Contextual considerations such as professional discipline have bearing upon the perspective offered when it comes to defining 'reflexivity'. Embracing the opportunity for interdisciplinary learning, Table 2.5 offers a snapshot of different perspectives of

'reflexivity' alongside the potential implications for coaching. Reflexivity appears to make specific contributions to the ongoing self-awareness and confidence of the coach as it supports development and ethical coaching practice.

All definitions embrace introspection and 'self' as starting points for reflexive practice with associations of consistency and real-time practice highlighted. Reflexivity emerges as a dynamic, postmodernist, constructionist practice supporting subtlety and ambiguity. Within coaching, the literature suggests reflexivity facilitates enhanced and sophisticated levels of coaching practice based upon the enriched development and maturity of the coach's personal and professional perspective(s) and practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011).

Summary of reflexivity and its potential considerations for coaching

Table 2.5

Author	View of reflexivity	Considerations for Coaching
Fook (2002, p.43)	<i>'Reflexivity is potentially more complex than being reflective, in that the potential for understanding the myriad ways in which one's own presence and perspective influence the knowledge and actions which are created is potentially more problematic than the simple searching for implicit theory.'</i>	Awareness of <i>'influence'</i> and <i>'power dynamics'</i> (role/culture/personal) appears vital in consideration of ethical competent coaching practice (Hawkins & Smith, 2010, p.265)
Alvesson, et al (2008, p.497)	Reflexivity means <i>'thinking through what one is doing to encourage insights'</i> and ... <i>the role that language, power/ knowledge connections, social interests and ideologies, rhetorical moves and manoeuvring in the socio-political field play in producing particular accounts.'</i>	Appreciation of the social, cultural and business context (Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2014) of the coaching contract affords both coach and coachee and the wider enterprise greater opportunity for coaching success. Such considerations are vital in reference to the wider system of which each is a part (Hawkins & Smith, 2010) and to optimize contribution to the wider stakeholder community (Hawkins, 2015).
Fook & Askeland (2007, p.45)	<i>'reflexivity can simply be defined as an ability to recognize our own influence and the influence of our social and cultural contexts on research, the type of knowledge we create and the way we create it.'</i>	
Cunliffe (2004)	<i>'questioning the relationship between ourselves and others: how we see the world, our assumptions/what we take for granted and the impact, our responsibility for 'constructing' life/self/social.'</i>	Coach self-awareness/self management are key for a coach aspiring to ethical practice and personal / professional growth (Bachkirova, 2015). As a recursive process, continuous awareness is necessary.
Steier (1989, p.9)	<i>'the turning or bending back of one's experience to oneself'</i> based upon "a radical constructivist, approach must be a social approach with communication processes both underlying and overlaying the ensuing understanding.'	Real-time reflexive consideration potentially affords a richer dialogue and relationship between coach and coachee as the coach draws upon professional skills and capabilities to bring forth real-time observations and sights. If coaching focuses upon learning and change, the value of addressing in-the-moment issues is likely to foster coachee confidence and progress (Cox, Bachkirova & Clutterbuck, 2014).
Lambert et al (2010)	<i>'an integral process in qualitative research whereby the researcher reflects continuously on how their own actions, values and perceptions impact'</i>	
Soros (2009)	<i>a self-reinforcing pattern whereby 'distorted views can influence the situation to which they relate because false views lead to inappropriate actions.'</i>	Bachkirova (2015, p.5) highlights the importance of a coach's awareness of personal deception to support coachee to minimize their own.

2.3.3. Reflexivity and Poetry

Typically, early engagement with reflexivity is promoted using personal journals as individuals seek to move beyond reflection and engage with sensemaking and more reflexive questions (Passmore, 2011; Cox, 2005; Cunliffe, 2002; Fook, 2002). With a range of creative processes to stimulate the senses and alternative ways of knowing, the focus is typically on getting '*to the heart of issues and obstacles that can be difficult to access and verbalize*' (Davidson & Schwarz, 2011, p.218). Such creative processes draw from writing and storytelling, drawing and mask-making, drama and physical movement, visualisation, and music, each applied in a considered and outcome-focused manner, supporting embodied reflection and learning (Palmer & Iordanou, 2015; Davidson & Schwarz, 2011; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). My research study is specifically directed at the potential of poetry as a form of creative expression that can act as a cathartic, healing process, supporting sensemaking and acting as a pathway connecting the conscious and the unconscious (Haertl, 2014; Morgan, 2010; Mazza, 2006; Whyte, 1994).

Blending together literature from a variety of disciplines to consider potential application in support of the development of professional coaching practice, poetry emerges in Table 2.6 as a potentially integrative catalyst for reflexivity and learning. Writing poetry and practising reflexivity focus upon internal sensemaking with insight and learning potentially emerging from self-dialogue or discussion. Dependencies emerge such as discipline, time and space, plus the audacity to face personal emotions alongside a clear commitment to ongoing personal and professional development (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Passmore, 2011; Rukeyser, 1949). Underlying assumptions attend to the coach embracing the emotional maturity to move beyond reflection (Mezirow, 2009) plus an interest to explore the creation of poetry, acknowledging its potential as a facilitator of internal sensemaking, development and growth. The challenges of creating poetry as a means of engaging with reflexivity, independently and collectively, appear significant, as do the potential benefits (Passmore, 2011; Morgan, 2010; Cunliffe, 2004; Whyte, 1994).

How might poetry support reflexive practice?

Table 2.6

Drawing Upon	The Potential of Poetry (ref Table 2.2)	The Potential of Reflexivity (ref Table 2.4)
Alvesson et al. (2008)	Poetry as a facilitator - 'to explore the silent and hidden worlds' (Armitage, 2014, p.37) - 'to reconcile... competing demands' (Windle, 1994, p.1) - 'melding soul life with work life' (Whyte, 1994, p.20) -> sense making (Morgan, 2010) -> bringing the unconscious into the conscious (Whyte, 1994) - i.e. (deeper level processing; emotional development)	Reflexivity as a dynamic relational way of being attends to three questions: <i>Existential:</i> Who am I and what kind of person do I want to be? <i>Relational:</i> How do I relate to others and to the world around me <i>Praxis:</i> The need for self-conscious and ethical action based on a critical questioning of past actions and of future possibilities (Cunliffe, 2004, p.408)
Mazza (2006)	Implications of poetry i.e. the power of the process • Offers potential as assessment/reflection/reflexive vehicle • Enables author to create order & structure through self expression • Supports/prompts acknowledgement and processing of emotions • Draws upon lived experience to forge connections/make sense • Affords objectification of and perspective to subjective experience • Suspends judgement to support deeper consideration • Catalyses personal development/expansion/empowerment/closure • Brings forth opportunity in business for case study & agenda setting - team building, cohesion & engagement, innovation & EQ development - Validation & feedback - Supervision	Reflexivity: Intensely recursive Process: Product of social/political/linguistic/cultural contextual influences Philosophically driven practice
Pennebaker (1997)		
The National Association for Poetry-Therapy (online)		
Mezirow (2003)		
Kember et al. (2000)	Limitations of poetry :- - Relevance of another's work/ style/approach may fail to resonate/ engage - If poetry or a selected poetic structure has no appeal to the coach or the coachee - Analysis may take place at an intellectual level only	Challenges of Reflexivity:- - Emotional maturity to progress past reflection required - Motivation to learn; discipline to practice and to write - Resistance to engagement with poetry due to current personal perceptions of media
		Underlying Assumptions in support of reflexive learning:- • Social reality is objective • Learning is a disembodied structured cognitive activity that takes place in the head, in which mind and body, intellect and emotion, thinking and acting are (can be attended to) separate(y). • We can apply knowledge to practice and use it to change and improve efficiency and effectiveness (situations/people/events)

2.3.4 Reflexivity and Coaching

Within the coaching process, the invitation to the coachee is typically to move beyond mere observation or recounting of an experience or situation to explore underlying assumptions and beliefs. Subject to coaching style and approach, this may facilitate deeper consideration of contextual factors, enabling consideration of fresh perspectives, options and choices. Alongside such consideration, the challenge of updating and enriching long-standing frames of reference may be taking place (Cunliffe, 2014; Bolton, 2014; Senge, 1994). During such a process, the coach is facilitating the coachee to think reflexively about self and the system of which they are a part and by which as a coachee, they are being influenced whilst affecting it (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cunliffe, 2016 & 2004; Hawkins, 2015). Reflexivity does not offer a single, distinct, familiar perspective; rather it brings forth consideration of a variety of perspectives from a range of angles, inviting the coachee to scrutinize the light and the dark, to pursue the magic of confusion and ambiguity and to distill the output of scrutiny into the reality of experience.

Whilst the literature provides no single definition of reflexivity, Cunliffe (2016; 2004) and Alvesson *et al.* (2008) focus on issues of influence and context. Cunliffe's (2004, p.415) proposal of reflexivity as '*a way of being*' emphasises on 'praxis' i.e. with a focus upon how '*questioning opens up our own practices and assumptions as a basis for working toward more critical, responsive, and ethical action*' and sits comfortably with my existentialist research paradigm.

It reflects the importance of a coach owning self within the coaching process and being sensitised as to where my attention is focused and why; what am I missing as a result; how does this influence the coachee etc. When Cunliffe (2004) situates reflexivity as a basis for ethical action, such considerations of self-awareness and personal insight appear to support the shared professional values and ethical considerations identified by the professional coaching associations at the UK Coaching Round Tables discussion (ICF, online).

My research draws on the potential relationship between poetry and reflexivity and when considering the literature, independently and in support of each other, the signs appear encouraging as I move on to explore the relevance to ongoing personal and professional development within the coaching community.

2.4 Coaching

Coaching is a partnership, in which the role of a coach is in part to facilitate the reflexivity of the coachee, with a focus upon self-directed change and learning (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cox *et al.*, 2014). The importance of the coach '*reflecting upon and practicing*' professional disciplines and techniques may be considered issues of continuous professional development (Cox *et al.*, 2014, p.144). Such an approach is vital in support of understanding self as a coach practitioner and in the development and maintenance of '*ethical coaching practice*' (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.38; Bachkirova, 2016). However, in a world of ambiguity and change, a single '*one size fits all*' approach to coaching and continuous professional development may reflect an oversimplification of practice and/or the requirement (Bachkirova, 2016, p.145).

2.4.1 Coaching competences, competencies or capabilities

Acknowledging the complexity of the operating environment, Bachkirova and Lawton Smith (2015, p.136) argue in support of the development of an enriched set of coaching capabilities. Such capabilities include the development of criticality and reflexivity as '*generic skills*' alongside '*the development of the coach as a person and a professional, aiming for congruence between the person and their particular model of practice.*' An emphasis upon capabilities carries potential implications for personal accountability regarding approach, philosophy, development and growth. Such a proposal apparently extends thinking beyond competences and competencies – terms often used interchangeably but reflecting differing levels of sophistication regarding professional capabilities. Bachkirova and Lawton Smith (2015) potentially offer much to the development and professionalism of coaching, whilst taking account of the evolving needs of clients and the operating environment.

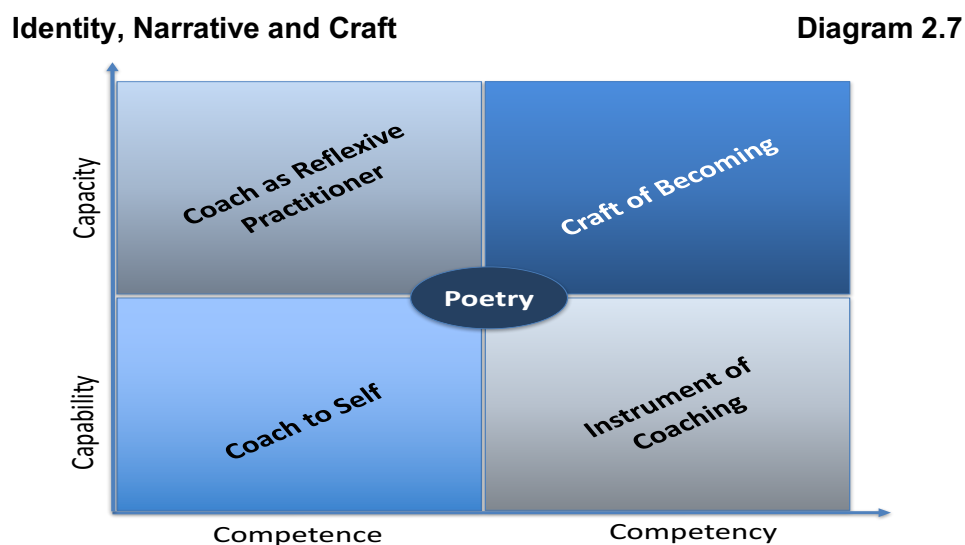
Cox *et al.* (2014) posit key influencing factors on coaching of individuality, relationship and context, highlighting the importance of the coach's ability to be flexible and responsive to the complexity and dynamics of the coaching environment and the coachee's world. A capabilities mindset alongside consideration of potential influencing factors apparently tends to notions of *effective* coaching support, as much as *efficient* coaching support as it tends to breadth and depth of coaching capability (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015). A view supported by Hawkins (2015) and Clutterbuck and Megginson (2011), each of whom argues for a mature, increasingly sophisticated coaching response to coachee support.

The development of reflexivity as a skill or competence, with associated notions of applied technique using learning logs contrasts with Cunliffe's (2015) view of reflexivity. Iordanou *et al.* (2017, p.98) argue that '*reflexivity is a powerful tool*', enabling subjective evaluation of underlying assumptions and beliefs, patterns of response and behaviour in support of ethical coaching practice. Bachkirova (2016) positions it as a capacity that resonates with reflexivity as a way of being, as opposed to a technique (Cunliffe, 2002). Cunliffe's (2002) ontological considerations appear to be an extension of Bachkirova and Lawton Smith's (2015, p.136) proposal for a postmodernist coaching mindset, emphasising the development of the coach as '*a person and a professional*'. Whilst I acknowledge that consideration of reflexivity as an integral part of who I am supports my existentialist paradigm, it also appears aligned with the idea of coach development and a quest for development of the whole person (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011; Cunliffe, 2002; Goleman, 1995). Consideration of reflexivity as an ontological stance suggests the ongoing pursuit of development of practice in congruence with self and in support of a coaching definition rooted in relationships, influence and learning (Bachkirova, 2016; Cox *et al.*, 2014).

Being able to specify the uniqueness of personal coaching practice and professional approach suggests a potential relationship with narrative and identity against the dimensions of competence, and competency juxtaposed with capability and capacity (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). The terms competence and competency, capability and capacity, whilst often used interchangeably, reflect subtle differences that emerge in the narrative of my CRs as they present their professional selves and are therefore useful to define in terms of this research. A competence is typically defined as a functional or job-based skill enabling effective performance within a specific area whilst a competency attends to the typical behavioural aspects to deliver high performance standards. Capability refers to the extent of one's ability to perform whilst capacity considers the wider breadth and depth of what might be available. In terms of my research, this may carry subtle implications for the journey from reflection to reflexivity; from an individual having some coaching skills, such as active listening to a sophisticated level of coaching capacity, where the coach is capable of being reflexive in-the-moment and post experience, for self and coachee.

Based upon the degree of attention by the coach to self as a practitioner with an array of coaching competences and techniques to draw upon or as an '*instrument of*

coaching' (Bachkirova, 2016, p.145) with a greater focus upon coach behaviours, assumptions and methods may surface in one's professional identity. In consideration of self-leadership as a coach practitioner, the depth of self-attentiveness involved when reflexivity is embraced may be reflected in personal and professional capability and capacity and the coach's personal and professional approach to 'Becoming' (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.104; Cunha, Pacheco, Castanheira & Rego, 2015). Diagram 2.7 reflects a synthesis of the relationship between the writings indicated and the craft of coaching, identity and narrative.



Clutterbuck and Megginson (2011) consider coach maturation a personal and professional dynamic quest for personal enrichment, applied judiciously in professional praxis. Irrespective of personal coaching experience and approach, writing poetry offers a reflexive opportunity for sensemaking, realising the unknown and invisible and affording opportunity for personal learning and the formulation of alternative action (Grisoni, 2017, Morgan, 2010, Whyte, 1994).

Conscious proactive development of reflexive capability appears an important step as an ongoing principle of self-leadership on the journey to becoming a reflexive coach practitioner (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.104; Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015) and supports:

- (a) personal and professional ethical competent coaching (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith (2015, p.136)
- (b) continuous self-leadership and personal and professional development (Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011); and
- (c) ethical maturation emerging from the digestion of experience, choice, self-awareness and learning (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017).

2.4.2 Coaching and Learning

My research question invites review of the literature on poetry, reflexivity, coaching and the implications for professional coaching practice. A thread of enquiry emerges that appears rich in possibilities regarding the maturation and growth of the coach as a vital contributory factor in ethical competent practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova *et al.*, 2016; Cox *et al.*, 2014; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011; Cunliffe, 2004; Cunliffe, 2002; Rogers, 1988; Lorde, 1985).

Bachkirova (2016) and Cox *et al.* (2014) emphasise the uniqueness of the individual coach, whilst highlighting the commonality of drawing upon existing knowledge and experience, forging meaningful relationships and expanding breadth and depth of capability (Bachkirova, 2016). When Rodgers (1988, p.56) stated that *'the degree to which I can create relationships, which facilitate the growth of others as separate persons, is a measure of the growth I have achieved in myself'*, he was highlighting an inherent challenge for those in the helping professions whereby a potential limitation to coachee/client growth may be the self of the coach. Such considerations carry implications for ongoing learning. In a similar vein, Lorde (1985, p.36) speaks of *'the quality of light by which we scrutinize our lives'* and the implications for the life *'we live and the changes which we hope to bring about through those lives.'* Cunha *et al.*'s (2015, p.2) managerial-based research proposes *'self-leadership as a process of self-development through reflexivity'*, offering a parallel between the role of the manager in supporting their own development and what I am suggesting, is the coach's accountability to self. Reflexivity affords the coach opportunity to lead and develop self in support of development. Iordanou *et al.* (2017) suggest that continuous professional development makes a vital contribution to ethical maturity in support of enriched ethical practice. Like learning, ethical coaching practice appears to be an ongoing journey as opposed to a destination.

My research question reflects my curiosity as to whether writing poetry based upon lived experience offers a coach reflexive opportunity for the illumination, revelation and distillation of experience (Moustakas, 1990). Taylor and Ladkin (2009) acknowledge the value of creative expression as a means of objectification of lived experience and revelation of the unknown. When considering poetry, Whyte (1994) highlights the power of bringing forth the unconscious while Morgan (2010) argues for the potential of poetry in sensemaking, bringing the unconscious into the conscious and problematising an issue (Grisoni, 2017; Whyte, 1994). Exploring, understanding and

learning about self through creative expression and specifically poetry as an ongoing part of self emerges as an opportunity '*in the process of becoming*' (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.104; Grisoni, 2017; Cunliffe, 2002).

Within coaching, reflexivity entails the coach being conscious of personal thoughts, actions, feelings and behaviour, during and post practice (Bachkirova, 2016). Reflexivity might be considered the illumination, revelation and distillation of self within an experience. Such consideration supports self-awareness, insight, learning, growth and wellbeing (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016).

In coaching, reflexivity is a vital aspect of the coach/coachee relationship, facilitating insight, choice and learning, so it appears vital for the coach to develop a rounded appreciation of the concept, based in part upon personal experience (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cox *et al.*, 2014). Such personal experience potentially offers benefits for coach and coachee as the coach learns more about self within the coaching process whilst upholding a commitment by the coach to self-care, self-improvement and self-development.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has explored the literature around the potential use of poetry as a reflexive vehicle in support of personal growth and professional coaching practice by deconstructing and exploring my research interest into the key elements of poetry, reflexivity and coaching. Whilst exploring each of these areas individually, my interest extends to potential inter/intra relationships and the recursive nature of such relations.

Drawing upon the experience of other disciplines, poetry emerges as a valuable, if demanding, form of arts-based expression with opportunities emerging for the coaching community in support of reflective and reflexive practice. Reflexivity and reflection are distinctive processes, each of which is considered vital for the development and maintenance of '*ethical coaching practice*' (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.38). Readings on reflexivity are synthesised in the 'Ladder of Reflexivity' (Table 2.4) demonstrating the evolving intensity from reflection to reflexivity as an ongoing, deep-dive, recursive process supporting insight, choice and learning. Such learning is reflected as a triple-loop learning process based upon an ongoing curiosity that supports examination and consideration of the dynamic interplay between aspirational values, beliefs and behaviours alongside the reality as influenced by lived experience

and the impact of others. Ongoing professional development, whether in the form of supervision or knowledge enhancement, is positioned as an investment for the benefit of self and coachees in supporting the achievement of personal and professional goals (Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Bachkirova, 2016). Coaching is complex and demanding. As an unregulated, emerging profession, it attracts practitioners from a wide range of backgrounds and professional disciplines who assume accountability for the upholding of personal and professional standards, including personal awareness, understanding and insight (Bachkirova, 2015; Cox *et al.*, 2014). Embracing poetry in support of reflexivity appears to support these ambitions and to add value in terms of the development and consideration of options and choices that may have been previously unknown (Grisoni, 2017).

Chapter 3 - Methodology

This chapter attends to the methodology employed to study poetry and reflexivity in support of professional coaching practice. It begins with a consideration of the research philosophy, including ontological and epistemological perspectives and the quest for alignment and congruence between the research study and my espoused philosophical stance. It moves on to consider the impact of such philosophical underpinnings on my selected methodology and research approach.

Embracing a heuristic approach affords equal privilege to exploring the research question whilst simultaneously addressing my development as a researcher and coach (Moustakas, 1994). The Ancient Greek word *heuriskein* meaning 'find' or discovery encourages a spirit of inquiry rather than a quest for perfection and certainty. Such inquiry supports tentative consideration of emergent ideas, which may be interesting but prove irrelevant in answering my research question. Such principles sit comfortably with my existential, humanist worldview, which affords primary consideration to the individual as a human being alongside the optimisation of human potential. This is enriched by my social constructionist epistemology focussing upon the development of meaning and knowledge through social engagement, interaction and interpretation.

A perceived tension between 'subjectivity' and 'objectivity', plus an ambition for personal ownership and accountability in the research process encouraged expansion of my HI (Moustakas, 1994) to embrace HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002). HSSI seeks to address some of the expressed criticisms of the HI methodology in terms of rigour and application whilst embracing a desire to facilitate personal growth through rigour, accountability and discipline (Ozertugrul, 2015). Morgan and Smircich (1980) argue for the importance of the individual researcher to acknowledge, understand and embrace personal assumptions or beliefs to facilitate understanding, integrity and knowledge contribution. Grisoni (2008, p.3), highlights the potential use of poetry as '*a reflective and analytical tool of inquiry*' and as this study focuses upon poetry and reflexivity, including HSSI for the analysis of three personal poetic anthologies as a subset of my HI methodology supports optimisation of self-insight and ownership of personal assumptions and beliefs as part of the process.

Embracing HI supported by HSSI is consistent with my research interest, since I am considering the essence of my CRs' experience as evidenced by exploration, interpretation and discussion supported by analysis of my own experience drawing

upon my poetic anthologies. Such congruity between the nature of phenomena under research and research method seeks to address issues of alignment, as my research question is exploratory and curious as to the experience of CRs, supported by that of myself.

Engagement with a qualitative rather than quantitative paradigm is in tune with my inquiry rooted in curiosity, openness and search for meaning, insight and learning (Patton, 2014). Blastland and Dilnot (2008) challenge societal presumptions of objectivity and determinism in the primacy of numerical data highlighting my belief in the richness of diversity in human experience with associated impact upon interpretation and sensemaking. Cunliffe (2011) reflects upon the increased complexity of the twenty-first century researcher's paradigm and the knowledge enrichment that has emerged from enhanced and evolved nuance, differentiation and interpretation. Against this backdrop, I acknowledge this study is not without bias; it reflects the bias and influences of each participant, with my assumptions and influences being laid bare on occasion.

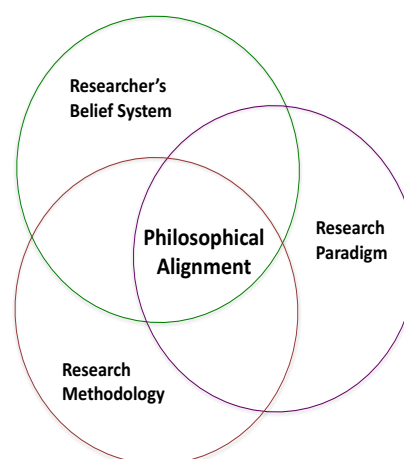
3.1 Research Philosophy and Approach

The importance of congruity between the research question, the selected method(s) for data collection and data analysis is frequently posited (Cunliffe, 2011; Willig, 2001). McLachlan and Garcia (2015) highlight the need for alignment between the researcher's research philosophy and methodology to facilitate understanding and

insight whilst reinforcing congruity and alignment and addressing considerations of validity and integrity of results as per Diagram 3.1.

Philosophical Alignment

Diagram 3.1



Exploration of phenomenology and its foundations addressed personal beliefs inherent in my research question, including an acknowledgement that as the researcher, I am present throughout the research. Giorgi (1994, p. 205) states

Nothing can be accomplished without subjectivity so its elimination is not the solution. Rather how the subject is present is what matters and objectivity itself is an accomplishment of subjectivity.

It appeared disingenuous to secularize myself in the research process, either above or below my CRs (CRs). To ignore my experience of the phenomenon at hand or the research process itself, was to potentially diminish the study. My focus as the researcher relied upon acknowledgement and ownership of what was mine. Finlay (2009, p.13) highlights the *'dialectic movement between bracketing pre-understandings and exploiting them reflexively as a source of insight.'* To avoid the dangers of self-indulgence and/or prioritising self within the phenomenological research process, Finlay (2009, p.13) highlights the importance of embracing the *'intersubjective relationship between researcher and researched'* alongside the experience of the co-researched. Drawing upon Wilber's (2006) Integral Approach with its *quadrants* of 'I/We/It/Its'; the focus and balance between the interior and the exterior; the tension between subjective and objective is part of the ongoing challenges facing the phenomenological researcher. The theme of 'self within the research' is implicit within my research question and is something of a 'leitmotiv' throughout the study. As such, self carried a direct bearing upon my methodological choices and the enhancement of my initial selection of HI (Hiles, 2008).

An overview of the philosophical territory of my research methodology is reflected in Table 3.2, offering my interpretation of the key qualities of each element and situating the methodological considerations of my research.

Table 3.2 An Overview of the Philosophical Terrain Purpose of (Human Science) Qualitative Research <i>'to illuminate and better understand in depth the rich lives of human beings and the world in which we live'</i> (Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2006, p.2)	
Phenomenology (Finlay, 2009) An exploration as to how human beings perceive, construct, interpret and make sense of lived experience, individually and collectively to reveal a deeper sense of essence and meaning	
Husserl (Science > Philosophy) The (objective and intentional) study of lived experience or the lived world through bracketing /denial <i>Research Participant = YOU distinct from ME</i>	Methodology: - Heuristic Inquiry (Moustakas, Psychologist, 1994) - Recognition of the value of qualitative research - The totality of experience rather than solely on its component parts - Search for meaning and essence of experience - Obtaining experience through first- person accounts, either formally/informal conversations/interviews - Imperative recognition of experience as data & evidence - Question and research formulated based upon (intense) personal interest of researcher Experience & behaviour = both subject & object/parts & whole Importance of Intuition
Unique Feature - Transcendental Phenomenology Setting aside prejudgements 'epoche' (refrain from judgement) is the vital first stage, enabling the researcher to encounter <i>'freshly as for the first time'</i> the totality of what is available (Moustakas, 1994, p.34). This initial phase of research aims to surface the researcher's biases and assumptions thereby improving self-awareness (Lavery, 2003)	
Key Linguistic Differentiators:- Methodology - a creative/ instinctive approach to developing understanding to whatever is at hand Method - defined and prescribed approach (Lavery, 2003, p.16) Social Constructionist – concerned with engagement in the development of individual understanding e.g. HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002) Social Constructionist – concerned with engagement in the development of collective understanding e.g. HI (Moustakas, 1994) Heuristic (adj) an approach to learning/knowledge gained by experience (n) argument derived from experience. <i>Metaphors</i> e.g. 'rule of thumb'; 'trial & error'; 'educated guess'; 'common sense' 'intuitive judgement' (Grk) 'Heuriskein' - to discover; to inquire	Methodology: - Heuristic Self Search Inquiry (Sela-Smith, Psychologist, 2002) - Reporting of personal subjective experience - Tacit knowing of the previously unknown - Internal discovery - Going with the ebb and flow of personal learning and growth - Themes for explication are sought from self - Evidence of personal transformation - 'I-who-feels' (Wilber, 2006) - Personal Story

As a methodology in the phenomenological tradition, HI (Moustakas, 1994) attends to a systematic inquiry into defining the essence of a specified human experience (Hiles, 2001). Drawing upon the lived experience of the researcher and CRs, HI is concerned to distill wider, relevant messages of more general value and appeal (Cresswell, 2006). As a research method, HI attends to a shared quest for meaning and sensemaking of lived experience, affording alignment with my research interest. (Hiles, 2001). HI focuses upon inter/intra-relationships between the outside and the inside; self and others as does reflexivity and poetry (Cunliffe, 2011; Grisoni, 2008). HI is also concerned with the systemic nature of being and the relevance of individual learning for wider application, thereby supporting my existential values and doctoral ambitions of making a professional contribution to coaching (Hiles, 2001).

The focus of my study is to explore the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. The phenomenon with which I am concerned is the interplay between writing poetry and reflexivity and how this might manifest itself in practice. Engaging with a select number of CRs would support exploration of lived experience, with the potential for individual and collective development and insight. The phenomenological roots of HI reside in a search for meaning, acquiring data to explain the essence of a human experience, and embracing the two main Husserlian challenges of '*epoché*' and '*reductio*' (Moustakas, 1994, p.34). For the researcher, this demands that he/she embrace the critically self-aware challenge of questioning his/her current worldview and to recognize and accept how things have come to be.

HI is not without its critics as to the integrity and validity of researcher perspective, and the impact upon the integrity of the results. Such criticism, often levied at qualitative research in general, demands consistency and alignment of research question, researcher's philosophical paradigm and methodology. Specific criticisms of HI appear to reside in ambiguity whether regarding the role of the researcher as participant, the inclusion of participants, the specifics of the process or the use of language (Ozertugrul, 2015). To address the role of '*self*' within the research, Sela-Smith (2002) drew upon Wilber's (2006, p.3) Integral Method where attention is on addressing '*both yourself and the world around you in more comprehensive and effective ways*'. With a focus upon expansion of the HI process to enrich and facilitate rigour, three key strands of appeal emerged for me:

- A professional doctorate is about professional contribution and my research study is focused upon offering a contribution to professional coaching practice. At the heart of professional coaching guidance lies *personal* responsibility for increasing awareness, insight, leadership and coaching (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Bachkirova (2011) extolls the importance of continuing professional development, supervision plus criticality and reflexivity in support of ethical and competent practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Hawkins & Smith (2006) argue that a systemic transformational coaching approach positions the coach within the overall process, highlighting the need for awareness of personal influence upon the system in real time (Cunliffe, 2004). Hutchison (2015) and Spinelli (2010) reflecting an existential philosophical paradigm, argue such sensitivity is vital for the integrity and enrichment of the coach and his/her profession whilst Iordanou *et al.* (2017) endorsing Bachkirova & Lawton Smith (2015) posit that such awareness is vital for continuous professional development and ethical, professional coaching practice. By expanding my core HI research methodology to include HSSI, I sought to enrich professional understanding and to enhance the rigour and transparency of self and methods associated with the early stages of the HI process.

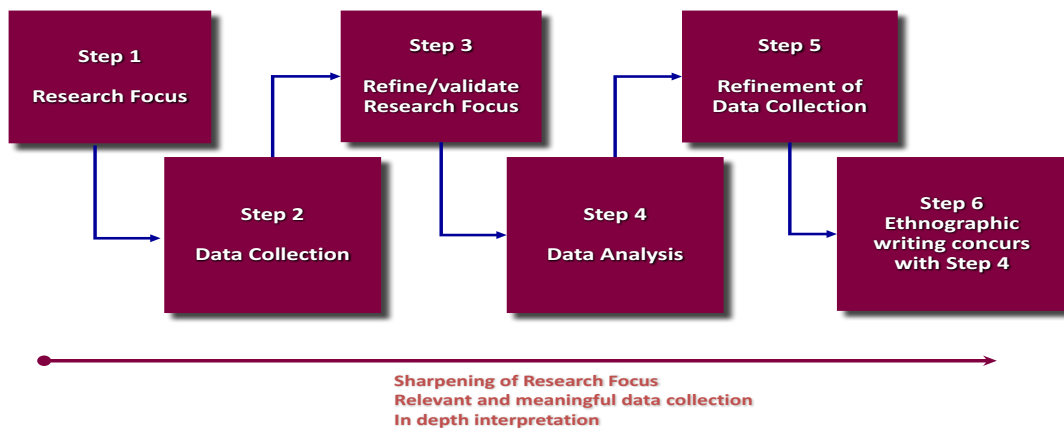
- This study is focused upon the learning of my CRs and myself by engagement with a study that is of personal and professional interest (Moustakas, 1994). Sela-Smith's (2002) work was catalysed by considering whether Moustakas (1990) potentially compromised the rigour of his own process when considering his own experience alongside that of his CRs. Balancing the lived experience of the CRs with that of the researcher appeals since it offers the potential distillation of the multiplicity of lived experience that will afford valuable insight into the essence of a phenomenon and supports a social constructionist worldview. I do not wish to exclude or privilege myself within this process; rather to acknowledge what is mine with the same discipline and attention I afford to my CRs.

- Armitage (2014) and Grisoni (2008) investigated the role of poetry in facilitating 'reflective' practice. My research attends to the role of poetry in supporting 'reflexivity'. Embracing supported by HSSI offered a disciplined, deep dive and holistic approach to account for 'self' within the process and within the interpretation of my CRs' data. Such an approach afforded increased transparency as to my reflexive practice, my bias, and myself as a researcher and coach practitioner.

3.2 Options for Research Methods

My early research question reflected an interest in the role of poetry in the development of my own coaching practice. An early methodological consideration included autoethnography as it explores *'the relationship between self and others'* within the context of *'three (inter) connecting concepts culture, self and others'* (Chang, 2008, p.29). Whilst this initially afforded much optimism in terms of method, autoethnography (Diagram 3.3) appears to hold many challenges in terms of validity, replicability and contribution to the wider coaching profession – each a key element in the professional doctorate approach. Thus, I found myself uncertain as to whether autoethnography was the right method within the wider context of my doctoral interests, or whether I was avoiding embracing research participants and if so, why.

Diagram 3.3 Methodology: **Autoethnography**



Such self-dialogue opened the way for consideration of alternatives, many of which were relatively easy to discount (e.g. Case Study, Grounded Theory and Conceptual Inquiry), since they failed to address key principles inherent in my research interest. Such principles were rooted in personal experience as data to inform the research, implying equality of status for CRs(s) and researcher, attending to meaning-making and the essence of a phenomenon.

The differences between HI (Moustakas, 1994), HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002) and Autoethnography (Chang, 2008) are apparently subtle, with the unique qualities of each emerging more clearly when compared here in Table 3.4.

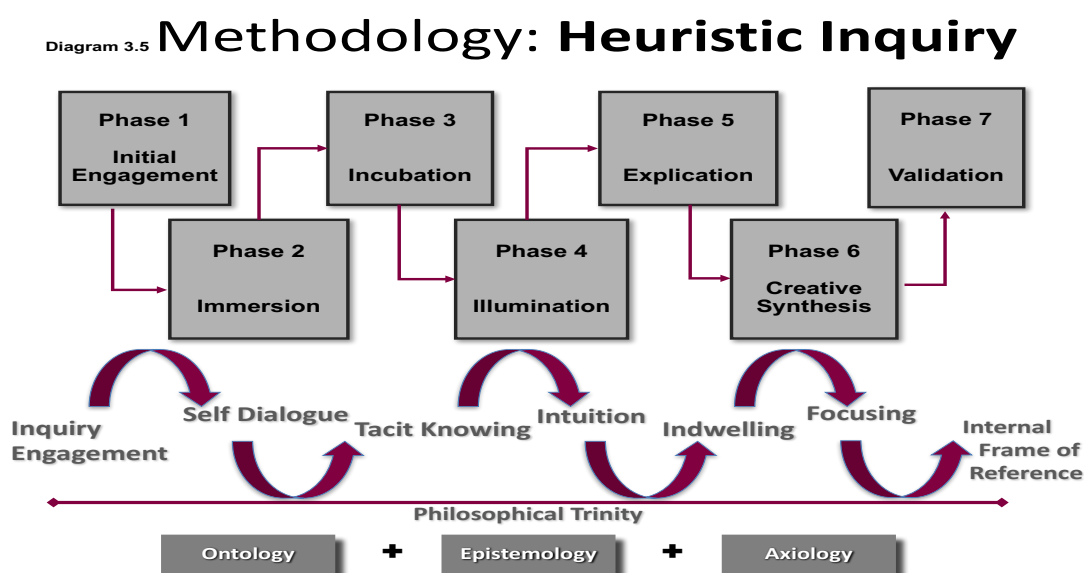
Table 3.4 – A comparison of HI/HSSI and Autoethnography.

Heuristic Inquiry (HI)	Heuristic Self Search Inquiry (HSSI)	Autoethnography
'In essence, it is a research process designed for the exploration and interpretation of experience, which uses the self of the researcher.' (Hiles, 2001, p.1) 'The focus in exclusively and continually aimed at understanding human experience.' (Moustakas, 1994, p.19) 'Searching for meanings and essences of experience rather than measurements and explanation' (Moustakas, 1994, p.21) The 6-stage process is presented as linear/ sequential but in practice, is dynamic and circuitous.	Integral self-search approach surfacing/drawing upon 'data (residing) in the researcher' and where s/he 'wants to engage the phenomenon under investigation through personal experience' (Ozertugrul, 2015, p.3) The goal of HSSI is personal transformation by coming 'to a deeper under- standing of whatever is calling out from the inside of the self to be understood' (Sela-Smith, 2002, p.64). Focus is upon emotion triggered by crisis e.g. physical event (cancer) that leads to emotional trauma e.g. grief. Address resistance to 'I-who-feels'(ibid, p.83) 'Expansion of Moustakas' (Sela-Smith, 2002, p.84) to address requirement to embrace all four quadrants of Wilber's (2005, p.28) Integral Operating System i.e. 'universal, but intuitive and developmental framework' (Ozertugrul, 2015, p.2) The process is dynamic and circuitous	'It renders the researcher-participant opportunities to explore past and present experiences while gaining self-awareness of his or her interactions and their socio-cultural effects.' (Butler, 2009, p.1) 'Autoethnographers vary in their emphasis on the research process (graphy), on culture (ethno) and on self (auto)' and 'different exemplars of autoethnography fall at different places along the continuum of each of these three axes.' (Chang, 2008, p.48) Presented by means of life histories, native or reflexive memoirs The process is dynamic, not linear, with overlap/mix
'A process that begins with a question or a problem, which the researcher tries to illuminate or find an answer to. The question itself is usually focused on an issue that has posed a personal problem and to which answers are required. It seeks through open-ended inquiry, self-directed search and immersion in active experience, to get inside the question by becoming one with it' (Gray 2014, p.33) Focus is upon 'what works?' (Sela-Smith, 2002, p.58)	'First person singular search inquiry' (Ozertugrul, 2015, p.4) with no detachment from phenomenon under investigation. Address resistance. Data collection via written rather than audio recording of internal self-dialogic/dialectic process, sometimes in real time, to make the internal accessible to reader. Researcher as both researcher and participant (Ozertugrul, 2015) – duality/ambiguity 6 Es – 'Experience, Express, Explore, Explicate, Extricate and Experience Anew' (Sela-Smith, online)	Self & Others as focus of inquiry - Self as main character; others in supporting role - Others as co-researchers or co-informants - Others as the primary focus, yet also as my entry in my world Tools. Self as personal memory; diaries; inventories; visualizing (charting relationships); self-observation (thoughts /behaviours/emotions as occur in natural contexts); self-reflection re identity;

Analysis is focused upon a search for themes and patterns to distill key messages that have wider relevance.	Moustakas (1990) analytic phases/structured approach used for analysis within HSSI.	Textual artefacts i.e. documents. External = interviews/focus groups/ questionnaires
Epistemology : Subjectivist	Epistemology: Existential Reality Sela-Smith = feelings; Meents = self-transformation by intuition; Ferendo = connectedness with others thru spiritual practice	Epistemology : Subjectivist vs Objectivist
Ontology: Descriptive and/or Interpretivist	Ontology: Interpretivist	Ontology: Constructivist
Possible Limitations: Challenge of foundational question and emphasis upon shared intensity of experience for researcher/CRs. Potential for researcher bias as 'places at the fore' researcher's experience/ reflections/insights of the phenomenon might influence the interpretation of the findings (Patton, 2014, p.108). Generalisation of findings given limited numbers of researchers. Process control - timescales/saturation <i>'Potential disconnect between analytic tools' (application of methodology for individual and co-researchers)</i> (Ozertugrul, 2015, p.4) <i>'Fine line between subjective and objective'</i> (Ozertugrul, 2015, p.4) Ambivalence in use of language & stance between subjective experience and objectification/ projection onto experience of co-researchers (Cunliffe, 2011)	Possible Limitations: Validation Very new/emergent form of research i.e. late C20/C21 therefore experience and evidence database limited and reputation shallow Potential for self-deception Challenges of integrity and generalisation of findings Challenge to stay with <i>'internal orientation'</i> and to deal with personal resistance (Sela-Smith, 2002) Challenge to stay with the emotions and possible associated, discombobulation Challenge to avoid pressures of time/method to maintain integrity of approach Sela-Smith emphasis on <i>'feelings'</i> (Ozertugrul, 2015, p.2)	Possible Limitations: The on-going tension in qualitative research between objectivity and subjectivity; between objectivist/ subjectivist and intersubjectivist (Cunliffe, 2011) Emotional nature of personal inquiry and its impact upon the objectivity of researcher stance – balance/integrity/ transparency and rigour Question as to contribution and wider application of findings

3.3 Heuristic Inquiry (HI – Moustakas, 1990; 1994)

'Discovery through self-inquiry and dialogue' accompanied by 'a full story that is vividly portrayed and further elucidated through art and personal documents' (Moustakas, 1994, p.1) are implicit principles within my research interest. My research question focuses upon poetry and its potential relationship with reflexive practice so I also considered the wider potential of HI. HI requires me to become a researcher who, by taking account of self, reflexively and critically via a multiplicity of lenses throughout the research study, is *'better equipped to conduct more insightful, deeper and richer research'* (Clarke, Broussine & Watts, 2015, p.4). Diagram 3.5 reflects my view of the seven phases of the HI methodology in parallel with associated underlying processes (Hiles, 2001; Moustakas, 1990).



The HI process, with its phased structure and underlying disciplines appears linear, but in practice it is dynamic and iterative. Exploring my research question with CRs supported social constructionist interests, affording challenge and stimulation for all. Hiles (2001) highlights the time requirements associated with the researcher becoming at one with the research question and from experience, this did take time. I had been considering the bones of my question for some time; in fact, my curiosity as to how the creation of poetry might support personal growth is evident in my initial application for the DCaM programme. Specifying and testing the territory and boundaries of my research interest emerged through a dynamic process of self-dialogue, intuition and trust of my subconscious and tacit knowledge, plus engagement with others as they inquired and challenged my interest and resolve, reflecting an interpretive social constructionist approach.

3.4 Recruiting HI Co-Researchers (CRs)

The HI process is concerned with equality in the status of the co-researchers (CRs) and the researcher and implies considerations of power/equality/contribution and value for all participating in the process. This research study sought voluntary participation from ten coach practitioners interested in exploring personal experience(s), reflexively through the creation of poetry. The sample size was complementary to my HI research approach, and supportive of my research interest and constraints regarding data management and analysis, time and resources (Moustakas, 1990; Patton, 2014). CRs were recruited via a purposive, snowballing approach or referral via personal and professional executive coaching networks e.g. OBCAMs or LinkedIn contacts (Patton, 2014). Participation in the research was subject to currently practising as a coach and an expression of interest based upon a high-level overview of the research focus.

Each CR received a formal invitation to participate in the research accompanied by a Participant Information Sheet detailing the general process plus the opportunity to attend a voluntary workshop focused upon exploring what constitutes poetry (Sample materials – Appendix A). CRs played a key role of engagement whereby '*a full and complete depiction of the experience from the frame of reference of the experiencing person*' (Moustakas, 1994, p.264) was embraced throughout the data collection and data analysis process. CRs were invited to take part in a two-stage process:

- A one-to-one in-depth, semi-structured 90-minute interview to explore individual approaches to reflexive practice and to invite CRs to engage with the creation of poetry as a means of reflexive practice over a 2/3-month period to explore the impact on personal development and coaching practice.
- A final one-to-one in-depth, semi-structured 90-minute interview to explore CRs' experience and to consider any emergent issues from the first interview and/or the workshop.

The time commitment for interviews for each CR totalled three hours.

A voluntary one-off three-hour group workshop to explore a poetic writing process was designed and offered to all CRs (Appendix B) in three different locations to support the geographical spread of my CRs. No workshops took place due to lack of CR availability. A structured and disciplined approach to sourcing and on-boarding was embraced from the earliest stages of CR engagement reflecting my humanist and interpretivist approach. Principles of confidentiality, and anonymity alongside demographic and practical interests of coding and contact information were embraced. Relationship-building with my CRs was prioritised as demonstrated in the detail and

integrity of the related micro-methodological approach of Table 3.6. A similar approach was repeated for the second round of interviews.

Detailed co-researcher engagement process

Table 3.6

	Content	Attachments	My Timescales	CR - Interviews
1 st Email (standard format)	Introduction Enquiry re Interest to Engage	Recruitment Invitation Participant Info Sheet	Introduced by 3 rd party – same day	Interview Process Connect on LinkedIn Interview Venues Skype - Connect - Open with camera on - Close camera after initial greeting (internet speed) Face to face - Home - Office - Pub - Motorway Services
Response	Yes/No/Nothing			
2 nd Email (standard format + customisation)	Yes - Thank you. Possible dates/times/locations No – Thank you & good luck Nothing - nothing		Same day as response	Interview Principles - Maximum of 2 per/week - (T) Arrive 10/15 mins early - 2 days/90 minutes/trans
Response	Confirmation			
3 rd Email (standard format + customisation)	Confirmation of date/time/ location Skype info exchange if req'd		Same day as date/time/ location confirmed	Interview Documentation • Interview structure • Reflexive log • Poetry & Reflexivity • The role of poetry & reflexivity in coaching Possible Poetic Workshops • Proposed agenda • Oxford (scheduled 17/3) on invitation moved to • London (scheduled 4/4 with 4 attendees – each cancelled so workshop cancelled 31/3) • Bristol (scheduled 17/4 no available delegates)
4 th Email (standard format + customisation)	Reminder re scheduled interview – date/time/location	If Skype – PIS & Consent Reflexive log + Poetry & Reflexivity Task Poetic Writing Guidelines	24 hours in advance of scheduled interview slot	
5 th Email (standard format & customisation)	Thank you Confirmation re transcript process		Same day as interview	
6 th Email (standard format & customisation)	Positioning of transcript - Good to Go or any amendments	Transcript	Within 7 days of Interview	
Response	Good to Go (amendments)	(Modified) Transcript		
7 th Email (standard format & customisation)	Chase if no response to 6 th email received	Transcript	2 weeks after 6 th Email	
8 th Email (standard format & customisation)	Thank you. Support re Poetic Writing task June/July interview		Same day as transcript confirmation received	

The HI Interview Process

Broad interview guidelines (Appendix C) were developed pre-interview to support my thinking as the researcher plus a small range of materials (Appendix D) to facilitate the engagement of CRs with the process, the concepts of reflexivity and poetry. Included was a reflexive log (Appendix D.2) which moved from reflection through to reflexivity (Moon, 2009; Cunliffe, 2004). The consent form focused upon transparency of process with agreement sought re. note-taking and audio recording. An expression of interest was sought regarding a workshop and/or a poetic writing exercise whilst indicating the CR could withdraw from the process at any time, without explanation (Patton, 2002). Two CRs withdrew shortly before their second interview with data from another inadmissible due to an unsigned Consent Form (Appendix A.4).

As a researcher and trained interviewer, embracing a semi-structured approach to the 60-minute long interviews ensured that, against the need for a repeatable and reliable broad process, I could ask questions, listen, evaluate the response and probe/respond accordingly. This facilitated a conversational and generally relaxed atmosphere. Interviews were recorded, transcribed by myself and passed to my CR for review and sign off (Patton, 2002). Minor amendments were incorporated and annotated with due consideration given to maintaining the confirmability, dependability and reliability of the research data. Opting to transcribe the interviews myself was time-consuming but invaluable, enabling familiarity and confidence, whilst supporting the 'Engagement' (phase 1) and 'Immersion' (phase 2) stages of HI (Moustakas, 1994).

3.5 Heuristic Self Search Inquiry (HSSI – Sela-Smith, 2002)

Having settled with HI where the researcher and CR share an equal platform, a portion of the data lies with myself as researcher. Concerned to ensure the rigour and integrity of my role within the research process, HSSI emerged as a complementary '*extension*' of HI, with a specific focus upon roles and emotions (Sela-Smith, 2002, p.84).

Sela-Smith (2002) offers a 6-step, deep dive model, which with '*an unwavering and steady inward gaze*' (Moustakas, 1990, p.13), addresses Experience/Express/Explore/Explicate/Extricate/Experience Anew. Catalysed by emotion arising from experience and a commitment to personal transformational change, Sela-Smith's (2002) development of HSSI resonated with my ambitions to be fully engaged with the HI process whilst structuring my own transformational journey based upon lived experience (Kegan, 2009). Kegan in Illeris (2009) suggests that transformational learning reflects epistemological, behavioural and cognitive aspects by expanding and deepening the individual's personal frame of reference.

Like HI, HSSI is a non-linear, dynamic and rigorous structure that supports robust analysis and evaluation of the researcher's emotional and lived experience in support of personal growth and transformation. My HSSI activity drew upon three autobiographical anthologies written between 2013-2015 to distil the essence of embracing poetry in support of engagement with reflexivity as part of the development of my professional coaching practice as a business coach (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016).

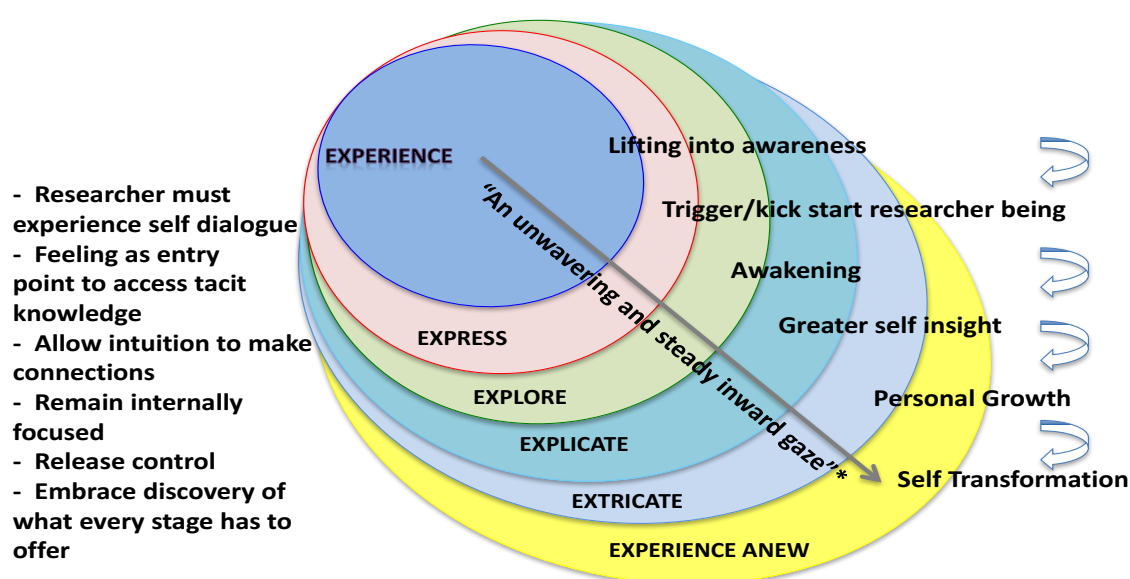
The high level 6-step HSSI process outlined in Diagram 3.7 draws upon Sela-Smith (2002) and was applied as part of my methodology, as follows:-

- **Experience.** My real-time instinctive emotional, physical, intuitive and cognitive reactions to life's events over the period 2013-2015.
- **Express.** Poetry as the slightly time-delayed creative expression of my personal, conscious and unconscious nuanced response(s) to lived experience. Three anthologies were written over the specified period.
- **Explore.** The anthologies were subdivided and explored using mind mapping and associated notes whilst working with self-dialogue, tacit knowledge and intuition to get a sense of emotions.
- **Explicate.** This process is enriched with the development of a range of word clouds, each of which is subsequently considered through self-dialogue, tacit knowledge and intuition.
- **Extricate.** Time and analysis offers a fresh perspective and insight on lived experience so consideration of emergent key themes and associated metaphors through a content and a process lens, enabled further insight(s) which are subsequently considered through four lenses
 - **Self-Deception (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013)**
 - **Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 2001)**
 - **Stages of Adult Development (Kegan, 2009)**
 - **Self-Doubt (Hindmarch, 2008)**

(These specific lenses were identified from initial analysis of anthology titles)

- **Experience anew.** Enabling the development of a more detailed and objective appreciation of the experience under review

Methodology: **Heuristic Self Search Inquiry** **Diagram 3.7**



*Moustakas, 1990

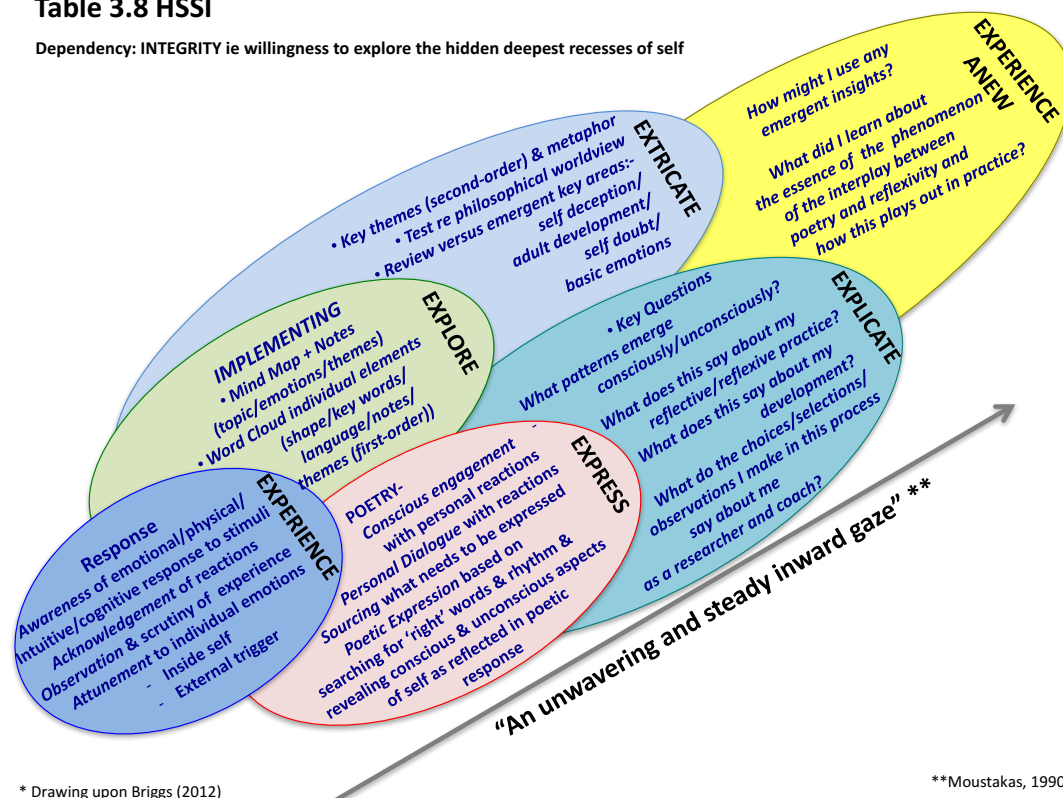
Dependency: INTEGRITY ie willingness to explore the hidden deepest recesses of self

Applying the same rigour and discipline to HSSI, I defined the structure outlined in Diagram 3.8 to move beyond the poetry and explore, illuminate and distill the experience. As part of this process, reflexive analysis of the poetry and titles in my poetic anthologies was undertaken using the questions identified at each stage. Such an approach sought to distil the essence of my experience of embracing poetry in support of engagement with reflexivity as part of the development of my professional coaching practice as a business coach (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016).

3.6 Reflexivity

Table 3.8 HSSI

Dependency: INTEGRITY is willingness to explore the hidden deepest recesses of self



* Drawing upon Briggs (2012)

**Moustakas, 1990

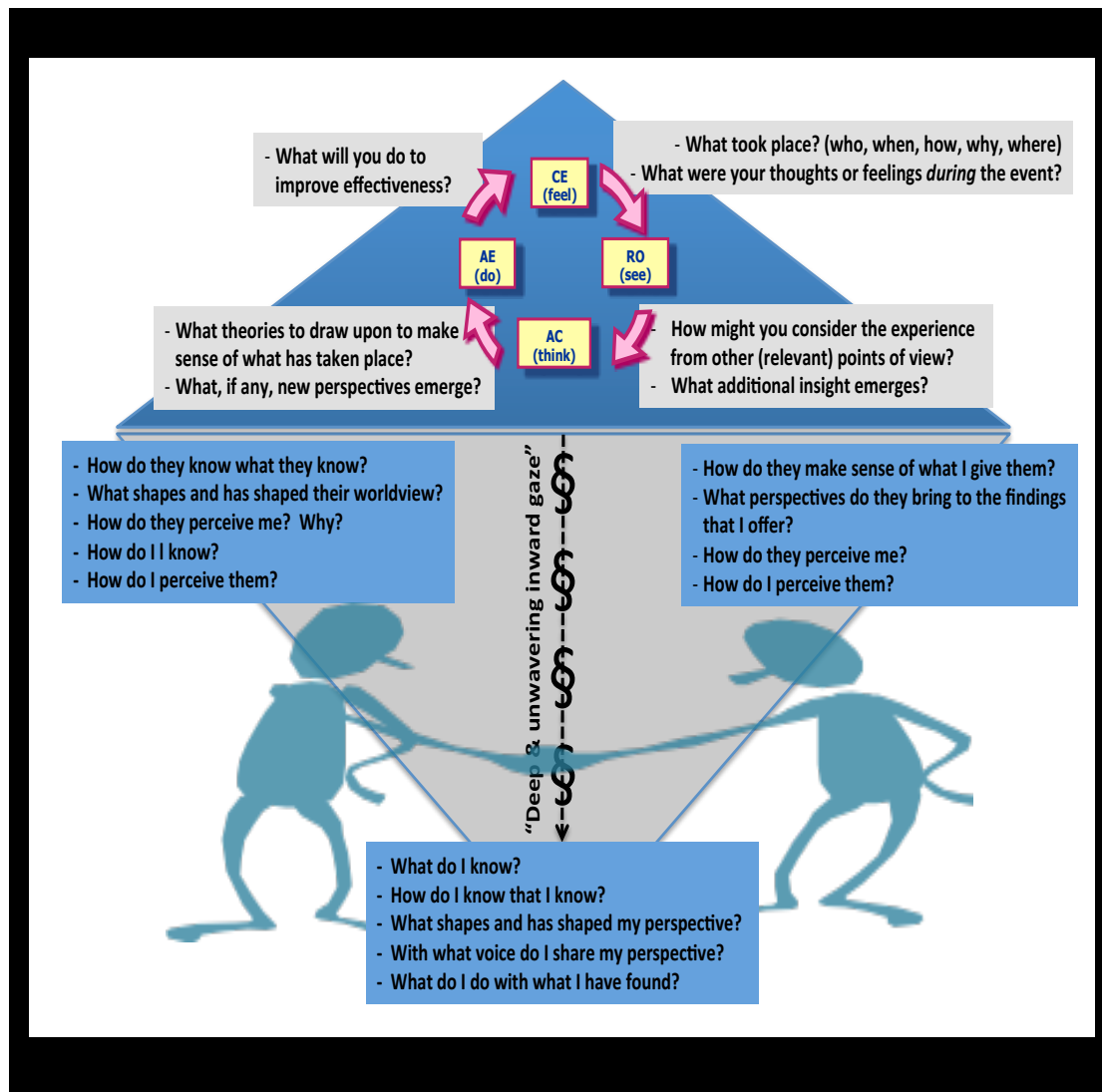
Underpinning my core methodological approaches resides reflexivity, whether systematic, epistemic or disciplinary (Coughlan & Brannick, 2005). Acknowledging the importance of moving beyond reflection as part of my methodology is highly relevant against the backdrop of this aspect of my interpretivist research study. Taking responsibility for exploring personal underlying assumptions, actions and influences expands awareness of the un/conscious and encourages different interpretations of my research study (Bachkirova, 2016). Through a process of self-dialogue, questioning emergent doubts, contradictions and possibilities, opportunities emerge to expand thinking and create new possibilities and growth (Bolton, 2014; Ryan, 2005;

Cunliffe, 2004). Such growth might be personal, relational or professional; each is directly relevant to my research question (Cunliffe, 2004).

In support of crafting my research and owning self within the design, my reflexive practice was rooted in a computer-based reflexive journal and the writing of poetry based upon my lived experience, thoughts and ideas. '*Self-awareness and critical consciousness*' are vital for ethical, coaching practice and ethical research (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.98; Finlay, 2009). An existential philosophical paradigm argues that in the face of life's uncertainties, self-awareness is vital for the integrity and enrichment of the coach and the coaching profession (Hutchison, 2015; Spinelli, 2010). A poem reflecting my definition and approach to reflexivity, supporting consideration of issues of integrity, sincerity, contribution and value(s) was shared with my CRs (Appendix D.1).

As the researcher, I do not consider it possible to separate self from the research; therefore, what is being presented in this study is my *interpretation* and translation of the lived experience of my CRs and myself based upon my '*judgement, intuition, ability to 'see and point something out' as well as consideration of an explicit dialogue*' as reflected in taped conversations and transcriptions (Etherington, 2004, p.248). Acknowledging such subjectivity and ambiguity is in consideration of issues of transparency, rigour and resonance for the integrity of the study (Etherington, 2004).

Drawing upon Kolb (2014), Cunliffe (2014), Sela-Smith (2002) and Patton (2002), I synthesise in Diagram 3.9, my deep-dive approach to reflexivity. Embracing reflexivity requires the practitioner to swim down through the shallow waters of reflection into the deeper, darker waters of the less familiar, moving into the unknown, and potentially more anxiety-laden, to consider emerging beliefs, assumptions and influences. HI, HSSI and reflexivity carry the same challenges of steadiness, rigour, discipline and congruity, with the aims of achieving growth and enhanced levels of ethical, competent coaching practice.



As a reflexive research practitioner, alongside the interviews and transcriptions, my reflexive approach differentiated between the two stages of fieldwork whilst taking account of the recursive influence, independently and jointly, upon my researcher self. Such a reflexive approach was developed to support my development, learning and insight as an interviewer, and as a researcher whilst supporting wider HI principles; specifically, phase 1 and phase 2 of the HI process (Moustakas, 1994). Ownership and expression of my initial emotional, intuitive, somatic and cognitive responses to the interviews and the emergent data enabled greater insight with respect to my approach as a researcher, a coach and a human being (Bolton, 2014; Coghlan & Brannick, 2005). Sensemaking and insight reflected a systemic approach, drawing upon development work undertaken as part of my MSc (2013), the theoretical work of other practitioners (e.g. Hawkins & Smith (2006), Senge (1990)) plus my CR data. Such a recursive process resulted in deeper questions with respect to aspects of my

fieldwork experience and the emergent data increased insight as to my approach. A computer-based reflexive diary was developed post each CR interview, updated through transcription and repeated for the second round of interviews. At each stage, the outcomes from individual settings were reviewed and integrated to enable the development of a final summary. The timescale reflected in Table 3.10 is approximately five months; practically, it took fourteen months to reach a (temporary) conclusion to some of these questions.

Table 3.10

Reflexive Practitioner Approach (context/experience/response)	(Impact of self of interview/transcription process Impact upon self of interview/transcription process)
1st round Interviews	- The potential role of interviews/ conversation/ social constructivism is throwing self into relief in terms of Leadership style / Character / Personality / Bias / Emotions / Development - How to come to terms with and defend my own lived approach of being a humanist/existential/ social constructionist/ interpretivist researcher, owning it, accepting the responsibilities that go with it whilst considering the challenges from those who do not sit in this space?
1st round Transcripts	- What impact does this range of interviews have on the interviewer as researcher in terms of my emotions (anger / anticipation / fear / sadness / disgust) and my learning and development? - What does my emotional response to the P1 stage of the fieldwork imply for my interpretivist approach?
2nd round Interviews	- What impact does minimal engagement with poetic writing task have on me & research? ie Impact upon my emotions ie Impact upon research (target of avoidance and resistance - poetry / writing / reflexivity / thinking) - 100% commitment to poetic writing task resulted in 10% return. Range of excuses => challenge of poetry writing => challenge of reflexivity => challenges of distillation and precision. For many, avoidance of externalising thinking - why? - What am I missing and how can my approach be more inclusive?
Further Reflexivity	
2nd round Transcripts	- What impact does this range of interviews have on the interviewer as researcher in terms of my emotions and my learning and development? - What are the implications in terms of professional practice? - What personal challenges emerge for me within this research (Question rooted in researcher's values) - How much effort does someone put in to defend personal failure? - As a human system what is the impact of learning style on reflexive practice, self identity and self image, behaviour and actions, emotions and emotional management? Even before get to poetry as means to support ... what/why is there resistance to reflexivity? Why does it matter in coaching? Where is supervision in this? Where is one's individual inner coach?

3.7 Data Analysis

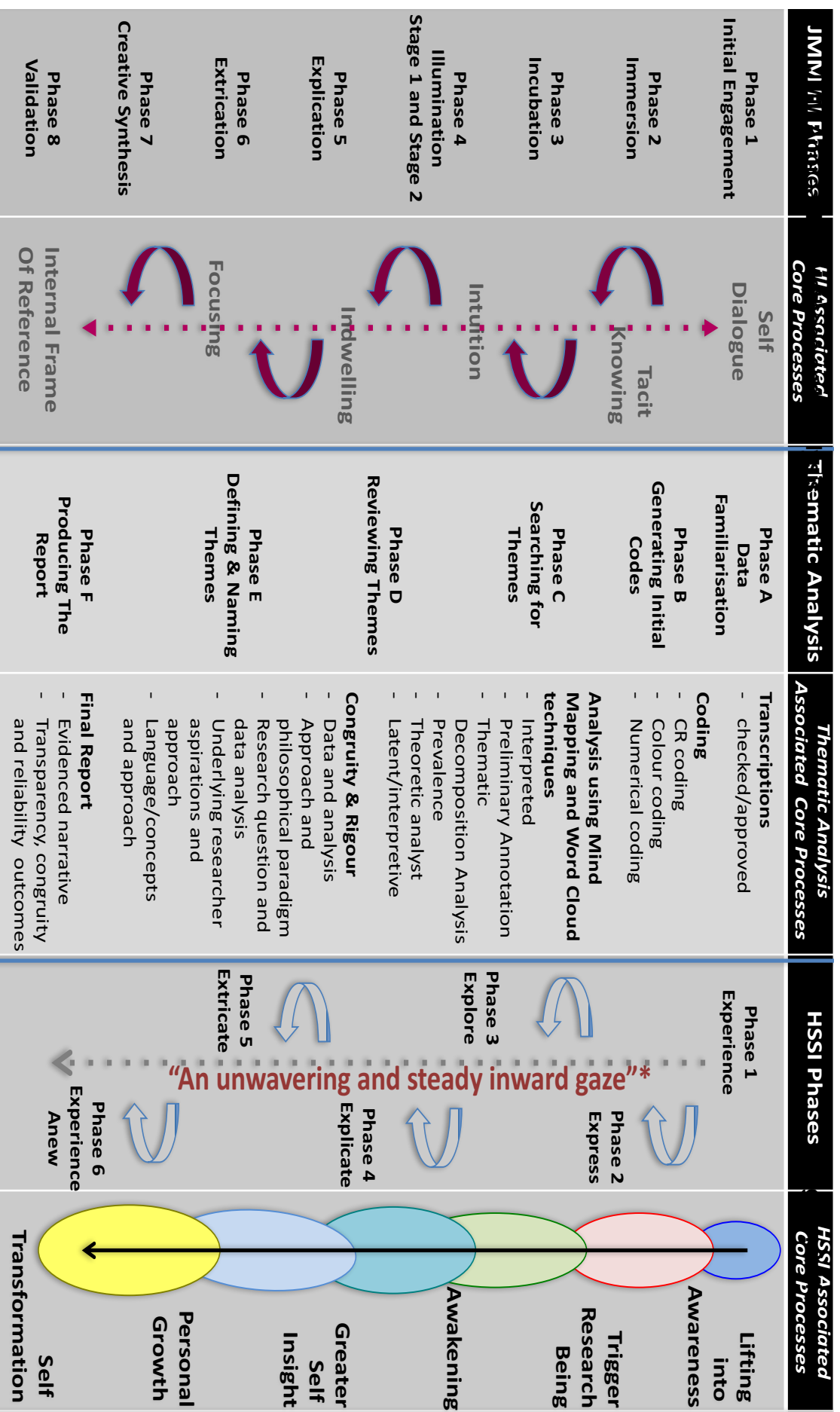
HI (Moustakas, 1990) was the primary methodology, occasionally drawing upon my reflexive data to enrich insight and understanding. HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002), an emotionally demanding endeavour, similarly drew upon my reflexive diary to inform and challenge. Each methodological approach brought forth a significant amount of data which was analysed independently, collectively and recursively. This in turn brought forth richer data, which, through analysis, brought forth insights and opportunities.

Diagram 3.11 demonstrates the territory of my methodologies and analysis whilst highlighting the relationships and blending between them. My approach to the HI

phases of analysis was enriched by my HSSI experience as I expanded Phase 4 *'Illumination'* (Moustakas, 1990) into two separate but connected stages, enabling differentiation between themes emerging from each method, and key themes within each method to be identified. Phase 6 *'Extrication'* is a direct reflection of Sela-Smith's (2002) HSSI approach and enabled exploration of the emergent, key themes in HI and HSSI using the same lenses. This enabled a mapping of methodologies, the emergence of a set of integrated themes, with congruity and rigour applied equally to each. Applying such discipline to HI and HSSI throughout extended insights and learning, as did my reflexive diary.

Diagram 3.11 offers a summary of my approach to HI, including modifications to a small number of phases plus my approach and associated to HI, thematic analysis. The core processes associated with HI, HSSI and thematic analysis are presented to the right of each methodology. Whilst this diagram apparently reflects each methodology as a linear process, each methodology is highly dynamic, iterative and recursive in nature requiring intense awareness and sensitivity to *'feelings, thoughts, beliefs and judgements'* (Sela-Smith, online).

My approach to HI (Diagram 3.11) reflects an extension to Phase 4 *Illumination* with Stage 1 attending to *'sifting through'* my CR narratives, and *'reflecting upon the authenticity of these insights, meanings and themes'* (Hiles, 2002) drawing upon my intuition and tacit knowing. Phase 4 *Illumination* Stage 2 embraces considerations from my reflexive diary with a view to enabling the emergence of *'dissociated aspects of the self'* (Sela-Smith, online) to be considered within the context of the Stage 1 analysis and facilitating fresh perspectives to emerge in Stage 2 (Patton, 2002). The inclusion of Phase 6 *Extrication* within my HI approach supports the emergence of additional *'layers of meaning'*, integrating my reflexive data and my HSSI analysis at a process and a content level (Sela-Smith, online). This enables a more complete understanding and reorganisation to occur at a conscious level which in turn facilitates transparency of thinking. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) is the model of analysis embraced for each methodology with phases (A – F) indicated and supporting an inductive and creative approach to the decomposition, reconstruction and reframing of CR data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Patton, 2002). Mind mapping with notes based upon earlier coding and word clouds enabled the dynamic discovery of *'important patterns, themes and interrelationships'* (Patton, 2002, p.41).



With a significant amount of data courtesy of my HI interview process, my HSSI poetry considerations and my reflexive practice, the first stage within each methodology was to organize the core data, as shown here in Table 3.12, and to consider the material, in a disciplined step-by-step manner. I acknowledge that such methodical approaches are as reflective of my business consulting heritage as my creative style as a researcher.

Data Sources

Table 3.12

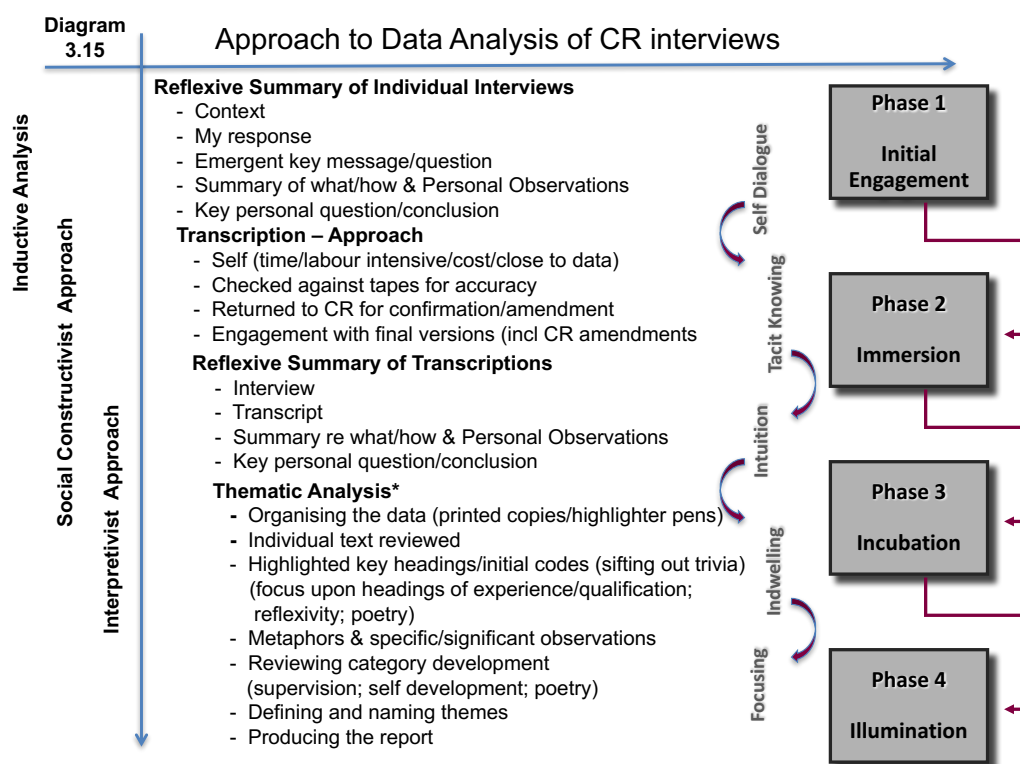
Heuristic Inquiry (HI) – CR data only	JMM Reflexive Practice	Heuristic Self Search Inquiry (HSSI) - JMM data only
CR Interviews x 14 (7 CRs x 90 minutes x 2 interviews each) (Typically 9 pages of A4 per interview)	1st round reflexive logs x 14 (each log my reflexive response to individual interview or transcription)	JMM Anthologies x 3 (Titles x 101) (Chapters x 6)
Integrated Summary	Integrated Summary	Integrated Summary
Transcriptions x 14 (21 hours of material)	2nd round interviews x 14 (each log my reflexive response to individual interview or transcription)	Poems #101 Verses #459 Words #11515
Integrated Summary	Integrated Summary	Integrated Summary

Following basic organisation of the material, my detailed exploration of the HI materials was undertaken in a similarly methodical manner as detailed in Table 3.13. **HI Analysis Table 3.13**

HI Stage	Approach	Timing/Detail	Purpose	Analysis Process	HI Process
Phase 1 Initial Engagement	Semi structured interview process supported by emails & paperwork	Feb/March 2016 & June/July 2016	To understand the experience, perspective & learning of individual CRs	Semi structured interviews Transcripts Reflexive practice Poetic Writing task	Self Dialogue
Phase 2 Immersion	Re-reading of Individual CR #1 transcript	Pre #2 Interview	Key questions arising from transcript	Read and mark up with questions directly before #2 interview	 Tacit Knowing
Phase 3 Incubation	Re-reading of individual CR #2 transcript	Post #2 Interview	Key messages emerging ex transcript	Directly after #2 interview	
	Review of individual CR's #1 interview transcript Review of individual CR's #2 interview transcript Joint review of #1 & #2	2 months later (Incubation)	Identifying key messages/observations within individual CR transcript	Yellow highlighter noting inductive observations in margin based on research question	
	Colour coding of data within CR transcript	2 months later	Detailed reading of CR transcripts #1 and #2	Orange highlighter/quotes Yellow highlighter/messages Purple highlighter/poetry used	 Intuition
Phase 4 Illumination (Stage 1)	Mind Map J with - Key interview headings - Ind CR notes & quotes - Emergent patterns with notes - Standardisation of hard data - Identification of hard data gaps	2 months later Key headings/CR interview + notes + key transcript points -> basic structure C = context; P = poetry; PAD = personal devt; R = Reflexivity; SC = self coaching)	Identification of emergent patterns from basic structure within and across CR interviews ie <i>Thematic Decomposition Analysis</i> -> Identification of key 'themes' ie reflects something of relevance/importance to research question <i>Prevalence</i> = pattern of frequency of appearance in & between CR data set(s)	Reference system (#interview & page# noted in green top LHS of each page of transcript) Emergent headings based upon consistency of semi structured interview process Cross referencing of notes and mind map annotations <i>Theoretic/analyst</i> approach	 Indwelling
	Summary CR Data Table	Individual hard data elements sent to each CR for confirmation at end of Mind Map J production Integrated table	To ensure accurate representation across key emergent dimensions To highlight consistencies, parallels and discrepancies	Email to each CR seeking confirmation re emergent data:- - Title/Training/Certification - Written poetry previously - Agreement re Poetic Task - Closure of Poetic Writing Task - Supervision nature/frequency - Clear definition of reflexivity	 Focusing

Having initially assigned my CRs a coded identity, these were modified to pseudonyms to sustain the individuality and presence of each CR, with the first letter of the selected name reflecting their alphabetically coded identity and gender. The *Explication* (Phase 5), *Extrication* (Phase 6) and *Creative Synthesis* (Phase 7) phases of HI attended to deeper consideration of the data, drawing upon my approach to analysing my HSSI data as I sought insight as to the essence of my CRs' experience in embracing poetry in support of reflexivity. *Explication* (HI Phase 5) of the data brought forth patterns, either conscious or unconscious, with key themes identified and considered further in *Extrication* (HI Phase 6) through four key lenses which emerged from analysis of my poetic titles. Embracing such a recursive approach was repeated throughout the analysis of my CR data and enabled a deeper, targeted analysis of the emergent data through a consistent set of lenses, and aimed to add an additional level of rigour as I aligned two methodologies as shown here in Diagram 3.15.

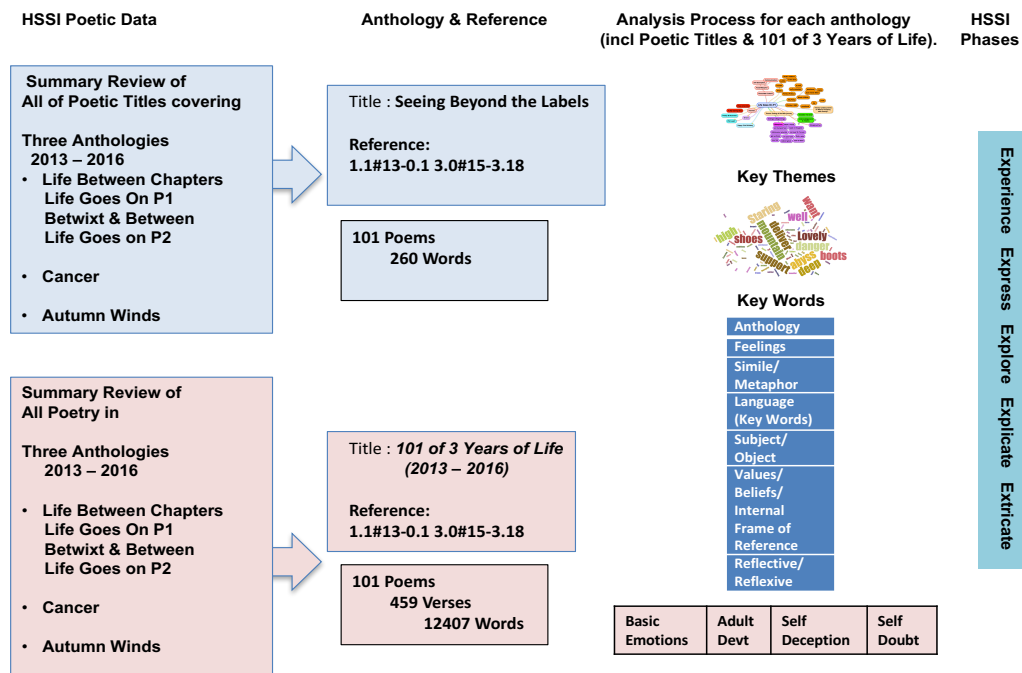
Diagram 3.15



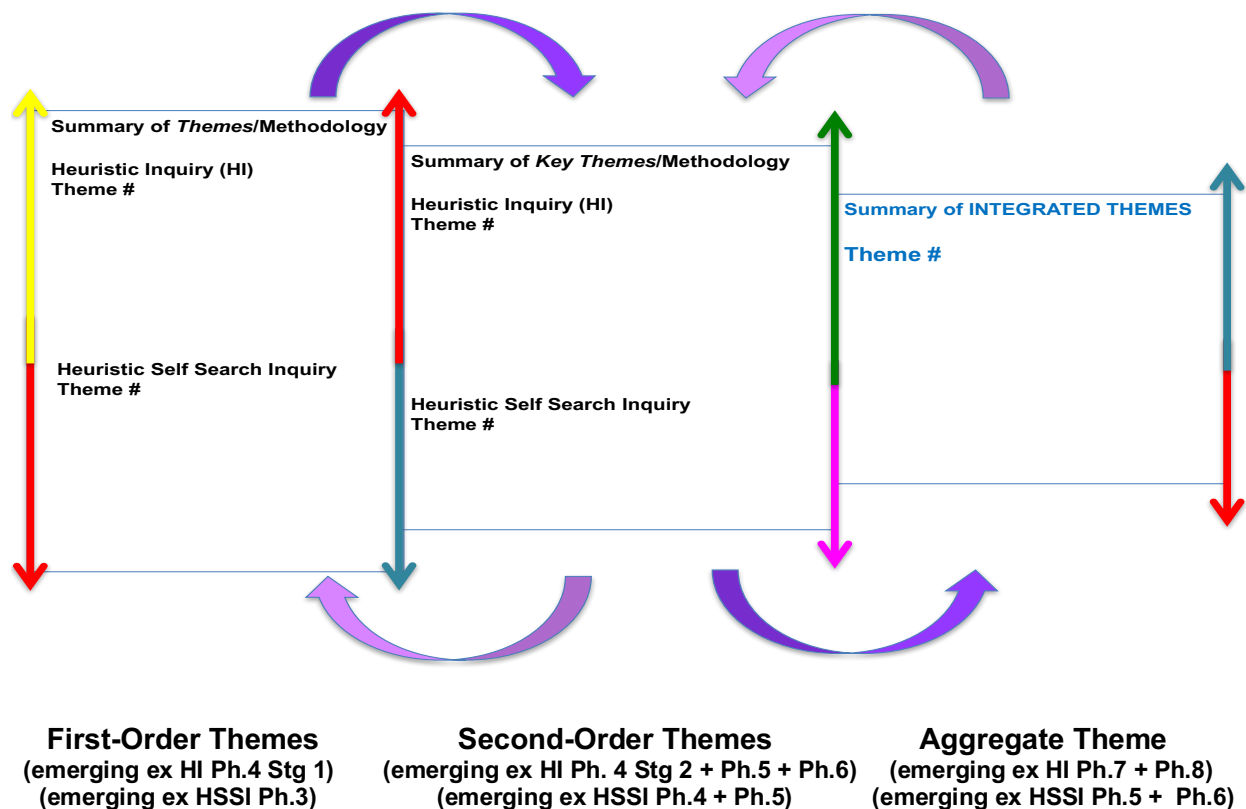
Embracing the HSSI approach, the key questions identified in Diagram 3.8 were explored using mind mapping and word cloud techniques to distil and analyse my poetry, as reflected in Diagram 3.16. Like HI, a structured and methodical approach supported emotional challenge, insight and transformational learning and attention to my experience (HSSI Phase 1) of writing poetry (HSSI Phase 2) in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. Throughout the course of my HSSI analysis, I was aware of the need for self-care and attention (Bachkirova, 2016). Such analysis required time, space and patience.

An overview of my HSSI analysis (Phases A - E)

Diagram 3.16



Analysis of my CR data drew upon HI principles (Phases 1 – 8), which was extended by analysis of my poetry embracing HSSI principles (Phases 1 – 6) drawing upon thematic analysis (Phases A – F). Questions reflecting the phases of each methodology plus mind mapping and word cloud techniques supported the identification of patterns and themes in consideration of rigour, integrity and transparency. Analysis is presented as a linear process, but was highly dynamic and recursive as I acknowledged the distinguishing and complementary features of each methodology. This enabled the development within each methodology of individual themes (*first-order*), which were individually explored through four key lenses leading in turn to the development of key themes (*second-order*) within each methodology as I progressed towards the development of a set of integrated (*aggregate*) themes (Cunha *et al.*, 2015). ‘*Validation*’ (HI Phase 8) and ‘*Experience Anew*’ (HSSI Phase 6) are the final phases for my methodologies and bringing together the emergent themes from each, reviewing patterns, message synchronicity and key questions enabled a rich set of integrated (*aggregate*) themes to evolve as demonstrated in Diagram 3.17.



Integrated (aggregate) themes emerge from the recursive nature of my methodological interests, including considering the themes through the four identified lenses. Such an interpretative approach reflects the importance of recounting the individual narratives and experience of my CRs with credibility and authenticity, supported by my own humanist, existential voice. Systematically blending the data supported the emergence of an integrated picture, highlighting, testing and reviewing the essence of the experience of my CRs and myself.

A non-linear and recursive process such as either HI or HSSI is individually messy and collectively stressful, so holding the research question throughout the data analysis was vital in support of focus and rigour. Embracing reflexivity throughout the analysis process was vital to the integrity and trustworthiness of the analysis and my credibility as a researcher. Acknowledgement of the important role of my subconscious and conscious processes of self-dialogue, trusting that which is tacitly known and intuitively embraced, and protecting emergent thoughts and ideas at every stage of the HI and the HSSI process, was vital, given the dynamic nature of the engagement. Similarly, embracing considerations of time and space, revisiting my research question whilst sustaining and retaining the integrity of my

worldview and my philosophical paradigm impacted at every stage of the potential emergence of the unknown within the context of emergent knowledge. My primary data source was my CRs and enriching their experience with the essence of my own experience and reflexive practice brought forth a set of integrated themes. Acknowledgement of the dynamic relationship and interplay between and amongst these elements was highlighted and reflected in the integrated process and outcomes (Cunliffe, 2016). Each of these three integrated themes is explored as findings in chapters four, five and six. Chapter 7 considers these integrated themes through the four lenses and supports replication of process at every stage. Scrutinising the integrated themes in such a manner was consistent with my methodological approach throughout and facilitated the conclusions for the research study.

Phase 6 of HI invites the researcher to develop a '*Creative Synthesis*' of the experience with Phase 7 '*Validation*' being an evolution to Moustakas' original framework with the final phase of HSSI challenging to '*Experience Anew*' (Sela-Smith, 2013; Hiles, 2001). As I reflected upon the options for HI Phase 6, I drew upon the totality of my research journey as a cognitive, emotional, somatic and physiological experience, including my HI and HSSI data, my reflexive diary and my writing. This in turn informed Phase 7 '*Validation*' where I also noted that at key points throughout my work, I tested my thinking and my emergent findings with my CRs, most recently with an Executive Summary of the research. In experiencing anew, I considered the essence of my core stability and my personal and professional growth and core stability from research inception to present.

3.8 Ethics and Confidentiality

Professional ethical practice is fundamental to the success of the research process (Patton, 2002). The proposed research study and methodology received clearance through the OBU UREC, where key issues addressed include the purpose and reciprocity of engaging with research, alongside details of my credentials as a researcher. Key elements to be embraced in the invitation to participate, were the voluntary nature of engagement whilst highlighting the CRs' freedom to withdraw at any stage (Patton, 2002). An assurance to avoid any maleficence throughout the research process formed a core aspect of my approach to managing risk(s). Reassurance with respect to the confidential nature of the interview process and the management and security of materials, both paper and electronic, were also specified. This included the storing of interview data and recordings under password control on my computer, with paper copies stored in a locked metal filing cabinet in my office. My CRs were

asked to sign a consent form confirming their agreement to participate in the process, with failure to sign this document rendering the data inadmissible.

Considerations of ethics and confidentiality were consciously reflected throughout the research process as I sought to balance the wellbeing of my CRs with my needs as a researcher (Patton, 2002; Moustakas, 1994). As a '*human science researcher*' (Moustakas, 1994, p.109), my research was guided by principles that attended to research that engaged human beings (Patton, 2002). Such principles included an acknowledgement that arriving at interviews, individuals brought with them a wealth of knowledge and experience plus their current day-to-day reality (Cox *et al.*, 2014). This served to highlight that as a researcher, my values are rooted in empathy for my fellow humans. Such sensitivity heightened the role awareness of researcher and CR and afforded both parties protection and accountability (Moustakas, 1994).

As a qualitative method, HSSI demands that the researcher pursue tacit knowledge with boldness, curiosity and rigour that is likely to be personally exposing. Sela-Smith (2002) predicates HSSI upon a willingness to immerse self in a crisis based upon personal lived experience in a quest for transformation, healing and learning. The intensity and demands intrinsic to the HSSI process necessitate cautionary notes and an acknowledgement that it may not be a suitable method of inquiry for everyone. Risk management must be a key consideration for a researcher, since the decision to engage with HSSI carries with it ethical implications for a wider social circle.

3.9 Validity, Transparency and Verification

The quest for '*accuracy, utility, feasibility and propriety*' reflects an ambition to demonstrate honesty throughout the research study (Patton, 2002, p.400). This is not to be confused with a quest for a single truth but rather to acknowledge a search for multiple perspectives that will enrich understanding of the essence of a phenomenon. The HI process (Moustakas, 1994) reflects a quest for meaning and sensemaking of lived experience for the primary researcher and CRs. HSSI was embraced to enhance the richness and sincerity of the study by expanding the HI methodology and my role, credibility and ethical stance as researcher and contributor (Tracy, 2010). To this end, interview transcripts were returned to CRs for review and amendment with thinking, ideas and progress also shared to support ongoing engagement, involvement and power-sharing in terms of the rigour and integrity of data (Tracy, 2010).

Reflexive practice was embraced to offer context, transparency and limitations of my approach (Etherington, 2004). My goal was to reflect and interpret the voices of my CRs as accurately as possible, to distil the key messages and to draw out the learning from the material to hand, acknowledging possible imperfections and ambiguity, whilst creating a platform worthy of consideration and review. Verification of outcomes was tested with CRs at key points throughout the process.

3.10 Limitations of the Research Design

Qualitative data generally and HI specifically are questioned and challenged in terms of subjectivity, introspection and rigour (Patton, 2002; Hiles, 2001). It is an important element of the HI process that the CRs and the primary researcher are of equal standing and that the primary researcher is willing and able to engage fully with the research in this dual role. The ability to embrace ambiguity and duality, the challenge of 'I', 'We' and 'It' in relation to self, CRs and the phenomenon under investigation (Wilber, 2006) plus objectivity and subjectivity at the same time, are vital elements of the HI process, highly dependent upon the skill, truth and reality of the researcher. Such plurality is supported by reflexivity and transparency and extended in this research by HSSI, but the challenge is acknowledged as an opportunity and a risk (Cunliffe, 2011, Etherington, 2004, Sela-Smith, 2002). As the researcher, I am potentially the biggest limitation in the research study so have sought to address this through the transparency of my approach and reflexive practice whilst embracing HSSI to afford greater transparency, integrity and rigour.

3.11 Summary

This chapter reflects my philosophical and methodological approach to the gathering and analysis of data in support of my research study of the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. HI (Moustakas, 1990) is a personally-challenging, rigorous and demanding process, which I have extended by embracing HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002) to support the rigour and integrity of my role within the research process. This has enhanced the recursive nature of my methodology, leading to enriched insights and outcomes on a range of dimensions. The iterative, dynamic nature of HI and HSSI as unique methodologies carry critical aspects of uncertainty, ambiguity and complexity that are personally and professionally demanding. Moustakas (1990) highlights the importance of the researcher's emotional engagement with the research question and such a pre-requisite appears vital, and potentially in direct correlation with the quality of emergent insight and the degree of personal transformation. Reflexivity has been a vital enabler and way of being in supporting personal insight and ownership of self within and

throughout the research process (Cunliffe, 2002). Reflexivity has supported aspirations with respect to transparency, integrity, and rigour by honouring the voices of each of my CRs and their individual and collective contribution to emergent ideas, insights and proposals with respect to the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of ethically competent coaching practice.

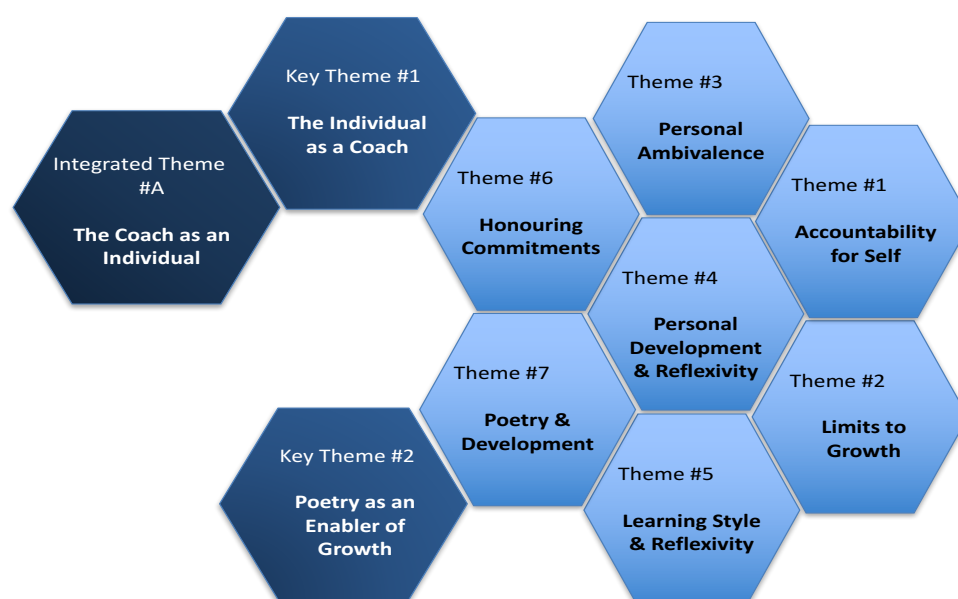
Chapter 4 – The Coach as an Individual

This chapter focuses upon one of three *integrated* themes entitled ‘The Coach as an Individual’ (#A), informed by data from interview transcriptions and emails and emerging from two key themes (#1 and #2) and themes (#1-#7) and patterns abstracted from individual transcriptions. An appreciation of relationships enriches understanding of the headline story as shown here in Diagram 4.1 and draws upon the Illumination and Explication phases of HI. These HI phases focus upon developing a deeper textured sense of the meanings of the experience as they emerge from deeper delineation of the data. This emergent portrayal of the experience is enhanced by a clear depiction of my CRs – highlighting the humanistic aspect of this research and its attendance to the essential experience of myself and others through intense self-dialogue and intuition (Patton, 2002, p.132). As an integrated theme, it draws upon my HSSI work which attends to the distillation of my experience of using poetry in support of my reflexive practice, and merges together the narratives from HI and HSSI reflecting my interpretivist, social constructionist approach.

This data was explored and analysed against the backdrop of my philosophical worldview and my choice of literature, using thematic analysis. This theme considers the coach as a unique individual and the responsibilities/professional accountabilities which this carries in terms of personal being, personal development and personal growth as a coach practitioner (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cunliffe, 2002; Goleman, 1995).

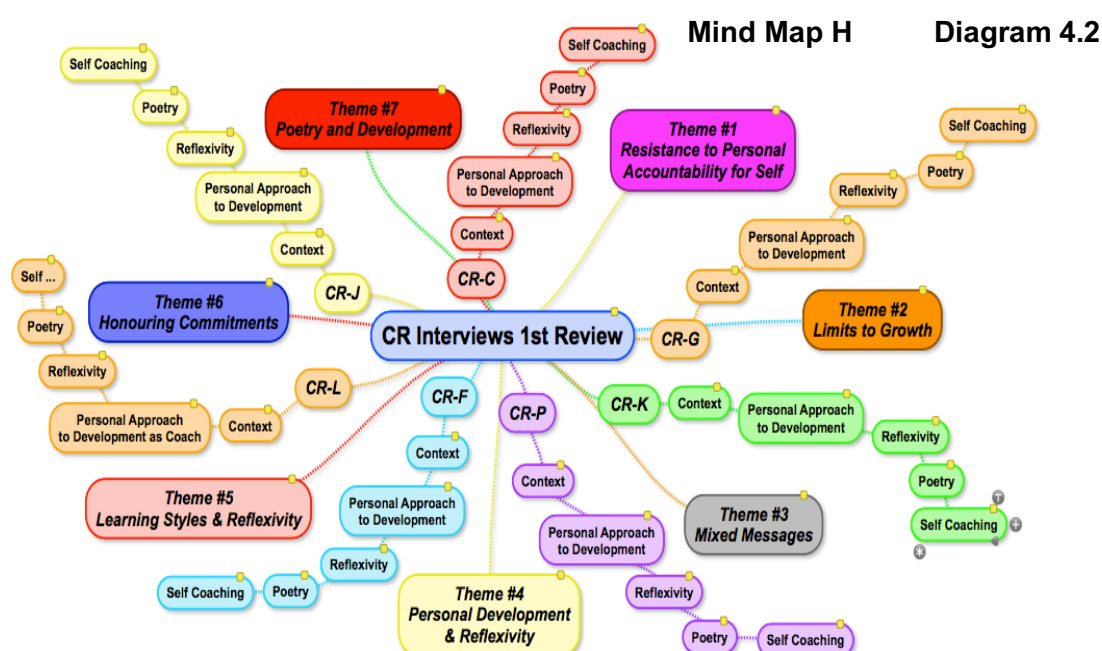
An Overview of Chapter 4

Diagram 4.1



4.1 The emergent story around Accountability for Self (Theme #1) and Limits to Growth (Theme #2)

In analysing email exchanges, interview transcriptions and my reflexive logs with respect to the interview and transcriptions processes, I drew upon formal and informal processes including my semi-structured interview design, self-dialogue and tacit knowledge as the starting point for data analysis. The development of Mind Map H in Diagram 4.2 supported an intensely recursive and dynamic engagement with my CR data, facilitating indwelling, interpretation and the early stages of interview diagnostics, which in turn lead to the first set of themes.



As a group of individuals, each of my CRs has their own story and experience to share (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012), personally and professionally, with each offering a unique description of themselves as a human being and as a coach. Such interest broadly ranged from a desire to be *helpful*, offering support to me as an individual (Charles and Katie) or a *personal introduction* from someone else they admired (Jade, Lucas, Polly, Gina) or someone who considered the topic and its context to be directly relevant, “*I think it’s fascinating I really do ... you know it does resonate*” (Faye).

All CRs were recruited as practising coaches with an expressed interest in the research study. During the first interview, people offered enhanced perspectives of self against a shared set of criteria which I felt applicable to the research study with its focus upon poetry and reflexivity and shown in Table 4.3. In coaching research, accreditation and supervision appeared potentially relevant as did experience of poetic writing.

My Co-Researchers

Table 4.3

	Professional Identity ex Interview	Professional Association Membership	Training/ Certification as Coach	Written Poetry Previously	Agreement re Poetic Writing	Completion of Poetic Writing	Nature & Frequency of Supervision
Charles	Trainer/ Facilitator	NO	NO	✓	✓	✗	NONE
Gina	Coach	ICF	Diploma/ ICF - PCC	✓	✓	✗	Team/ 1 x pcm
Katie	Coach	EMCC	ILM	✗	✓	✗	Group/ 1 x qtr
Polly	Coach	UKCP	Psycho-therapy Degree	✗	✓	✓	Peer/ 1 x pcm
Faye	Coach	ICF	Diploma/ ICF – PCC	✓	✓	✗	Ind/ 1 x pcm
Lucas	Business Builder	NO	ILM	✓	✓	✗	None
Jade	Coach	ICF	ILM Level 7 Coaching & Mentoring	✓	✓	✓	NONE

Charles, Lucas and Jade introduced themselves as individuals who draw upon a coaching approach but do not see it as their primary professional role; rather, *'it's part of my larger job'* (Lucas) or *'only a part of what I do'* (Jade). Neither Charles nor Lucas are members of a Professional Coaching Association, with each identifying himself as something other than a coach during the interview. Charles as a trainer/facilitator, expressed an interest in performance improvement, focusing his development upon being *'the best I can be'*, whilst Lucas presented himself *'as more of a business guy than a coach'*. Some co-researchers identified self, based upon the type of coaching in which they engage, with Gina identifying herself as *'an internal coach ... a facilitator for coach training ... individual group or team coaching ... medical coaching'*. Other CRs defined their professional coaching identity as *'a therapeutic coach'* (Polly) or *'I'm very practical and very pragmatic; I border on the therapeutic'* (Katie). It appeared that professional identity shaped the focus of the work embraced and the professional development sought, as captured by Faye, who indicated *'my PDP is very much focused ... one is me as a leader; the other is me as a coach'*. Not all CRs prioritised coaching as part of their professional identity, bringing forth an apparent separation of professional identity from self. This may be noteworthy in a complex profession such as coaching, when, as Bachkirova highlights, *'the professional as a person matters even more'* (2016, p.144).

Many of my CRs are carrying multiple professional identities, such as head of department or business owner alongside that of coach, which may be relevant for personal accountability, wellbeing and development (Petherick, 2016). There may be a gap between an ideal model of coaching as a profession in which people have high levels of self-awareness, a duty of self-care and development and a clear sense of personal and professional identity versus a complex reality in which people are juggling multiple roles, in a time-pressured, emotionally challenging, nuanced reality of *'accelerated madness'* (Gina). It is within such a reality that the importance of the coach looking after self and holding self to account is vital. In the current reality of postmodernist complexity (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015), it may be easier to *'keep too busy because that is a coping mechanism'* (Gina) or to become *'very ill'* by embracing *'a diversion and distraction technique'* (Katie) rather than giving *'time to ... really do that self-care'* (Katie). Without investing in self, the potential for self-deception (Bachkirova, 2015), inaccurate personal narrative, or burnout (Bachkirova, 2016) is real and something a coach may need to prioritise to stay effective (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017).

Cunliffe and Coupland (2012) suggest making sense of personal complexity is driven by a need for plausibility and rationality and is key in shaping identity and personal narrative since it enables people to realise their role, contribution, position and uniqueness in a world of ambiguity and uncertainty. Such considerations are congruent within my research study with its focus upon coaching, reflexivity and poetry. The connectivity between self-awareness, reflexivity, and personal identity is considered in the creation of poetry, the use of language and choice of vocabulary, with the voice of the author resonating throughout (Briggs, 2012; Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003). With self-identity and personal narrative intertwined and mutually reinforcing, the potential of a negative trajectory is compounded and may become a limitation to growth (Bachkirova, 2016; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). This might suggest that if someone identifies self as a trainer, with learning achieved only through external theoretical delivery by a third party, a narrative emerges around learning within a single construct, with associated issues of power, privilege and responsibility (Fook & Askeland, 2007). Such an approach appears to reduce learning options, restrict opportunities and limit accountability.

In contrast, Cunliffe and Coupland (2012) promote engagement with multiple sources of learning, including an individual's sensory and intellectual data as key in support of sensemaking, self-awareness and personal congruity (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). If multiple sources of learning are explored and extended by reflexivity, the opportunities for learning are enhanced and limitations to growth, potentially reduced. One CR expressed the developmental quest in terms of

*clear identity and sense of core self allows you to bend
and wave in the breeze (Faye),*

enabling self

*to be more at peace with not knowing what it is and
being able to respond than just react (Faye).*

In a postmodernist world of complexity and ambiguity, being open to multiple sources for learning appears vital in support of continuous development. In an unregulated business, individual accountability and professional standards are self-imposed (Brennan & Wildflower, 2014).

4.2 Personal Ambivalence (Theme #3)

A pattern of mixed messages emerged during interviews, some of which were discussed during the interviews and some of which emerged more clearly during the transcription process. Personal transcriptions were available to each CR for amendment and/or discussion during the second interview; however, few amendments were offered, with those that were, typically focused upon spelling/grammatical corrections. Those who did spot their own ambivalence appeared to use their insights to embrace a reflexive stance, which in turn led to possible growth opportunities.

It did make me think about the possibility. What were my beliefs around writing poetry? What were my beliefs around that and why did I shy away from it ... what was that really about? So, it did make me more open to what were the possibilities. (Faye)

The frequent use of the pronoun 'you' when referring to the first-person singular was noteworthy and I found myself musing as to whether this is simply in alignment with common vernacular or whether as coaches, there is a need to be more self-aware and disciplined in the use of language since there might be a sense of distancing and objectification reflected in the use of 'you' when referring to self (Wilber, 2005).

4.3 Honouring Commitments (Theme #6)

During the first interview, the poetic writing task was discussed in detail with my CRs, with each re-confirming their commitment to do so; some with apparent excitement, and a plan of action:

Well, I want to do that. I do. No, I am up for this. I am going to go to Paper Chase. Yes definitely. I think this is absolutely the right thing for me at exactly the right time (Katie)

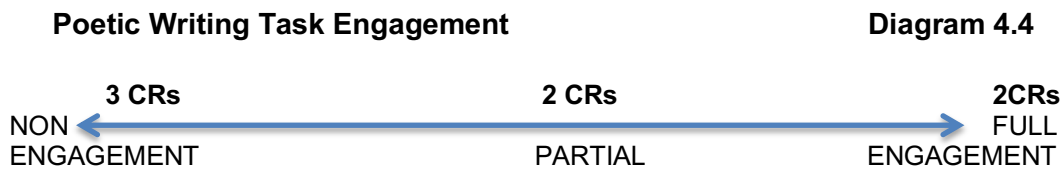
or identifying a process flow

What it is allowing me to do and the fact that I have now said I will, is the structure and that I am committing to doing it will help me to get over one of ... my challenges of doing stuff and I will start with the reflexive log because that will be helpful and I will start with that because that will be a challenge of itself ... I can easily see that the flow of a poem, will be quite easy. (Polly)

and considering a personal approach

... I had already started to think whether I would write in my native language or English. So that thinking has started. (Gina)

Despite initial enthusiasm, levels of engagement ranged along a continuum shown here in Diagram 4.4:



Of the three CRs who did not engage in the task: one had no experience of poetry as a tool, one had written poetry and one had used the poetry of others in coaching practice. Two primary reasons for non-completion of the task were offered: priorities (*'all my writing energy has gone into writing my thesis and that has been really, really challenging'* (Faye)) or mood (*'I haven't been in that headspace; it's not been something that I've wanted to do'* (Charles)), including specific issues that impacted upon mood (*'I had my notebook ... I didn't fill it with anything... it's there; it's on my shelf ... in my office, which I was avoiding'* (Katie)).

Those CRs marked as 'partial' did not directly engage with the poetic writing task but acknowledged that taking part in the research process had influenced their individual writing practice, either reflexively

So, I did experiment with more writing and although it's not poetry, it has given me a lot. It gave me an intimacy with myself, also an opportunity to see where I might be self-deceiving or what it is I'm struggling noticing or struggling to face up to but also expressing love in this process... (Gina)

or stylistically,

I'm writing in a more associational or poetic style without saying 'so I'm going to make this a poem' as such. (Lucas)

Of the two CRs who engaged with the task, one, who had not written poetry before, indicated that after a couple of attempts, *'I'm very disappointed to say that it's been a not good experience'* (Polly), whilst for the other

my first instinct is always to apologise and feel that I haven't done enough ... so I've kind of wrestled with my own tendency to be generous and helpful (Jade).

People were initially motivated to engage with the poetic writing task so exploration of reasons for engaging or not with the task as reflected in Diagram 4.5 was important.



PRIORITIES **GAINED** (emotionally/stylistically) **PERSONAL PATTERNS**

It appeared that with other priorities impacting personally and professionally, made self-directed choice as to whether to engage or not and in what form (Cox *et al.*, 2014). Those who wrote more expressively indicated personal gain, as for Lucas, it was a *'healthy and powerful thing'*. Those who attempted to write poetry discovered that the process of engagement appeared to tap into familiar patterns of personal behaviour. More discussion on each of these elements is embraced in the Poetry, Reflexivity and Growth Theme (Integrated Theme #2).

People offered a variety of reasons for non-engagement and I found myself considering whether there might be a relationship between the format of poetry embraced and the purpose or perceived identity of the author (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). The issue of identity and narrative re-emerges in this theme as one CR who had not written any poetry for this research writes poetry in the format of limericks which *'is like a playground... it's like a ... ball pool'* (Charles). The metaphor used indicates a sense of childlike fun and playfulness; not too serious but *'a release of positive ... energy'*, subject to Charles's personal *'mood and the opportunity ... there is a sweet spot there where I am in a place where poetry can be written'*. Charles's narrative prompted consideration of any relationship between the poetic form and its audience (forum), the mood required to write or as reflected in the output, plus the narrated identity of the poet as shown here in Table 4.6. The essence of my research question attends to potential inter/intra relationships, so being curious as to the influence of related aspects appears relevant.

Consideration of Relationships between Form, Mood and Identity Table 4.6

Co-Researcher	Form & Forum	Mood	Identity
Charles	<i>Limerick</i> <i>Internet Forum</i> (Entertainment)	'Good mood' 'Impish' 'Let's see how I can play with this... I try to make it something that people will laugh at'	<i>Management</i> <i>Development/</i> <i>'Training'</i> <i>'The Phantom Poet'</i> A pseudonym enables 'plausible deniability'
Jade	Range of poetic styles <i>Journal articles</i> <i>Emails</i> <i>Personal</i> <i>notebooks</i> (Development)	'Poetry captures a moment ... complexity of reality, emotional, relational, organisational ...'	'An English teacher ... a human being ... a mother ... a coach and a facilitator'

Cunliffe & Coupland (2012, p.11) propose that 'we sense through sight, sound and touch, ways' in which we present who we are to secure and validate our place and identity in the world. Such considerations appear to be highlighted in the relationships outlined in Table 4.3, specifically between identity and poetic form. Self-identity considerations were explored from the perspective of skills or talent, highlighting that the poetic craft and the output is typically underestimated and/or undervalued as a talent with Charles noting 'cheap to the person who has it'. Charles considers his poetry to be of limited value and disposable, 'similar to ... a crossword puzzle' with Jade acknowledging that she had shared

*It's nice to exceed expectation
With amusing rhymes and creation
So far, it's been mild
It could get a bit wild
I hope that's met with elation
Charles*

*some of the things I have written but
not all because quite frankly I can't find them because I didn't keep
them in any systematic way.*

Grisoni (2017) and Gioia (1991) note the inaccessibility of poetry with an implied sense of elitism. This CR data implicitly supports a view that writing poetry is often judged simply by the quality of output, with the creative process itself being underestimated in terms of talent and skill (Briggs, 2012).

Over the course of the interview process, Charles was *'starting to see some of the links ... between practice and reflexivity and reflexivity and limericks'* however potential links between limericks and practice were unclear and *'very, very separate'*. Whilst not dismissive of the possibility of a relationship, Charles acknowledged *'I'm kind of going, 'I need to think about that''*, and such a relationship was not obvious to him. Such a lack of connection may reflect the deeper challenge of *'the professional as a person'* (Bachkirova, 2016, p.144), which attends to the merging of self as an individual with knowledge, values and experience, including a sense of personal identity and narrative. Meanwhile, for Jade, *'learning, development and reflexivity are in some kind of Venn diagram'* with poetry facilitating personal process and perspective in the moment and healing over time. In terms of professional practice, Jade noted *'a kind of increased awareness of metaphor'* and an emerging confidence that

I can imagine writing a poem to my client ... and I know she would receive it in the spirit that I sent it.

For Jade, engagement in this research appeared to unify her personal and professional identities, with poetry expanding possibilities and offering an enriched narrative (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012).

As the numbers of CRs who had not completed the poetic writing task increased, I realised the data available to answer my research question was limited and possibly insufficient for my research study. Drawing upon an existentialist view that I have choice as to how to respond to a situation, I decided to consider the experience as data which might offer a wider perspective. I considered four related questions:

(a) How can someone voluntarily commit to do something and then not do it as agreed?

For a coach to commit to do something and not honour that commitment appeared noteworthy. I asked the follow-up question 'why?' and the answers are noted elsewhere. However, this is a research study, not a coaching contract, and my role is to gather, explore and interpret data rather than challenge behaviour as I seek to learn from my CRs' experience. This specific question appears to become redundant.

(b) What is the (unconscious) resistance to writing poetry about?

Gina and Lucas indicated the volume of their writing had increased, with the style and linguistic approach becoming more poetic. Both advised that writing more expressively

had brought them personal benefits in terms of emotional and general wellbeing. This apparently endorses the benefits of creative expression researched within alternative settings (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Mazza, 2006; Pennebaker, 1997). It appears such benefits might extend to a non-therapeutic, but developmental setting, such as coaching.

Authors from a therapeutic setting (Mazza, 2006; Baker & Mazza, 2004; Pennebaker, 1997) highlight the importance of creating a safe environment, characterised by honouring the authors' choice re disclosure of creative efforts, '*freedom to invoke their feelings*' (Baker & Mazza, 2004, p.146), confidentiality, and with no potential '*adverse social effects on them*' (ibid., p.146). Within an educational setting, Meltzer (2015, p.49) notes that '*some students express unease and feelings of vulnerability*' as they '*doubt their creative abilities and express doubt in expressing themselves artistically.*' These sentiments resonate since I have no pretensions as to the poetic value of my poetry, but joy at what the creative process brings forth for me. If I choose to share my poetic output, I am exposing my deeper self, my thinking and my creative effort, so the role of trust and relationship is vital (Hawkins, 2015).

Intuitively, to offer reassurance and freedom, I had specifically indicated to each CR that I had no interest in reviewing the poetic output, but rather *the experience* of writing poetry in support of reflexive practice. Charles and Jade choose to share their poetic writings – a gesture I experienced as a gift. For Jade, my assurance as to the focus of my interest had provoked an entirely different response from that I was seeking to achieve:

'If I am doing this writing – I want to offer it to her.

Why is she not interested?

I want her to be interested.'

Given her question, the sharing of her poetic works, felt courageous and humble.

(c) What if the (unconscious) resistance really focuses upon reflexivity rather than poetry?

When discussing 'critical reflection', Fook and Askeland (2007) argue from an educational and possibly organisational stance that individual focus attends to a balance between risk and exposure. Such sentiments may be reflected within the

experience of one of my CRs, Polly who highlighted that the experience of writing poetry impacted in a less than helpful way. On the one hand,

I was shooting myself back to schooling, English lessons, those sorts of self-reflectiveness and I was thinking 'yes, well, that in itself is saying something'

and at the same time,

it wasn't deepening either personal reflectiveness or thoughts about the client situation.

This cost and benefit exchange was compounded further for Polly by

I just got so hung up with the next ... with what I was going to say next from a written perspective that I'm afraid it didn't feel very helpful.

Grisoni (2017) reflects similar research discussions as individuals are transported back in time to experiences with apparently uncomfortable associations. In Chapter 5, I will discuss my experience of writing haiku, in which I sought to challenge myself to embrace the process to see what I might learn about my own resistance to the form. Despite offering reassurance as to the focus of my research interest, Polly may have experienced a sense of vulnerability around the creation of poetry in support of reflexive practice, based upon past experience, where

you read a poem or you bring a poem ... and you then discuss it.

As Whyte (1994, p.28) talks about poetry '*invoking the soul*' so Armitage (2014, p.25) considers how poetry can be used '*to explore the hidden and silent realities*', both reflecting how poetry reveals the unconscious in the conscious. However, as Fook and Askeland (2007) indicate, 'critical reflection' carries considerations of risks and exposure, so Jade refers to '*sharing vulnerability and intimacy*' in her lyrical poetry. Thus, it might be that Faye and Gina highlight the value in remaining one step removed by using the poetry of others to minimise personal risk/exposure. Some may argue this to be particularly important for the internal organisational coach. Consideration as to the personal decision-making process around the selection of poetic choice (Baker & Mazza, 2004; Pennebaker, 1997) might create another pathway into reflexivity if the individual chose to do so (Norton, 2017).

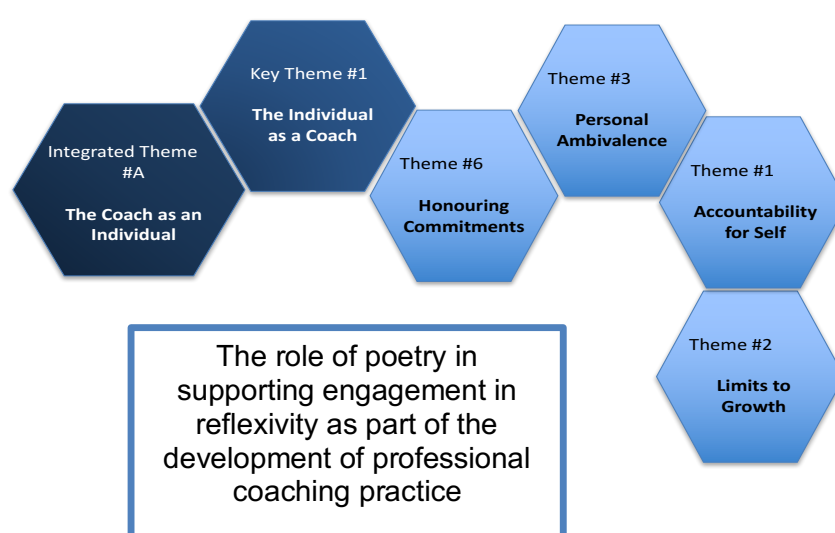
Cited within the field of coaching, the research worked to a voluntary engagement process and it is against this backdrop, that I was curious to understand the tension between agreeing in principle to do something and whether this agreement is

honoured or not. As coaches, when a commitment to action is given by a coachee, a vital part of the role of the coach is follow-up and support (Hawkins & Smith, 2006). As a coach, we might typically explore or challenge and consider responses, and explore further to garner learning for both parties. The focus of such exploration is learning (Cox *et al.*, 2014), whether about the essence of the phenomenon that is 'commitment' or self. Each of these emergent themes apparently expands underlying aspects of my research question, highlighting inherent assumptions, tensions and challenges from the perspectives of identity and narrative (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012), emotions (Plutchik, 2001), growth (Cox *et al.*, 2014) and coaching practice (Hawkins, 2015).

4.4 The Individual as a Coach (Key Theme #1)

An Overview of the Individual as a Coach (Key Theme #1)

Diagram 4.7



Within the framework of my research question, the previous elements lead to the emergence of a key theme focused upon '**The Individual as a Coach**' (#1) with associated considerations of accountability for self to support congruity of identity, self and praxis (Bachkirova, 2016). This theme carries an implicit assumption that people are motivated to learn and grow as human beings. Such an approach reflects a quest for the enhancement of personal capacity in terms of breadth and depth (Bachkirova, 2016; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011; Hawkins & Smith, 2006), and which might benefit from a sense as to what it means to be a critically reflexive (coach) practitioner to structure thinking, learning and choice (Cunliffe, 2004).

Cunliffe (2004, p.408) highlights the importance of an *existential* appreciation as to 'who I am and who I want to be going forward,' which, based upon the themes identified from the research, might address considerations of personal accountability for self, with proactive attention to ambivalence or self-imposed limits to growth. '*Relational*' dynamics (Cunliffe, 2004, p.408) expands attention to engagement, interaction and influence with and from others and the wider community. Within this key theme, honouring commitments (theme #6) might highlight the importance of clarification of expectations, with consideration of wider implications of decisions made by self upon others and vice versa. The final perspective of '*praxis*' (Cunliffe, 2004, p.408) considers potential limits to growth such as past and current mental models, beliefs and assumptions and potential impact upon current and future personal and professional preferences and practice. Such considerations appear to have merit for professional coaching practice.

Embracing such considerations, Katie expressed a sentiment which might resonate with many, stating that '*If I have to do stuff that I don't like, that's not my happy place*'. Further exploration revealed that

My happy place isn't a place; it's a combination of all of my strengths being at play, not overdone.

Drawing upon Cunliffe's (2004, p.4) reflexive lenses of existential/relational/praxis to consider these sentiments further, afforded a better appreciation of Katie's *existential* metaphor that '*I would be a bouncy Labrador when I arrived home*'. The metaphor here evokes a mental image of an energetic, playful dog, giving and receiving loyalty and love, perhaps offering insight into Katie's preferred way of being and being seen. *Relational* considerations through which Katie might consider the selection criteria of '*like-minded peers with similar values*' whilst embracing a *praxis* lens, raised considerations that might encourage Katie to expand into the less familiar, thereby broadening and deepening personal capacity (Bachkirova, 2016; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011; Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Katie's sentiments reflect the assurance of a familiar, safe space – possibly seductive and restrictive in equal measure. Bachkirova (2016) highlights the importance of knowing how and when to attend to self, physically and mentally to protect self and support effective practice. The challenge appears to lie in embracing a boldness required to step into the unfamiliar (Fook & Askeland, 2007; Kegan, 2009).

Drawing upon Cunliffe's (2004, p.408) three perspectives appears to support the development of a unique individual appreciation of personal identity, potential, style and capacity, which in turn offers '*a basis for working toward more critical responsive and ethical action.*' (Cunliffe, 2004, p.415). Reflexive practice as part of the coach's way of being (Cunliffe, 2004) supports personal and professional growth (Ryan, 2005) since reflexive practice challenges the individual to consider issues of inclusion, impact and omission (Bolton, 2014). In the world of coaching, such reflexive considerations challenge the coach to consider areas of attention, the impact and influence of approach and the challenging of self as to areas to follow up, disregard or avoid. Out of such reflexive considerations emerges awareness, understanding, appreciation and choice in the quest for congruity of practice and honouring of self (Bachkirova, 2016).

4.5 The Coach as an Individual (Integrated Theme #A)

The integrated theme of 'The Coach as an Individual' attends to notions of personal accountability, potential limitations to growth; personal responsibility in terms of professional conduct, standards and self-care, including emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual wellbeing (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016). Achieving the personal equilibrium to realise a model of coaching which Charles defines as

*... a gift giving, a warm feeling of helping someone helping them to
explore an issue*

whilst supporting a coachee

to explore what's behind, below the surface (Gina),

is personally and professionally demanding. The coach walks fine lines, managing and leading self within a process focused upon

bringing out the potential that's there ... (Jade).

Typically, practitioner definitions are congruent with Cox *et al.*'s (2014, p.1) definition of coaching as

*a human development process that involves structured, focused
interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools, and
techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the
benefit of the coachee and potentially for other stakeholders*

with the application and approach uniquely personal and reflective of the being of the coach (Bachkirova, 2016).

Reflexivity is consistently promoted as an enabler of 'ethical practice' whatever the professional setting (Grisoni, 2017; Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016; Cunliffe,

2004) with reflexive narrative logs typically being offered as the means for practice (Moon, 2009; Cunliffe, 2004). Such ideas might be considered to reflect Pennebaker's (1997) sentiments on the benefits of writing to support individual mental health and general wellbeing. Those CRs who engaged in the poetic writing task acknowledged the benefits of taking time to consider

what is the unmet need that presents itself in some kind of reaction

(Gina).

Gina went on to be specific, citing the benefits '*as a way to get deeper*' and '*allowing the emotion to emerge*' whilst '*expressing love in this process*'. Similarly, for Jade '*it's joyous*', bringing forth '*a kind of increased awareness of metaphor*' which benefited coach and coachee alike, since '*it was like a thematic wave that carried us through the session.*' Notably the response appears unique and personal '*that expression of my own reflectiveness or the client ... was stifled*' (Polly), once again reflecting the personal being of the coach (Bachkirova, 2016).

The focus upon the individuality of the coach, in being and approach, may also highlight notions of personal accountability and growth alongside the importance of supervision. It falls to the individual coach to hold self to account for the development, praxis of reflexivity, alongside considerations of self-deception, wellbeing and growth (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Wall *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016). Such issues of professional ethics highlight the importance of individual supervision (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Bachkirova and Lawton Smith (2015) highlight the importance of a mindset that includes a strong reflexive capability, moving beyond self-awareness. Embracing the identity of 'reflexive coach practitioner' is an aspiration that appears to sit alongside the maturation of coaching practice (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011), the ethical maturity of the coach (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017) and development as a human being (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009).

4.5.1 The Coach as an Individual -

when that individual is Me (Integrated Theme #A)

My research question attends to the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. Embracing HSSI as an extension of HI draws upon the essence of my lived experience of writing poetry in support of reflexivity, as additional material (Sela-Smith, 2002). Following a detailed HSSI review and analysis of my experience, insights and learning, my

research from the perspective of *'first person singular inquiry'* seeks to address criticisms of HI with respect to ambiguity of researcher role (Ozertugrul, 2015, p.4). My HSSI drew upon the experience of creating three anthologies entitled *Life Between Chapters*, *Cancer and Autumn Winds*, amounting to one hundred and one poems written over the period 2013-2016. My poetry evidences *'reflexivity-in-action'*, with my HSSI work distilling the essence of embracing poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of my development of professional coaching practice.

As with HI, my approach reflects an inductive and creative approach to the decomposition, reconstruction and reframing of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Patton, 2002). Mind mapping, with notes based upon the earlier organisation and coding of the data, enabled the dynamic discovery of *'important patterns, themes and interrelationships'* (Patton, 2002, p.41). The key themes to emerge from my HSSI analysis were informed by themes that emerged from a review of poetic titles and my poetry and subsequently considered within the context of my research question. Analysis of my poetic content seeks to illuminate and extricate deeper reflexive considerations in support of my own development and my research.

Organising, mind mapping and annotating the titles and poetry within each anthology brought forth intense engagement with poems which had been written two or three years previously. Time and space supported an additional level of objectification of the material however the power, authenticity and sentiment(s) of the titles and the poems transcended such concepts. Historical experience was brought to life, enabling my voice and underlying feelings to emerge and be expressed clearly. Such power is reflected in Briggs's (2012, p.33) sentiment regarding

the discovery of one's own voice is dependable upon being in a relationship with what one perceivably feels and with how that perception has entered one's own being.

On initial exploration and review, my poetic titles reflected an attention to sensemaking of unique and personal lived experience (Morgan, 2010). By considering the titles in a holistic and integrated manner, I challenged myself to see beyond the labels to explore assumptions and views that emerged when reviewing the totality of the titles. To dive deeper, to understand more; to consider more widely beyond the obvious; to actively listen to my own voice, without rushing to judgement. Such consideration of

a three-year period charted a flow, horizontally and vertically enabling patterns to emerge and key messages to be embraced.

Deeper analysis of the titles revealed other ongoing considerations of which I had been unaware despite supervision. A flow emerged as I moved through an intense, personally challenging journey from 'light' to 'dark' and back into 'light' as the unconscious was brought into relief in the reality of my poetry. Confronted by the reality of personal paradox, deep emotion and elements of self-deception was painful and difficult whilst creating opportunity and choice. Reviewing the titles as a collective enabled light and perspective to be directed on my unconscious and brought forth the unknown (Whyte, 1994). Armitage (2014, p.35) identifies this as '*unique productions of my reality – my being*' with Grisoni (2017, p.15) noting that '*writing poetry helps an individual understand where their attention has been placed*'. The titles of my poems referenced the descriptive element of the poem; reviewing the collective titles over time and distance revealed patterns of behaviour that were unknown and unconscious (Whyte, 1994).

Reflexively, I wondered whether my apparent lack of awareness constituted an element of self-deception (Bachkirova, 2015). Cunliffe and Coupland (2012) posit that an individual's identity is caught up in the narrative that s/he shares with others and perhaps with self. Bachkirova (2015) exploring the concept of self-deception in coaches, suggests that to support coachees minimise their self-deception, then perhaps it is appropriate for a coach to start with self by contracting within supervision to consider the topic. However, to contract regarding self-deception, assumes awareness of and personal accountability for self-deception by the coach. This may invite the coach to negotiate personal defense mechanisms before arriving at supervision (Senge, 1990). I suggest that poetry as a vehicle for reflexivity may raise awareness of self-deception as it taps into the unconscious (Whyte, 1994).

Each anthology was explored, with emergent thoughts and ideas, patterns of behaviour and thinking, assumptions, limitations and consequences explicated and examined for patterns, understanding and sensemaking. The titles and content of the first anthology attending to the known, the unknown and the hidden, reflecting the challenges of a busy day-to-day life, juggling work/home; family/business; others/me; so, analysis of the titles revealed underlying tensions that were exemplified by roles and emotions, power and control, and self-doubt. Acknowledging the truth of my own

poetry, the intensity of personal dilemmas emerged as a surprise, and the unconscious self-deception as to the effort required to be all things to all people.

The emergence of such topics is in parallel to my interpretation of the themes that emerged for my CRs when considering the potential of poetry as a reflexive tool. Having reviewed my poetic anthologies, Mind Map J reflects the emergent first-level themes from each anthology. Secondary themes were extricated via word clouds, and evolved into key themes. All themes at every level are evidenced by thinking, intuition with the notes from each individual anthology tracked back into Mind Map J, the individual anthology and the precise poem.

The range and intensity of emotion invited exploration and drawing upon Plutchik's (2001) theory of emotions, supported sensemaking. Embracing an evolutionary paradigm, whereby emotion is a process driving towards a homeostatic status, Plutchik (2001) suggests that behaviour acts as a mediator in the drive to return to homeostasis. Individuals respond to learning and change in quite different ways as evidenced by my HI CRs and when the drive for homeostasis is added into the picture, the issue becomes complex and confusing. Understanding such emotional complexity and drawing upon personal experience may afford improvement(s) or compromise in professional coaching practice (Cox *et al.*, 2014, p.7). Plutchik (2001) talks about the importance of feelings as a feedback mechanism in response to a chain of events, suggesting three primal instinctive drivers (*threat/food/mate*) trigger three primal cognitive responses (*escape or attack/eat/mate*), which trigger an unconscious emotional response (*fear/hunger/desire*). This then leads to a physiological and behavioural response (*run/eat/sex*), driving to achieve a specific effect (*protection/satiation/procreation*).

Throughout the personal crisis reflected in my poetry of the '*Betwixt and Between*' chapter, emerged a quest for a return to homeostasis or normality, whatever that might be. A six-month poetic journey reflected a gradual emotional change and acceptance that things had changed with such acceptance offering a vital platform for progress and learning. Reflecting the essential coaching theme of extending meaning and learning to personal experience, change needs to be embraced if pain and effort is to have a positive purpose (Cox *et al.*, 2014). Analysis of my poetry using mind mapping and word clouds enabled key emotions to be identified through intuition, interpretation

and self-dialogue that in turn revealed internal patterns and connections around self-identity and self-worth.

Cunliffe & Coupland (2012) like Plutchik (2001) highlight the importance of drawing on embodied experience as a means of sensemaking. Reviewing the titles of my poetry and analysing the content of the *'Life Goes On'* anthology, I was shocked to note the discrepancy between the narrative I carried as a conscious part of my daily existence and that reflected deep within my poetry. Developing a detailed appreciation of this discrepancy and the emotions inherent within enabled exploration of wider concepts regarding self-deception and self-identity, rooted in deeper fears and anxieties (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Plutchik, 2001).

Moving on from the shock and emotional turmoil of *'Life Goes On PI'* and *'Betwixt and Between,'* fear emerged as the dominant, unconscious, underlying emotion in my *'Cancer'* anthology (2.0#14-01C to 2.0#14-0.10C) with Albrecht's (2012) model offers insight as to the primal nature of the emotion. Reviewing my *'Cancer'* anthology enabled me to move beyond my own *'Be Strong'* driver (Stewart & Joines, 2012, p.161), to acknowledge its short-term value as a control/defence mechanism and to embrace the deeper fear that emerged in the poetry. Exploration of the metaphors employed, the emotions, the implicit personal frame of reference, the nature and the focus of the poem enabled identification of deeper, primary emotions is demonstrated in Table 4.8. I also sought to differentiate between the reflective and reflexive nature of each poem as a means of reviewing the intensity and inherent *'revelation of the self to the self'* (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003, p.190).

A Sample Consideration of one Anthology - Cancer

Table 4.8

Cancer Anthology	Feelings	Simile/ Metaphor	Language (Biggest words in word cloud)	Subject/ Object	Values/ Beliefs/ Internal Frame of Reference	Reflective or Reflexive
Cancer	Submission	Crab Astrology	<i>Hermit simply right</i> Chest pain Don't know Deep dark shock	Cancer Diagnosis	Be Strong; Head Down Get Through It Done	Reflective
Stress	Fear	Darkness	Im Dark	Me	Be Strong; Weary but gearing up	Reflective
MRI	Terror	Noise – music or alarms	Silent Screaming Suspended Limbs Clear Fear	Intense fear	Be Strong; Primal fear	Reflexive
Angst	Acceptance	Acronym	----	Dealing with change and uncertainty		Reflective
It's Theatre Dahling!	Distraction	Theatre	Stage	Pastime as way of avoiding fear	Please Others	Reflective
My Week	Love	Passing Time	Time Journey	Walking through the dark	Be Strong: Will of Iron	Reflexive
Oncology	Terror	Illness	Suddenly Life	Confronted by my reality	Cup half full or half empty?	Reflexive
Tears	Anger	Grief	Tears Eye	Past present future	Call to Action	Reflexive
24 Hours	Submission	 Rhythm	10 minutes ok counts count warning been machine clunk clank position expand brrrrrrring whizzzzzzing	Observational	Micro life view	Reflective
Vulnerable	Vigilance	Page 3 Model	Alone new	Me Radiotherapy	I'm on my own here	Reflexive

The dominant emotion to emerge from analysis of my 'Cancer' anthology was fear noted in the tensions between my presenting control and underlying terror of the MRI machine or my discomfort at being the focus of attention in the operating theatre. A 'fear of ego death' (Albrecht, 2012) speaks to the emotional stress associated with the

potential loss of '*integrity of the self*' (Albrecht, 2012) which might be considered as a fear of that which threatens one's self-identity (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). My poetry in this anthology perhaps highlights issues of identity and emotion, in that I did not want to be a patient or a victim juxtaposed with the fear of what might emerge from the darkness (Plutchik, 2001). As I reflected further, I wondered whether at an extreme level, such considerations might highlight the challenges of giving/receiving 'feedback' where 'the unknown I cannot see' suggests the reticence or fear that might underpin such an exchange. Heightened awareness by a coach of such resistance either personal or with a coachee might enable greater consideration as to how to explore such unknown territory in a manner that minimises threat and optimises learning.

Analysis of my poetry highlighted that coming on top of emergent issues and themes around previously unknown/ unacknowledged emotional turmoil (Plutchik, 2001) and specific issues of conflict management (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974), self-identity (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012) and self-doubt (Hindmarch, 2008), the undercurrent of fear is not entirely surprising. Connecting with such concepts and intense emotions supported deeper and richer ideas and choice through reflection and self-dialogue.

Exploring the concept of fear through the Albrecht (2012) model, I noted a difference between the quality of emotion underpinning my 'Cancer' anthology and that of my broader 'Life Goes On' anthology. In the 'Cancer' anthology, the emotion may be cited in a response to danger with a fight/flight impulse. Albrecht (2012) suggests protection as the appropriate response and notably within my poetry, emerges a sense of aloneness and a search for support. In the broader 'Life Goes On' (1.1#13-01-1.3#14.07) anthology, the fear is spread across all three triggers as reflected throughout Plutchik (2001). Sela-Smith (online) speaks of the '*willingness to surrender to experiencing difficult feelings with integrity*' demanding intense reflection, courage and curiosity to embrace the challenging and unknown. Difficult emotion was identified and my HSSI journey highlighted the uniqueness of this emotion, its presentation, its day to day management and its potential strategic impact subject to interpretation. As I drew upon Plutchik (2001) to identify and understand the emotion so I explored the emotion from the perspectives of self-worth or identity and its potential influence upon my life script (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Stewart & Joines, 2012). Consideration of fear or loss associated with separation might reflect a desire to belong, requiring acceptance and appreciation of self (Albrecht, 2012). If it is about self-deception then the requirement is to face into the pain since this will support healing (Bachkirova,

2015; Sela-Smith, 2002). Each option is personally emotionally demanding and carries with it notions of '*growing pains*' (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009, p.16), but concentrating upon the emotion created choices going forward that tend to my wellbeing, growth and development as a reflexive coach practitioner (Well *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016).

In considering the 'Coach as an Individual' theme, my final research anthology 'Autumn Winds' (3.0#15-3.1 – 3.0#15-3.17) addresses emerging from the darkness (#15-04 and #15-05) into the light whilst identifying the learning and establishing how I might heal and grow from the experience, the emergent insights and additional thinking. Reflecting key themes of wholeness and aloneness, this anthology also reflects movement from darkness to light in a quest to consolidate my learning. It should also be noted that a side-effect of my cancer medication is depression and while I have a clear recall of the general associated fatigue, the emotional toll is also visible in this anthology.

Sela-Smith (online) indicates that there is no single way to approach HSSI but that like HI, the key requirements lie in curiosity and connection. My interest in the Sela-Smith approach to HSSI is rooted in her interest in feelings and connecting with deeper aspects of self from which one may have become disconnected. Writing and subsequently analysing my poetry using the broad HSSI structure enabled me to connect with the intensity of emotion reflected in my poetry. Such analysis was painful and I drew upon my '*professional knowledge and skills*' (Bachkirova, 2016, p.144) to encourage, tend and support self through the resistance and challenges of the emotions. The duality of my roles as 'I-participant' and 'I-researcher' was embraced in my reflexive diary, enabling my physical and emotional wellbeing throughout analysis of poetry that recorded the chaos and disruption of lived experience (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Cunliffe, 2004).

4.6 The Coach as an Individual Theme (integrating data from CRs and myself)

Having explored data from my CRs and myself, this section focuses upon optimising the material by considering the data from each source together. My poetic realisations are considered alongside those of my CRs in Table 4.9 as the essence of experience in the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. This comparison seeks to draw upon the thoughts and experience of my CRs and that of myself by juxtaposing experience.

My CRs were all aware of poetry, with some having already written or used poetry, personally or professionally. The concept of using poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity typically arose during preliminary discussions or the first interview, with gentle questioning: 'awakening' people to the idea. For my CRs, their 'Awakening' was apparently gentle and greeted with interest and enthusiasm. My own awakening to the potential of poetry in supporting reflexivity was also gradual and evidenced by my HSSI internal inquiry. In specific terms, my poetry reflected my awakening to hidden turmoil. In 'Accountability', there are parallels as to the choice which people face when challenged by compromise, and potentially a lack of sensitivity to the cost of compromise. When considered in conjunction with 'Limits to Growth', and 'Ambivalence', a narrative starts to emerge with respect to individual accountability for self-care plus personal and professional development (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016). Being sensitised to self in terms of personal and professional needs, care and wellbeing is evidenced by Jade in Personal Ambivalence. Bachkirova (2016) suggests that self-care is vital in terms of ensuring ongoing development and the highest standards of professional practice. Different approaches to reflection and reflexivity may reflect different learning styles as I consider whether poetry as a reflexive vehicle may speak to Kolb's (2014) learning styles 'perception continuum', potentially offering insight as to how to support the reflexive practice of those on the 'processing continuum'. Drawing upon research in education and therapeutic settings (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Haertl, 2014; Mazza, 2006; Pennebaker, 1997), the value of creative expression is endorsed. Initial enthusiasm for the poetic writing task did not bring forth the anticipated engagement but rather a (fascinating) gap between intent and reality.

Theme Alignment

Table 4.9

Co-Researcher Comments	Theme	JMM Poetic Anthologies
<i>'I'm curious that you have made me think about why don't I write poetry?' (Faye)</i>	Awakening (to current reality hidden assumptions patterns of behaviour)	<i>Life Goes On</i> <i>Cancer</i>
<i>'I am a woman who has emotions ... I know that I am a master at locking it up but then I am not 'me' and I think that is a real struggle' (Gina)</i>	Accountability (procrastination busyness avoidance)	<i>Life Goes On PI</i>
<i>'A lot of the learning that I do is fast and quick and when I have got a minute.'</i> (Katie)	Limits to Growth (when personal and professional development slow down, there are consequences for professional performance and growth Senge, 1990)	<i>Life Goes On PI</i> <i>Betwixt and Between</i>
<i>'I must be aware that my first responsibility is to be as great a service of myself as a whole a person as I can.'</i> (Jade)	Personal Ambivalence (sensitised to self)	<i>Life Goes On PI</i> <i>Betwixt and Between</i>
<i>'Writing in away is one way to connect to 'what am I feeling?' ... I think that's what I have learnt over long years, just don't feel ...'</i> (Gina)	Personal Development & Reflexivity	<i>Life Goes On PI</i> <i>Betwixt and Between</i>
<i>'I find that far more difficult to know how ... to get it or take that or whatever the reflection is back into my practice in a way that I feel is formal.'</i> (Polly)	Learning Styles & Reflexivity	<i>Life Goes On PI</i> <i>Betwixt and Between</i> <i>Life Goes On PII</i> <i>Cancer</i> <i>Autumn Winds</i>
<i>'No bluntly I haven't' (Faye)</i> <i>'I don't do it (write limericks) when I'm under pressure ... been a difficult 6 months' (Charles)</i>	Honouring Commitments	<i>Life Goes On PI</i> <i>Betwixt and Between</i> <i>Life Goes On PII</i>

In terms of the essence of the experience of engaging with poetry in support of reflexivity, my data was limited and brought forth considerations around honouring commitments, particularly important in a complex helping profession based upon trust and relationships (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016). Whilst I acknowledge the balance of risk and exposure which may mitigate against learning and the secreted worlds revealed by poetry (Grisoni, 2017; Armitage, 2014; Fook and Askeland, 2007), my CRs' initial enthusiasm had been usurped by other factors. In a research project cited within the world of executive coaching, promotion of poetry's potential to release the human soul, including that of the coach, within the sterility of the corporate world apparently resonated for all and yet (Whyte, 1994).

My research interest taps into the use of poetry to access the hidden, unconscious world of self and how this in turn may support reflexivity, a process typically practiced by means of written logs. Against this backdrop, the poetic writing task with its focus upon reflexivity and poetry as a reflexive vehicle, Polly's experience indicated that having engaged with the poetic writing task, she was *'left feeling that poetry is not a way that I would naturally express myself'* since she found herself *'weighing up the value of precision of word and the value of the free form story-telling.'* By contrast, Jade's experience was similarly unique; perhaps drawing upon her poetic writing experience, she commented *'I have shared it (my poetry) with you in the spirit of ... sharing vulnerability and intimacy.'* Intuitive appreciation of the potential vulnerability associated with sharing personal poetic efforts encouraged me to indicate from the earliest stages of CRs engagement that I had no requirement to see people's poetry. Such an approach proved to be endorsed by the therapeutic literature (Mazza, 2006; Pennebaker, 1997). Jade and Charles shared their poetry on a voluntary basis and their generosity is cherished.

Whilst engagement levels with the poetic writing task were less than anticipated, I believed that this of itself offered data and sought to understand *'why'* – reviewing the individual presenting reasons, individual wider narratives; the totality of presenting reasons and the totality of wider narratives; my role, approach and narrative. Those who had engaged, even with a limited number and with such different experiences, supported direct data in respect of my research question. When faced with *disruption* to established experience or current reality which might be perceived as either threat or danger, a fight/flight response is triggered to protect self. (Plutchik, 2001). At a minimalist level, such a response might intuitively and unconsciously manifest itself as

resistance. In the face of a 'new' approach, acknowledged as '*a disruptive form of writing*' (Grisoni & Page, 2015, p.109), it is possible that people, despite their best intentions and early enthusiasm, unconsciously prioritised other activities to manage personal exposure (Fook & Askeland, 2007). 'Honouring Commitments' (Theme #6) highlights individual responses and rationales for individual approaches. Tentative questioning sought more data and reframing my question supported insight as to the experience of my CRs. It appeared that despite their best intentions, in the reality of the task, individuals encountered some sort of resistance e.g. mood (Charles) or other priorities (Faye and Katie) or offered alternative forms of creative expression (Lucas and Gina).

With an appreciation of my own fears and dilemmas when facing disruption, I revisited my CRs' data to ascertain if there were any clues in the first interviews as to people's instinctive response to poetry as a reflexive vehicle. Lucas approached the task with a view that '*writing poetry is hard work*' whilst acknowledging '*I will have all this inbuilt resistance to my creative stuff ...*' pre-task. Post-task, he emphasised that '*I was inspired to write my notes to myself in a more ... I didn't try to write them as a poem but I wrote them thinking 'OK, so this could be a poem.'*' In advance Polly spontaneously devised a plan where

I will start with the reflexive log because that will be helpful and I will start with that because that will be a challenge in itself because I think if I can flow that then I can easily see that the flow of a poem, will be quite easy

but realised post-task

When I was sitting with you know a blank piece of paper thinking about poetry, even though I have you know got people's notes or your structure ... it still went 'uuugh gosh what ... where do I start?'

....

It might be that known/unknown considerations of threat (Albrecht, 2012; Fook & Askeland, 2007) and their impact upon the individual were very real.

I am going to go to Paper Chase! Yes definitely. I think this is absolutely the right thing for me at exactly the right time

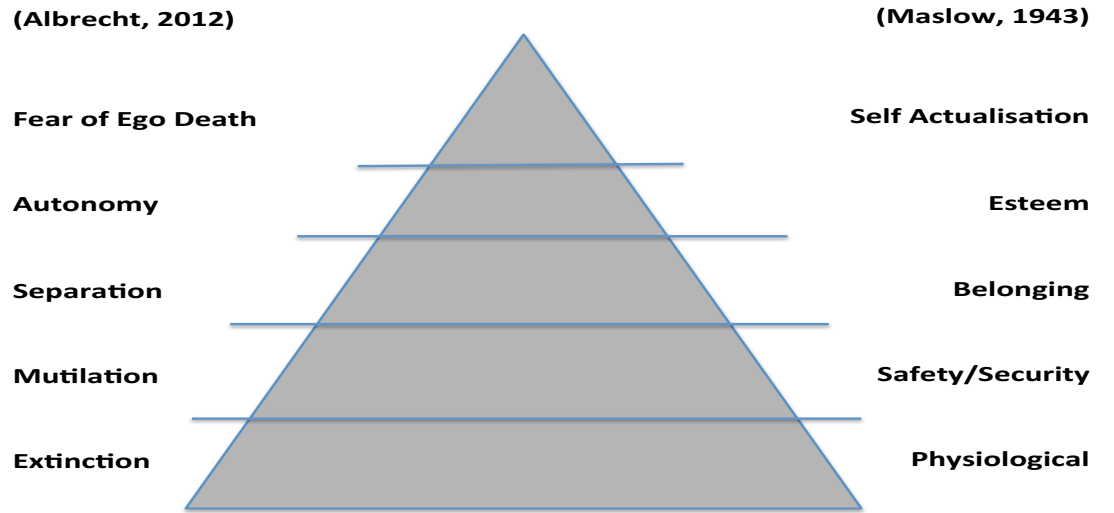
said Katie pre-task, but post-task she noted,

... it's all been bubbling around in my head rather than me writing it ...'

Drawing upon Plutchik’s (2001, p.347) evolutionary model of the emotional response to threat or disruption which is typically ‘fear’, I considered whether managing risk and fear of exposure (Fook & Askeland, 2007) might be an unconscious/underlying response to a new and unfamiliar approach or situation. Albrecht’s (2012) fear-archy posits that there are five basic fears, which can act as a source of data if acknowledged. Sela-Smith (2012) plus Fook and Askeland (2007) acknowledge the challenges of engaging with internal inquiry which typically might result in some sort of unconscious resistance. The importance of emotional maturity is highlighted when embracing deeper forms of reflection and reflexivity, which ‘*harness the potential to be self-critical*’ (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.99). I suggest that being bold and sufficiently curious as to the source of the fear can enable learning about self and offer choice. If, as suggested by Cox *et al.*, (2014), a coach focuses upon the realisation of learning and potential of coachees, then inviting a coach to consider personal fear or resistance might be considered an important element of professional practice and emotional maturity (Plutchik, 2001; Fook & Askeland, 2007). Considering Albrecht (2012) alongside Maslow (1943) in Diagram 4.10 demonstrates the possible shadow side or limitation to growth that emotion can play in inhibiting an individual’s progress in terms of realising learning and potential (Mezirow, 2001).

Considering Fear and Growth together

Diagram 4.10



I do not have the data to make judgements as to the role of fear in individual decision-making re. the poetic writing task. In a voluntary research setting, individuals made self-directed choice based on relevancy, motivation and need (Cox *et al.*, 2014). In a coaching session, it would have been worthwhile to challenge and consider decision-

making, emotion and approach; in a voluntary research setting, exploration regarding decision-making and choices, felt more tentative. Analysis has shown that each CR had an opportunity to learn about self, based upon their own decision-making and approach. Whilst, agreeing to engage with the poetic writing task was of itself a choice, it also appears that a more detailed appreciation of the poetic writing task upfront and associated expectations might have been helpful. Curiosity was not enough to disrupt established experience and existing patterns of behaviour. I also have questions as to the potential role of the poetry workshop in enabling engagement. From a coaching perspective, such considerations offer some insight as to the potential role of emotions in limiting personal growth. This in turn may bring forth choice for the coach as to where attention might be directed in challenging ambivalence and disruption.

'The Coach as an Individual' (#A) emerges from my HI and HSSI research as an integrated theme, which considers the individual coach's personal accountabilities for personal and professional standards within a complex helping but unregulated profession (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016). This theme draws upon notions of personal and professional growth, enrichment of a professional capability mindset drawing upon reflexive capability, experience and knowledge with personal accountability for self-care, learning, and growth (Bachkirova, 2015; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Cox *et al.*, 2014). Exploring with CRs the potential of poetry as a reflexive vehicle in support of such considerations, delivered limited data with respect to the value as experienced by the coaches involved. However, it appears that the research process encouraged increased levels of engagement with reflexivity and creative expression to beneficial effect for those who chose to engage (Cunliffe, 2004; Pennebaker, 1997). It created opportunity to learn about self by

interaction with somebody else and supporting the person trying to express, it can be extremely rich and helpful for both people. (Polly)

For those who engaged with the poetic writing task, it typically offered a level of personal support:

I did experiment with more writing and although it is not poetry, it has given me a lot. It gave me an intimacy with myself also an opportunity to see where I might be self-deceiving or what it is I'm struggling noticing or struggling to face up to but also expressing love in this process (Gina)

As coaches my CRs enjoyed different experiences in writing poetry and embracing it as a reflexive vessel. For Jade, poetry represents a

personal expression ... it enriches my life; it enriches my personal sensemaking and I think that then makes me a more sensitised server to others.

Meanwhile, for Polly, the experience was quite different:

I got so hung up in the word I was just about to use and the structure ... I didn't find it helpful at all ... and I thought I don't need this ... it wasn't deepening either personal reflectiveness or thoughts about the client situation. (Polly)

For me, the essence of the poetic writing experience was entirely unique to my lived experience and distinctive HSSI experience, with analysis bringing forth reflexive appreciation, insight and personal transformation.

4.7 Summary

This research study attends to the role of poetry in support of engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. This chapter has explored The Coach as an Individual (Integrated theme #1) by examining data from my CRs as part of the Illumination and Explication phases of HI, supported by exploration of my data using HSSI.

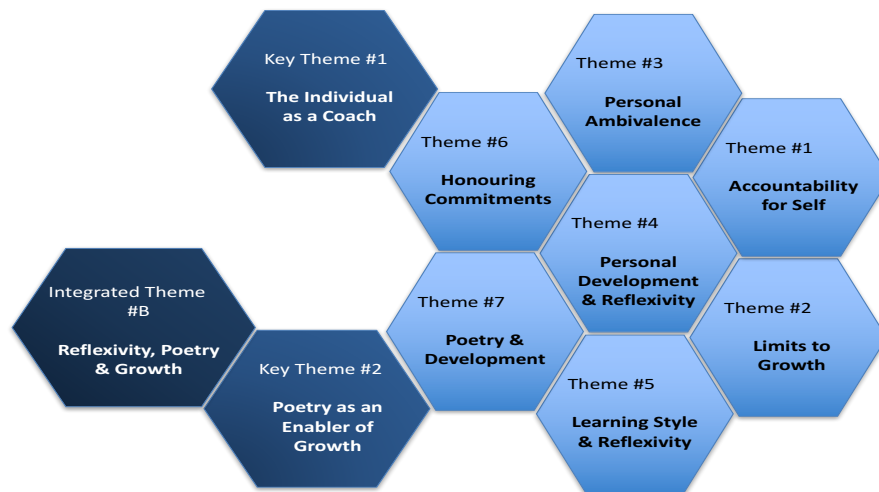
Considerations emerged focusing on the potential for embracing a strategic and considered approach to development in support of self-leadership and professional coaching practice. At a more tactical level, assimilation of reflexive practice as an ongoing part of the coach's personal and professional way of being might support and inform self-discovery and self-leadership. Writing, creatively and poetically, is evidenced as offering potential to reconcile day to day personal dilemmas alongside emotional and relational needs (Whyte, 1994) – the challenge appears to lie with individuals prioritising time and space for self to promote personal wellbeing and enable the subconscious to come to the fore. This in turn requires self-confidence, curiosity and a focus upon growth.

Chapter 5 – Reflexivity, Poetry and Growth

This chapter focuses upon the second of three *integrated* themes entitled ‘Reflexivity, Poetry & Growth’ (#B) and sits at the heart of my research question. Data is sourced from interview transcriptions, emails and two key themes (#1 and #2) and themes (#1-#7) with patterns abstracted from individual transcriptions. Diagram 5.1 reflects the emerging narrative by highlighting the relationships that underpin the headline story and draws upon the Illumination and Explication phases of HI. These HI phases focus upon being receptive to new and richer nuanced meanings as they emerge from intense examination of the data. This emergent portrayal is enriched by the unique experience of each CR and reflects my interpretivist, social constructionist approach, embracing intense self-dialogue and intuition (Patton, 2002). As an integrated theme, it blends the essential narratives from the HI and HSSI experience of exploring the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice.

An Overview of Chapter 5

Diagram 5.1



5.1 The emergent story Accountability for Self (Theme #1) and Limits to Growth (Theme #2)

This key theme attends to a relationship between poetry and reflexivity, bringing forth a potential contribution to personal development and growth, whilst seeking to contribute to professional coaching practice. During the first round of CR interviews, it emerged that whilst interested in the research study, experience of and interest in poetry was variable from zero to ...

*'The invitation intrigues
Weigh up time and benefit.
Remember tendency to over-give,
But then - commitment to CPD
Take further . . .
Keep open . . .
'Yes' beckons.'* (Jade, email 16/2/2016)

People's interest in the research study occasionally carried an assumption that it was *"referring to other people's poetry"* (Polly) and the sentiment that *"I am moved by poetry"* but *"I don't write poetry"* (Lucas) was typical. Two CRs had previously written poetry, with Jade indicating *"it's often a therapeutic expression of strong feeling"*. Meantime Charles, an author of limericks, considers them *"a playground area for me to go into and have fun"*. On probing, it emerged that a small number who *"tend not to write poetry"* (Faye) do have poetic experience through attendance at a workshop where *"we did Haiku"* (Faye) or as part of a corporate culture reflecting *"a Haiku connection"* (Lucas). Some draw upon the work of others as a means of *"reflection on the coaching session"* (Faye) or to consider *"how it resonates or what stands out"* (Gina).

My CRs' interest in poetry appears focused upon the sensemaking opportunity identified by Morgan (2010), with an intuitive perception of benefits to the reader as *"help to see the brighter side"* (Charles). For Gina, it was about forging connections over generations (Windle, 1994): *"I didn't know my great grandfather but my grandmother ... keeps citing him"*, building appreciation and understanding since *"it comes from a place of love and compassion"*. When the poetry of others is used with coachees, it is as an instrument of reflection, with Faye highlighting poetry's power to access *"the parts that any logical or any analytical models don't get"* although it *"is quite light touch"*. When Faye utilises poetry for coach development, it offers *"a starting point"*. Despite such positive endorsements, writing and using poetry carry perceived risk with the use of pseudonyms e.g. for Charles *"The Phantom Poet"* enabling *"plausible deniability"* whilst for Jade *"A lot of my poetry is ... hidden, in a way."* When using poetry with clients, it impacts upon professional identity (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012) with the potential risk of being perceived as *"flaky"* (Jade), since *"poetry is its own little engine of complex meanings"* (Morgan, 2010, p.12).

Reflexivity was typically a less familiar term than reflection:

I don't think you learn much if you don't reflect on your own experience and process ... I don't really know what you mean by reflexivity. But certainly, reflection is a crucial part of my experience. (Lucas)

The CRs were curious as to its meaning and how to approach it:

I read your note on reflexivity and I was thinking about how do I do that ... I'm going to say that I don't find time to do it ... I would like to find more time to put things down on paper. This is going to give me an opportunity that is, in my thinking, an allowable time to do some writing ... (Polly).

The capability mindset, including reflexivity, espoused by Bachkirova and Lawton Smith (2015) enhances the competency frameworks promoted by the professional associations with their attention to self-awareness, self-insight and personal accountability. Bachkirova and Lawton Smith (2015) make explicit the importance of self-awareness and reflexivity in evaluating actions and choices in coaching practice; both in the moment and retrospectively, such capabilities will directly impact upon the quality of the coach's awareness and flexibility. The enrichment of such capabilities lies at the heart of our being and is directly connected to notions of effectiveness, ethics and self-leadership (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cunha *et al.*, 2015). Enhancing personal capacity might be regarded as a lifelong quest, with implications of breadth and depth of capability and practice; supported by coachees, supervisors and colleagues (Bachkirova, 2016). Acknowledging the importance of personal awareness as part of capability enrichment, Katie suggested "*it connects to emotional intelligence ... spotting ... raising self-awareness*", supported by a strong commitment to

know the latest literature, management practices, and most importantly the inner work. For the inner work, I use my coach ... I've been in therapy, I do supervision, I do some type of mindfulness ... I do a lot of reading. (Gina)

A narrative started to emerge of an unconscious limitation to personal learning and growth. This pattern, which became Theme #1 'Accountability for Self', apparently resides in taking responsibility and holding self to account for a personal way of being, emphasised by awareness, management and attendance to personal patterns of behaviour. My CRs indicated levels of self-awareness and self-knowledge with respect to patterns of personal behaviour, with Charles noting "*If someone says, 'oh what's this?' I dunno it's a bit difficult that; it's a bit complicated, isn't it? So, I'll just ...*

I dunno, you know” and Polly indicating *“What I find I don’t do enough of is to stand back and think ‘what does this mean?’*” Despite awareness of personal patterns, a gap emerged between awareness and action to change. Being willing to connect, tend to and address such patterns, including associated raw and painful emotion to heal or to learn is, as Katie indicated

challenging, ... I will find stuff to do that’s not related to it ... I’ll just go ‘oh right, let’s have some activity’ ... I use it as a diversion and distraction technique from what’s hard and what’s hurting and stressful over there.

As a former mental health practitioner, Katie’s approach might be considered something of a personal management technique, when she stated,

I move from one stressful situation to busyness and productivity and then I forget about that ... and then something else stressful might happen and then I’ll get ... busy and have some positivity elsewhere
....

whilst acknowledging the personal challenge of reflexively considering

‘Right, what can I do? How do I feel? What am I noticing?’ I never stopped to give myself time to do that.

People appear to demonstrate self-knowledge and self-awareness but to develop strategies for self-management that may be viewed as acceptance or perhaps a defence against the pain and challenge of personal change, even when known to be harmful to self (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Sela-Smith, online). For coaches, such awareness but lack of attention may be a form of self-deception if considering potential implication(s) for self and one’s practice, since *‘this is also what coaching practitioners aim to achieve for their clients in relation to their life and practice’* (Bachkirova, 2015, p.145).

Cunliffe and Coupland (2012) highlight the importance of self-identity within the construction of sensible personal narrative and within this context, tensions might be detected when considering CR data. This might include denial, rationalisation or acceptance of personal discomfort and challenge as part of one’s narrative, as demonstrated by Polly and Gina, or denying one’s own capability to address, heal or learn from such engagement, as highlighted by Charles and Katie. If attending to self, such ideas may offer opportunities for personal development (Bachkirova, 2016).

Supervision is typically viewed as key to reflection and self-development (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017) and whilst it became clear that many coaches are embracing supervision, a similar number are not (Bachkirova, Spence & Drake, 2016). Hawkins and Smith (2010, p.143) position supervision as *'one of the main integrating processes for ongoing personal and professional development'*. However, the purpose and experience of supervision was varied amongst my CRs, with Polly indicating *"I definitely write some notes in supervision ... about my client"*. For Faye, *"Reflection tends to be either in a journal and it is about pausing and thinking through things. It is through supervision."* Faye proposed an alternative perspective of reflexivity and its application, indicating that *"Reflexivity is absolutely about supervision"*, with therapy also emerging as *"a reflexive practice."*

Polly highlighted the key role of supervision in reflection and self-development, stating that,

in a more coach supervisory type environment which was actually more about me ... that's why I remembered it when you were talking about my own self-development.

Supervision, whether one-to-one and/or peer, emerges as a contributor to a potpourri of professional development avenues rooted in established experience, and including on-the-job development, regular therapy sessions, course attendance, conference speaking and reading. Gina expressed frustration regarding the development guidelines of the professional associations: *"I was a bit disillusioned ... it was very much competency-based"*. The development agenda for other CRs appeared rooted in aspects of personal interest (Cox *et al.*, 2014). Jade indicated *"I have done lots of counselling courses. I am not a counsellor or psychotherapist but my interest ... I guess, is psychological."* Polly's motivation was more extrinsic: *"I suddenly found this new world, which was very exciting, pretty challenging and hit my button at the time"*. Consistently many CRs reflected an opportunistic, dynamic, self-directed approach to development, including Katie who indicated *"a lot of the learning that I do is fast ... quick ... when I have got a minute, I am using social media to kind of find something of interest."* Personal interest, motivation and suitability of approach are vital ingredients of adult development (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009) however the prioritisation and incremental approach to personal and professional development is noteworthy. In an unregulated, emerging profession where responsibility for self-leadership and self-management lies with the individual, it might be argued that attention to professional and personal growth is an ethical issue, regarded as a key

contributor to coach maturation, with implications for professional practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011).

My CRs work with a broad base of coachees and come from a wide variety of professional backgrounds. The majority are self-employed, so conscious choices and decisions around development may be vital for reasons of professional and personal sustainability, investment and returns. Offering an organisational perspective, Faye reflected, *“there’s my PDP ... focused upon two aspects – one is me as a leader; the other is me as a coach.”* From a self-employed perspective, Katie indicated, *“How do I approach my personal development? This year probably not very well [laughter]”*. Identifying and acknowledging possible checks and balances to personal development was a recurring pattern and is identified as Theme #2 Limits to Growth, offering potential for development and growth through proactive self-leadership and accountability.

Such a dynamic approach to development and growth appears to afford both opportunity and risk in terms of enhancement of coaching competencies and capabilities, potentially relying heavily upon supervision as the vehicle for development. With data indicating a variable uptake of regular supervision and potentially variable approaches to supervision practice (Bachkirova *et al.*, 2016), it appears that there might be value in investigating additional means of self-coaching and self-development to potentially avoid an enabler to growth becoming a limit to growth (Cox *et al.*, 2014). Alternatively, it may emerge as a form of self-deception, with a coach minimising or denying personal emotion and action, with potential consequences for client work and ethical practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2015). Supervision plays an important role in supporting and enhancing the reflexive capability of coaches (Hawkins & Smith, 2006) however accountability for reflexive practice resides with the coach and could include a coach engaging with it as part of a way of being (Cunliffe, 2002).

5.2 Personal Development and Reflexivity (Theme #4)

Whilst many CRs were initially hesitant to differentiate between reflection and reflexivity, their reticence typically proved unfounded, with Katie offering a definition as follows:

Reflexivity ... I think it connects to emotional intelligence. So, it is around spotting ... raising self-awareness, noting seeing intuitive responses that I might take.

A variety of rich and subtle perspectives were offered including Lucas *"I guess ... reflexivity is a kinder, deeper version of reflection"*, and Faye's perspective: *"Reflexivity is absolutely about supervision ... therapy I would say is reflexive."*

Having established a broad working definition of reflexivity, the data indicated that the real challenge lay in practice. The interviews brought forth considerations of personal practice with Polly indicating *"I read your note on reflexivity and I was thinking about how do I do that?"* Katie advised, *"a lot of it is going on in my head ... my brain is busy"*, with Gina indicating *"when I reflect after a session, I write. So, for me writing is also a way to ... I use that as a way to get deeper."* Reflecting the sentiments of Cunliffe (2002), many CRs highlighted the intensity of mental reflection leading to an internal busyness that consumes personal energy and emotions. A continuum of reflection/reflexivity practice and application emerged in support of self-knowledge, personal development and action. This continuum ranged from Charles's view (*"I was patting myself on the back for doing something I found difficult"*) through to Jade's view (*"the words learning/development and reflexivity ... are in some kind of Venn diagram where it's quite difficult to decide where the boundaries are ..."*). Jade, in congruity with much of the literature (Bachkirova, 2016; Cox *et al.*, 2014; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011; Hawkins & Smith, 2006) indicated that

... any coach ... must be in their own process and kind of journey of development and awareness and consciousness.

Typically, reflexivity is promoted using logs (Cunliffe, 2004) and in this study, a template (Appendix D.2) was offered to support engagement with the process. Both pre- and post-task, Polly acknowledged the value of the reflexive log as a starting point: *"because that will be a challenge..."* and post-experience *"those were extremely helpful ..."*. Such endorsement alongside the literature appears to suggest that embracing a strategic and considered approach to reflexivity in support of development might be regarded as an ethical responsibility for a coach (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Cunliffe, 2004). Iordanou *et al.* (2017) emphasise the cause and effect relationships between ongoing development emerging from supervision and reflexivity and an enhanced appreciation of values. Such awareness is suggested as affording a platform for the development of ethical maturity; a prerequisite for ethical

coaching practice (ibid., 2017). Such an approach may reflect the enrichment of personal breadth and depth of capability and enhance personal capacity (Bachkirova, 2016; Hawkins & Smith, 2006). My CR data suggests that the practical realities of life may challenge such ideals, highlighting the significant self-imposed effort required to uphold such ambition.

5.3 Learning Styles and Reflexivity (Theme #5)

CR data suggests individuals appreciate the 'what' of reflexivity:

it's about their interaction with the world, it's their consideration of their interaction with the world, the behaviours they exhibit, the impact they have upon others, it's about considering those behaviours and exploring alternatives. (Charles)

Namely, what reflexivity is and what it enables

Reflexivity ... in the moment awareness of where I am coming from, what is my stuff, what is their stuff ... so not only recognising and reflecting upon the impact I am having but then altering and adapting what I am doing to take account of the impact I am having, learning from the responses I get and being able to adapt and change but being fully aware that I'm an active player in whatever happens. (Faye)

The practice or the 'how' and the 'why', outside of a supervised process, appears more elusive. With much of the literature on reflexivity emerging from the fields of social science research, healthcare and education (Lambert *et al.*, 2010; Ryan, 2005; Cunliffe, 2004), my research data potentially offers valuable material from a coaching perspective. Consideration of a coach embracing reflexivity as a way of being, potentially offers much in terms of personal and professional mastery and ethical practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2011; Cunliffe, 2002).

Charles challenged "where does that ... how does that help?" and "I'm kind of going, I need to think about that". Lucas acknowledged personal patterns of behaviour and perceived challenges in writing poetry: "I will find all sorts of ways to procrastinate and do all sorts of other stuff, except do my work over and overcoming resistance and I know that I won't want to". Equally Lucas knew the answer to his dilemma: "I need to have the discipline of every morning sitting down and just doing it - even if what comes out today is just rubbish". Such commentary prompted curiosity as to whether there might be a relationship between learning styles and reflexivity, in a similar manner to

the work of Kolb (2014). No clear answer emerges, but potential clues lie in the perceived value and motivation for engagement with reflexivity, as evidenced by Jade, who noted:

I see how fascinated I am by my own process and the thoughts that are there and the insights that then get they emerge out of looking back at them.

As a temporal process, reflexivity focuses upon relationships and the ability of the practitioner to own and accept his/her own ability to influence and the influence of others on self and his/her values/assumptions/beliefs (Cunliffe, 2016; Coghlan & Brannick, 2007). With practice, the potential for learning and growth through crafted reflexive ability is significant and necessary for congruity and integrity of practice and development of the person (Bachkirova, 2016; Ryan, 2005). Lucas reflected a typically broad appreciation of reflexivity:

Reflexivity ... there is a notion of circularity ... you get in the river with the client and you know you try something and you learn and you go back out and say, 'what happened there? What are we doing now? Let's go again.'

Some confusion with reflection emerged, so “being reflective is exactly how you describe reflexivity” (Gina), with its breadth, depth, opportunity and practice described as “very spontaneous” (Katie) and “absolutely about supervision” (Faye). As an ongoing, professional discipline supporting self-leadership and self-management, reflexive practice appears less appreciated as Lucas indicated, “I wasn’t so convinced about the distinction.”

Intuitively, it appears entirely possible that individual learning styles and reflexivity may inform practice in a similar manner to learning styles and reflection (Kolb, 2014). The practices of reflection and reflexivity appear to be underpinned by a commitment to learning, each apparently requiring varying degrees of motivation, rigour and courage to challenge established and familiar patterns of thinking and behaviour (Bolton, 2009; Knowles, 1988). Consideration of learning styles might impact upon personal approaches to reflexivity, with ‘Divergent’ and ‘Accommodating’ learning styles typically reflecting an external/extrovert orientation to reflection and ‘Converging’ and ‘Assimilating’ an internal/introvert orientation to reflection (Kolb, 2014, p.70). If such a premise is accepted, then the challenge for those with an external-oriented ‘Divergent’ and ‘Accommodating’ learning style (Kolb, 2014, p.70) might lie in embracing an

approach of *'knowledge from within'* (Cunliffe, 2002, p.8). It might be argued that for those embracing a *'Converging'* or *'Assimilating'* learning style reflecting a more introverted orientation, inner dialogue and reflexivity are more familiar terrain (Kolb, 2014, p.70). This may be an area worthy of further exploration beyond this study.

5.4 Poetry and Development (Theme #7)

The literature indicates that poetry affords three primary contributions to organisations and individuals in terms of sensemaking (Morgan, 2010), to *'tap into the unconscious'* (Whyte, 1994) and in support of organisational learning. Poetry acts as a bridge between explicit and tacit knowledge, facilitating learning within organisations (Grisoni, 2006) and between individuals. My research question attends to the potential of poetry to support reflexive practice in support of personal growth and ethical competent coaching practice, and I acknowledge that it carries two key assumptions with respect to people as emotional beings and people's ambition to learn and grow.

Gina highlighted the benefits of engaging with creative expression, if not writing poetry, *"I did experiment with more writing and although it's not poetry, it has given me a lot"*. Such benefits resided in the processing of lived experience to secure perspective whilst taking care of personal wellbeing, and supporting self to explore personal assumptions, choices and options (Mazza, 2006). Such writing facilitated acknowledgement of areas of personal challenge and learning (Grisoni, 2006). The development afforded by poetry as cited by Jade extends to several areas including personal development (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010):

it was making sense of what was going on for me ... and yeah so in some ways it was an expurgation of the pain in writing ... there was a healing process that took place ... the dynamics of the healing process were captured in the poem.

Relationship development was cited by Jade where *"poetry ... can be just fun,"*; deepening *"connection ... it's cemented another bit of the web of connections between us"* (Windle, 1994). Jade could see the potential in using it in support of coachee development: *"I can imagine writing a poem to my client ... and I know she would ... receive it in the spirit that I sent it."*

Such sentiments are reflected in the words of Gioia (1991, p.104) who advised *'poetry is the art of using words charged with their utmost meaning'*; forging human connection at the inter- and intra-relationship level; nurturing, protecting and cherishing self and

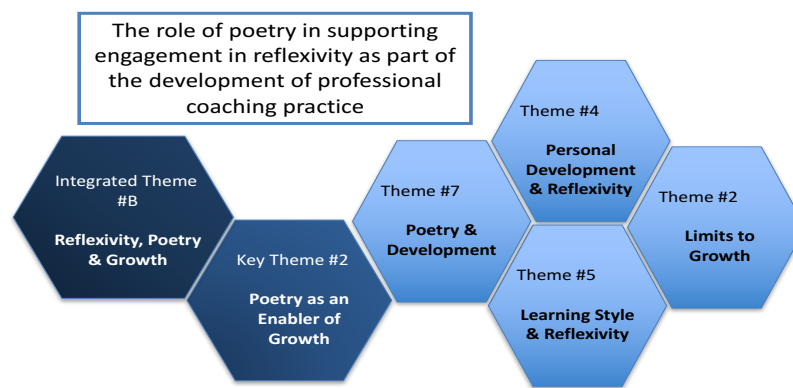
others; affording opportunities for reconciliation and organisational learning (Cunliffe, 2016; Grisoni & Kirk, 2006; Windle, 1994; Whyte, 1994). In the organisationally-based research, research narratives are constructed upon individual experience and learning (Morgan, 2010; Grisoni & Kirk, 2006). Leveraging the human drive for sensemaking, drawing upon all the senses as an embodied core of data, reflecting and translating lived experience and sense of self, poetry offers an opportunity to connect with and reflexively consider deeper and broader aspects of being in terms of development of self with others or coachees (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Whyte, 1994).

Charles, whose career progressed from NVQ/FS trainer through to performance improvement and management development trainer, writes limericks, a form in which he hears *“the rhythm better”* and which serves as *“a release of positive energy”*, affording him the opportunity *“to have intelligence tickled or engage in mental gymnastics”*. Such a narrative (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012) directly connects to Charles’s sense of self-identity as *“an entertainer”*, a team player and as *“a way of saying ‘I’ve got your back’ or ‘us versus everybody else’”*. Connection between identity and poetry similarly emerged with Jade, a qualified coaching supervisor, whose professional journey has taken her from teaching English through Adult and Management learning and development to coaching: *“it’s already part of the warp and weft of the way that I operate as a human being in the world”*. However, Jade indicated sensitivity to a perceived threat to professional identity stating, *“if I read them a poem, they will think I’m completely bonkers”* (Fook & Askeland, 2007).

5.5 Poetry as an Enabler of Growth (Key Theme #2)

Alongside my research question and themes highlighted in Diagram 5.2, emerges a key theme attending to the potential writing of poetry as an enabler for sensemaking as reflected in personal narrative and identity, tapping into underlying or subconscious ways of knowing and personal learning as a coach (Grisoni, 2017; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1994). This theme attends to the potential utilisation of poetry as an enabler of development and growth (#2).

An Overview of Poetry as an Enabler of Growth (Key Theme #2) Diagram 5.2



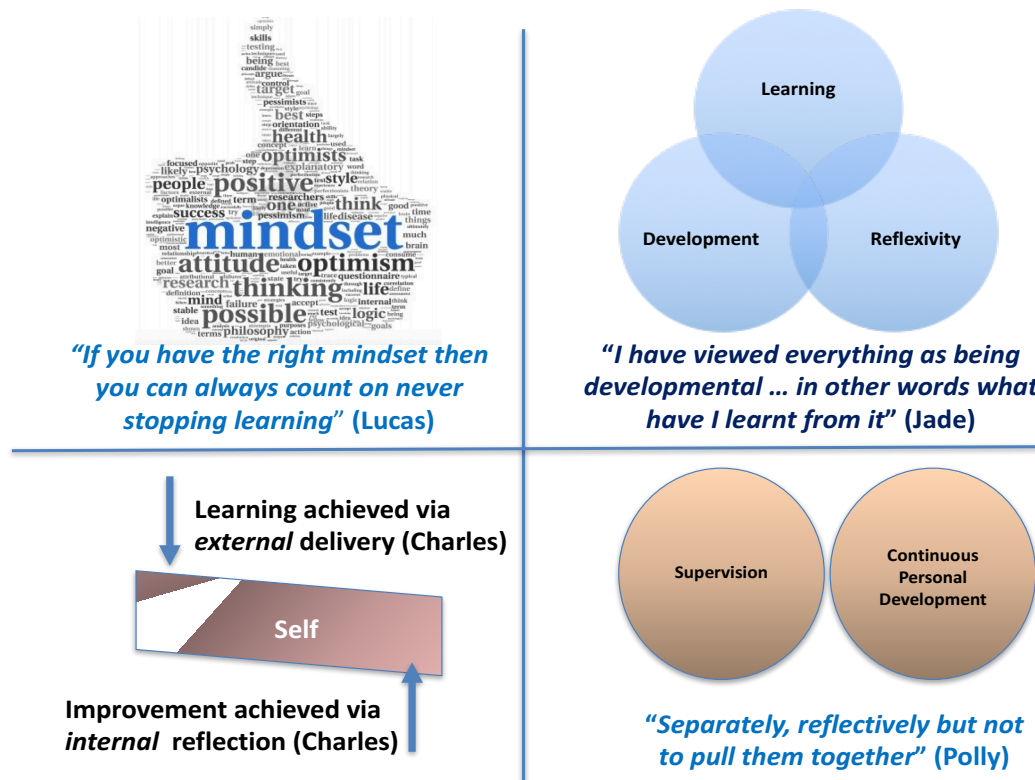
Exploring the potential value and impact of poetry, Lucas noted in *“an Age of Connection ... it’s about connecting as opposed to engaging with”* whether it be connecting with self as a coach and/or client as a coachee. If embracing poetry as a potential enabler of growth, it is vital that the coach embraces responsible coaching practice to manage client sensitivities and any risks associated with poem selection and understanding (Mazza, 2006). Poetry, whether written or selected by the coach, reflects a narrative as shared by the coachee and interpreted by the coach, whose identity and influence is inherent within the recycled narrative (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Like Canham (2003), Jade noted *“God, look what that’s revealed to the world and I didn’t even know – it’s like the unconscious is laid bare”*. If poetry reveals something of the unconscious (Whyte, 1994), there might be value in embracing such revelations by utilising self-authored poetry as a reflexive vehicle.

Within this theme, different models emerged around learning, where it comes from, who is responsible for it and how it contributes to the growth of self, professionally and personally. The relationship between identity and accountability for personal

development may be connected to professional identity. Mapping the thoughts of those CRs who have written poetry onto Diagram 5.3, I consider the relationships between capability/competence and identity, with the emergence of a difference in focus and application amongst my CRs.

Mapping different perspectives on learning

Diagram 5.3



Faye and Gina, neither of whom writes poetry, draw upon a small collection of poems, amongst other creative processes, to use in their coaching practice, with Faye acknowledging *“a belief in using poetry as a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious”*, using poetry as an instrument:

In the coaching space...I tend to offer it because it was relevant from what presented itself or what we were talking about and understand it through and let that tell me how it resonates or what stands out. (Gina)

It is usually in a ‘Thank you...’ or not a ‘thank you’ but in a ‘I’ve been reflecting upon our session ... and thought this might be helpful’ to either deepen a point or to cause reflection or to stimulate some

other thoughts. And I let them ... I'll pick whatever I think is the most appropriate ... how it came up ... how we ... I might mention it in the coaching session or send it afterwards. (Faye)

This requires the coach to interpret the potential requirement, and test understanding and relevance. As indicated by Faye and Gina, selecting the poetry of others also supports understanding (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010), as

It conveys a sense of meaning or being that can't be articulated in a different way. There is an essence that it captures and a real sense of being. (Faye)

Enriching connection is a possibility endorsed by Gina: “*if they find themselves in whatever I send, they probably understand that I really hear them which I believe builds trust*” with an appreciation of the potential to further coachee development (Windle, 1994). Such potential is expressed in Gina’s belief that,

sometimes when you send something like that [a poem], they actually see the less obvious or their own ordinary greatness or stuff like that so it's about opening their eyes to bigger potentials

by broadening and deepening perspectives. Faye offered an example:

one guy took it wholeheartedly and ...he'd written some points ... about ... the interweaving of ... and he'd mapped it out and it led to a very ... big breakthrough for him and a very deep conversation.

Embracing the poetry of others as an instrument of coaching appears to offer opportunity in terms of the development of the coachee in the hands of a client-centric coach (Rogers, 1988). The emphasis is upon the coach’s rationale for embracing poetry as a tool, as Mazza (2006) and Pennebaker (1997) highlight the importance of poetry selection in managing relevance and risk with associated considerations of follow-through and support.

However, writing poetry in support of reflexive practice split the two CRs who embraced the process. Polly, who had never written poetry before, “*found the form ... got in the way of what I was wanting to say.*” As with Grisoni’s (2017) research, Polly perceived the challenge of poetic structure as a reminder of experiences she had no desire to revisit. Challenging herself, Polly made choices as to the potential value versus the perceived degree of personal challenge. By contrast, Jade, who had written poetry in the past, found the experience

a making meaning activity by capturing the sharpness ... it was an expurgation of the pain in writing there was a healing process that took place and it was fascinating because the dynamics of the healing process were captured in the poem.

Acknowledging the benefits, Jade noted the foresight inherent in her own (unconscious) poetic expression: *"a kind of reconciliation ... was captured almost presciently in the poem."* Similarly, Windle (1994) suggests poetry has the potential to reconcile the dilemmas and challenges of day-to-day emotional needs and wider relational aspirations; to reconcile potentially competing identities and roles. Whyte (1994) advocates the emergent truth of the imagination when given space and time to reveal the musings of our unconscious. Perhaps this is what Jade is experiencing as she looks back over time, acknowledging *"I find it quite moving"*, whilst recognising that somewhere in her subconscious, she knew how to address the dilemma she faced and can see retrospectively how it played out. This is not to say it was easy, but rather to highlight the power of *'taking time for ourselves and allowing an easy rest into the body gives permission for our deeper unconscious life to stir'* (Whyte, 1994, p.229).

5.6 Reflexivity, Poetry & Growth (Integrated Theme #B)

The role of reflexivity in support of professional and ethical practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Grisoni, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016; Cunliffe, 2002) alongside the need for enrichment of capability in the postmodernist world of unpredictable change and ambiguity (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015) support the quest for coaches to take greater responsibility for personal growth *'as a person and as a professional'* (ibid., 2015, p.136). In an unregulated, expanding profession where members of the professional associations accept responsibility for self-awareness, upholding professional standards and optimising professional capability (Bachkirova, 2016), there is considerable agreement as to the importance of *"having that sense of who you are ..."* since *"clear identity and sense of core self allows you to bend and wave in the breeze"* (Faye). Jade brought forth notions of accountability and possibly congruity, suggesting that,

any coach ... working with other people in a kind of developmental way ... must be in their own process and kind of journey of development and awareness and consciousness.

Typically, reflexivity is promoted by logs (Cunliffe, 2002): in this research, a template (Appendix D.2) was offered to support ease of engagement with the poetic writing task. Katie regarded this as

the next and most helpful step for me, to not necessarily just improve my practice as a coach, but to consider how I am and who I am.

Grisoni (2017) and Haertl (2014) credit poetry creation as a gift for self and others, affording emotional support, fresh perspective and action, healing, development and growth. Armitage (2014, p.37) indicates that poetry throws light onto areas of inattention as *'the silent and hidden worlds.'* Bringing together these ideas, my research explores the possibility of creating poetry as a means of reflexively approaching the hidden world of self and realising its developmental potential as a coach.

I credit the three anthologies (Appendix E) reflected within my HSSI work for helping me to navigate life changing events, which impacted upon my physical and emotional wellbeing. During this period, I opted to stop one-to-one coaching, as clients, existing and potential, deserved more than I could offer; I had to be my own client (1.2#13-10.1). My work focused on consulting, training and facilitation. Such an approach is congruent with who I am as a coach and as a human being and acknowledges potential risks of projection and transference (Bachkirova, 2016). Writing a hundred and one reflective and reflexive poems (Appendix E - 1.1#13-0.1-1.3#14-0.7) enabled me to tend to normative, formative, restorative and developmental aspects of self (Bachkirova, 2016; Cunliffe, 2002).

Reviewing and analysing the three anthologies (Appendix E - 1.1#13-0.1-1.3#14-0.7) enabled identification of deeper, previously unidentified patterns and perspectives, reflected in individual poems but benefiting from time, distance and rigorous analysis, embracing HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002). Consideration of the perspectives and experience of reflexivity and poetry by my CRs who engaged with the poetic writing task and myself as a research participant is summarised in Table 5.4. Each valued poetry in terms of sensemaking in chaos and uncertainty (Morgan, 2010); connection, communication and reconciliation with self and others (Windle, 1994); exploration, personal support and self-healing (Sela-Smith, 2002) and personal enrichment and growth (Bachkirova, 2016). Table 5.4 also summarises how reflexively engaging with poetry enabled me, existentially, to update my personal model of who I am and who I want to be; at a relational level, to consider how I relate to the world and others around

me and at the level of praxis, to explore past actions and future possibilities (Cunliffe, 2004).

The Power of Poetry and Reflexivity

Table 5.4

CR	The Power of Poetry	The Power of Reflexivity
Jade	<i>"poetry captures a moment: painful, poignant, joyful, glancing, arresting. And in that moment some neural pathway is forged through new microcellular landscape."</i>	<i>"Another kind of moment of vulnerability ... so I articulate here my need"</i> <i>"writing this down in this way helped me to come to that insight... bringing together two different areas of my work in a different way."</i>
Polly	<i>"the language is in a way more specific because you have chosen the words and ... if [you] give feedback and those are your words and they are open to interpretation, it doesn't feel quite as broad as a picture might do and I think ... it could be tough, it could be challenging, it could be immensely rewarding"</i>	<i>"what was it about what I was doing or saying or how I was being or feeling that contributed to aspects of that session and therefore more feelings within me and reactions from the person and ..."</i> <i>"it is about me in the client."</i>
JMM	<i>Poetry's not for me so many cry My study attempts to explore why 'Cos smiles or tears it can help to say So much in a very concise way. Reflexive practice and poetry Are they partners in harmony? Forming part of your personal armoury Developing skills quite artfully? How does poetry deliver a result? Help you with yourself to consult To reflexively engage and surely catapult Ethical practice, growth, sustainable results.</i>	<i>Reflexivity is about owning who I am and how I influence/impact a situation. It is about engaging with my involvement, my impact, my assumptions, and myself in relation to others. When it comes to practising reflexivity, it might start as technique but with practice over time, it will become part of who you are and what you do.</i>

As Jade indicated *“the dynamics of the healing process were captured ... almost presciently in the poem”*. For Jade, poetry enables her to consider that,

*at the age of 65, I am still finding out about myself, my relationships,
with my children, how to support them, how to enable them to be
independent, how to step back, how to step forward, how to step in*

...

However, for Polly the experience of poetry writing was challenging with the reflexive aspect of the poetic exercise helpful but *“it was the restriction that I perceived to be the form of poetry.”* As part of my HSSI process in 2016, I challenged myself to embrace haiku, a highly structured sophisticated poetic form. My poetic practice is typically rhyming stanzas, which whilst deceptively simplistic, supports service as a reflexive vehicle. This change brought forth similar sentiments to Polly’s i.e. the form and structure got in the way of my purpose of embracing poetry as a reflexive vehicle. I delivered a haiku, but the structure dictated my experience; being reflexive helped me to acknowledge that I lack confidence with the process and apparently gained little emotionally from the experience.

If poetry supports sensemaking (Morgan, 2010) and tapping into the unconscious (Whyte, 1994), reflexivity and poetry together appear to offer feedback, offering choice, learning (Grisoni, 2017) and possibility. This requires the coach to develop reflexive capability (Bachkirova, 2016) and I would suggest, enter the same space as the coachee – one of disclosure, sometimes raw emotion, sometimes the unknown, sometimes the known and the familiar; in whatever circumstance, to embrace the opportunity, as Gina advised *“to be practising my own medicine”*, not least since *“we are just doing the parallel process of what is going on for them...”* (Iordanou et al., 2017). Poetry offers an opportunity *‘to step outside our self’* (Iordanou et al., 2017, p.105) in support of reflexive exploration and growth; to attend to self as a coach practitioner; to hold self-accountable for development and growth as a human being and professional coach practitioner (Bachkirova, 2016; Lorde, 1985).

5.7 Reflexivity Poetry & Growth Theme (integrating data from CRs and myself)

My HSSI work drew upon my reflexive poetry whilst engaging in deep self-search and accessing the unconscious part of self that becomes part of one’s personal mythology and personal identity (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Writing poetry starts with

observation and connectivity, attending to relationships with self and the outer world. Being open and receptive supports deep reflection and sensitivity to self, supported by intense scrutiny and personal challenge as to where the emotion is coming from internally and what has triggered the emotion externally, prior to finding the words that do justice to the observations and sentiments (Briggs, 2012; Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003). Such subjective awareness and curiosity offers the opportunity to consider beliefs and behaviours whilst embracing the uncertainty and paradox of self and others (Bolton, 2009). Unifying the reflexive process with the poetic process creates the opportunity for a richer, nuanced consideration of and learning about self and self in relation to others which reflects the unique voice of the author. For Polly, word selection was unsettling in terms of the “*clippedness*” or specificity which proved to be restrictive and challenging. The time and effort required to find the words is unpredictable and unique to the individual; it may be a conscious or subconscious process where the topic or key words prove to be ‘*a revelation of the self to the self*’ (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003, p.190). For me, a poem might start with a word or a phrase suddenly emerging from my subconscious when I have time and space to be with myself. Writing a poem typically provides emotional and cognitive relief as I translate, externalise and objectify the emotion related to an experience or memory (Briggs, 2012; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009).

Like my CRs, my process of reflection into reflexivity typically starts in my head before being finished on computer. In the early days of embracing reflexivity, the structure of a reflexive log was immensely helpful for diving deeper in a disciplined manner, facilitating learning and development. Polly noted the value of a reflexive log structure as part of her engagement with the research process, indicating “*that was very helpful.*” The more I practised, the more comfortable I became with my own process; and the less reliant I became upon the log structure and more confident about expanding my approach to include poetry. Drawing upon the HSSI structure using mind maps to explore the poems and draw out emotions and themes, followed by word clouds to identify key words and language, and test themes created a platform to explicate further. Consideration of the poems enabled unconscious patterns and choices to emerge, to be challenged and debated through self-dialogue, for fresh perspectives and alternative avenues to develop and new choices to be made. The essence of such an approach carries many of the qualities of self-coaching or self-leadership reflecting curiosity, accountability, motivation and proactivity (Cunha *et al.*, 2015).

At this explication phase, deeper understanding emerges by addressing choice using two key questions (Sela-Smith, 2016)

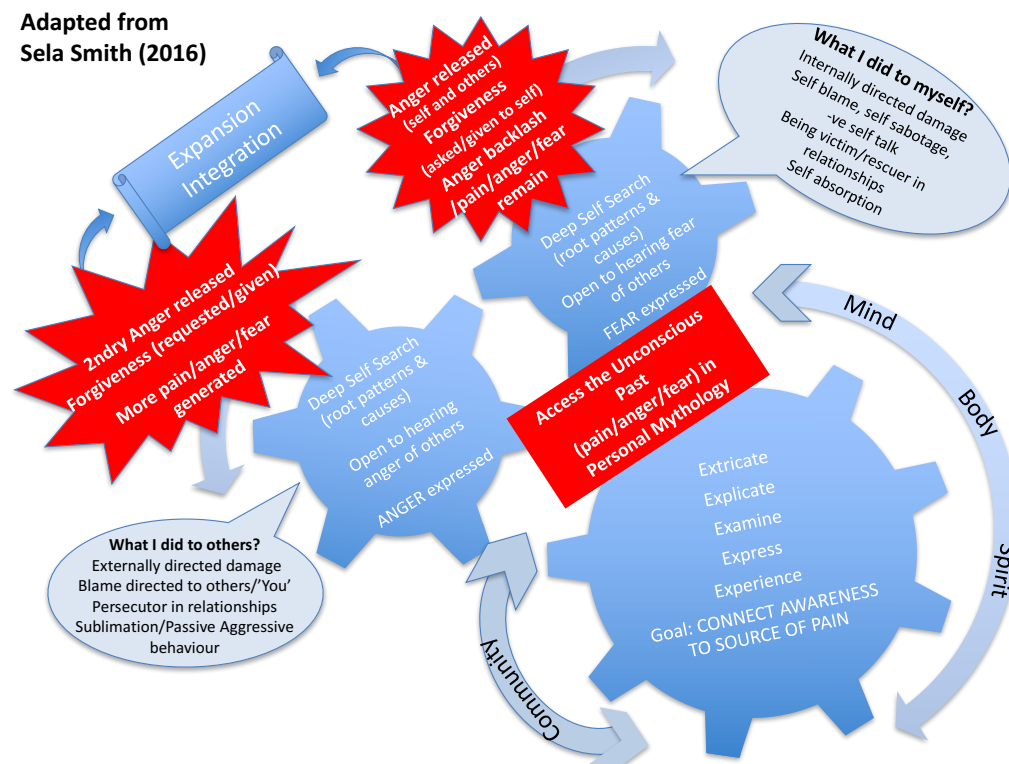
- *What did I do to others?* (consideration of personal responsibility or sublimation of the pain resulting in passive-aggressive behaviour or physical pain rather than apportioning blame elsewhere); and
- *What did I do to myself?* (focus upon negative self-talk, self-sabotage or self-absorption resulting in a sense of 'stuckness' and self-denial of opportunity)

Cunha *et al.* (2015, p.17) suggest '*conducting ... reflexive work is no simple task*' and is challenging and emotional. Drawing upon personal poetry with its surfacing of the unconscious and its sensemaking capabilities adds to the complexity but '*can be both transforming and liberating*' (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003, p.190). The HSSI structure affords discipline to reflexive sensemaking with Sela-Smith's (2016) work supporting choice and transformation as shown in Diagram 5.5.

The Path of Healing

Adapted from
Sela Smith (2016)

Diagram 5.5



Rigorous analysis of my poetry enabled the identification of deep patterns of behaviour that had hitherto been invisible to me, despite therapy and coaching supervision. Identifying such patterns was an emotional, challenging and courageous journey, reflecting the pain of growing (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). The essence of the

experience was challenging and there were moments, even with time and distance, when revisiting my poetry, I felt awash with emotion. As I revisited the pain and turmoil of *'Betwixt and Between'* (Appendix E), I felt anger; surprised and saddened in equal measure as I discovered how turbulent my inner self was in *'Life Goes on P1'* (Appendix E); annoyed and frustrated with the confusion of *'Life Goes On PII'* (Appendix E); amazed by my insights around fear in *'Cancer'* (Appendix E) and pensive at the messages of *'Autumn Winds'* (Appendix E). In the middle of such emotion, what emerges is my general ontological being of 'lemons into lemonade' with a focus upon the path of healing as a path of learning, development and growth. The journey, whilst painful, has been immensely rewarding, restorative and intensely developmental.

For those CRs who used this research to engage reflexively with themselves and their practice, through poetry or some form of creative expression, it brought forth individual awareness and choice (Haertl, 2014; Mazza, 2006):

my temptation is to numb ... kind of get through by keeping very very busy ... I know that ... I intentionally need every week or day to stop ... just sit with it. Because I know that's ... what is most self-healing. Writing in a way is one way to connect to 'what am I feeling...'. (Gina)

Gina's personal observation reflect reflexive consideration with the potential for transformative change (Kegan, 2009).

Meanwhile Jade, who,

having had poetry slightly illuminated in my consciousness so it's like ... the kind of poetry bit just had a little bit of flow of electricity ... so that it just glowed a little brighter

wrote a poem about a specific lived experience in May: *"the poem I wrote was where I was in the pain of the emotional experience."* Revisiting the poem in July, Jade was *"writing more from a distance – I could see myself in this situation as opposed to being inside it."* For Jade, such an approach appears to have afforded perspective and insight, whilst writing and when revisiting later. Jade indicated that her poetry *"enabled a kind of reconciliation..."*, reflecting the observations of Windle (1994) who highlighted the opportunity of poetry as a mechanism for reconciliation. In Whyte's (1994) world, reconciliation of the competing tensions of the corporate and personal self; for Jade, it was reconciliation within the family system. For both, it is about

rebalancing the human system and restoration of equilibrium. Jade notes the power of the unconscious, commenting, *“that was captured almost presciently in the poem”*. As prescience speaks to foreknowledge, it appears that creating the poem based upon current lived experience, supported articulation of the situation, emotions to be verbalised and perspective to be embraced. Such expression also reflected personal values, implicitly and perhaps subconsciously, enabling choices to be made (Whyte, 1994).

Some weeks on, revisiting the poem enabled further insight to be garnered in terms of a recognition by Jade that her poem intuitively reflected *“the dynamics of the healing process”*, suggesting that creating the poem enabled Jade to reflexively consider, in the moment, options as to how to respond in a way that supported a core value (*“I am here in service of you”*). Revisiting the poem was emotional for Jade who observed *“I find it quite moving actually”* and *“joyous”*, recognising that writing the poem enabled unconscious choices to be made and delivered resolution and healing. By gently tapping into the unconscious (Whyte, 1994), the poet reveals more than s/he thought s/he knew (Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003). For Jade, poetry forges links between *“imagination and intuition”* and between people as she shared poetic examples rooted in family, friends, and clients supporting connection, feedback and communication whilst deepening relationships.

In contrast, Polly, struggling with the form and structure of poetry found *“I was shooting myself back to schooling”* and whilst acknowledging *“that in itself is saying something”*, her experience appeared to be different. *“None of it was particularly new”* nor the reflective space particularly desirable as she weighed up the challenge and decided *“I don’t need this”* since *“it wasn’t deepening either personal reflectiveness or thoughts about the client situation.”* Polly’s experience highlights notions of expectations regarding the task and process of writing poetry which upon exploration, she perceived *“to be the form of poetry.”* Polly concluded *“free hand ... feels much more comfortable”*, specifically, *“writing a story or an essay”* or *“pictures”*.

Cox *et al.* (2014) suggest coaching offers potential, with a focus upon learning, relationships, communication and feedback; it appears that poetry in support of reflexivity may afford similar opportunity. Canham (2006, p.190) proposes poetry as a *‘revelation’*, implying that the poetic journey may not always be comfortable as it reveals and explores the unknown and the unfamiliar, which may in turn generate an

emotional response from the coachee. Bachkirova and Cox (2007) highlight the importance of an organisational coach having a personal appreciation of their theory of emotions to enrich their coaching approach in an environment reflecting the tensions of the postmodernist world. Poetry, like coaching may reveal and challenge the tension between the rational and the emotional in organisational life and the coachee, bringing opportunity and responsibility to the professional coach to support through a personal appreciation of preference, options and choices (Bachkirova & Cox, 2007; Whyte, 1994).

Polly's experience of writing poetry resonates with mine when writing haiku: I knew what I wanted to say and challenged myself to engage with a different approach. I produced something but discovered it felt unimportant to me as the structure and rules associated with haiku were constraining. I find my effort at haiku (2016) pretentious, perhaps as Jade indicated, rather "*smartarse*", reflecting a tension between the purpose of my poetry and the approach. Perhaps tensions between approach and content/output may be considered to mirror the debate as to whether the process or the content is the priority.

Jade's experience reflects mine in terms of sensemaking, tapping into my own unconscious, securing perspective and healing. Like Jade, revisiting my work at a later stage brought forth additional perspective, outcome, experience and growth; also like Jade, sharing my poetry is a possibility, respecting that as a potentially disruptive approach paying attention to emotions and rational thought, it carries risk in terms of countertransference and identity (Bachkirova & Cox, 2007).

Such considerations may reflect a quest for congruence between purpose, approach and values, a vital aspect of coaching practice identified by Bachkirova (2014). Bachkirova (2014, p.145) suggests that diversity in coaching approach must mirror diversity in coaching requirements with a '*one fit for all*' approach inappropriate in the complexity of the postmodernist world. Such considerations carry consequences for development as attention shifts to the enhancement of coaching capabilities alongside coaching competence. The importance of self-leadership emerges as vital in relation to personal accountability for the reflexive practice for the coach in support of authenticity, ethical practice and growth. Poetry offers a creative '*pathway*' (Norton, 2017, p.1) to embrace the challenges of reflexivity since it supports

sensemaking (Morgan, 2010), access to the subconscious (Whyte, 1994) and learning (Grisoni, 2017).

5.8 Summary

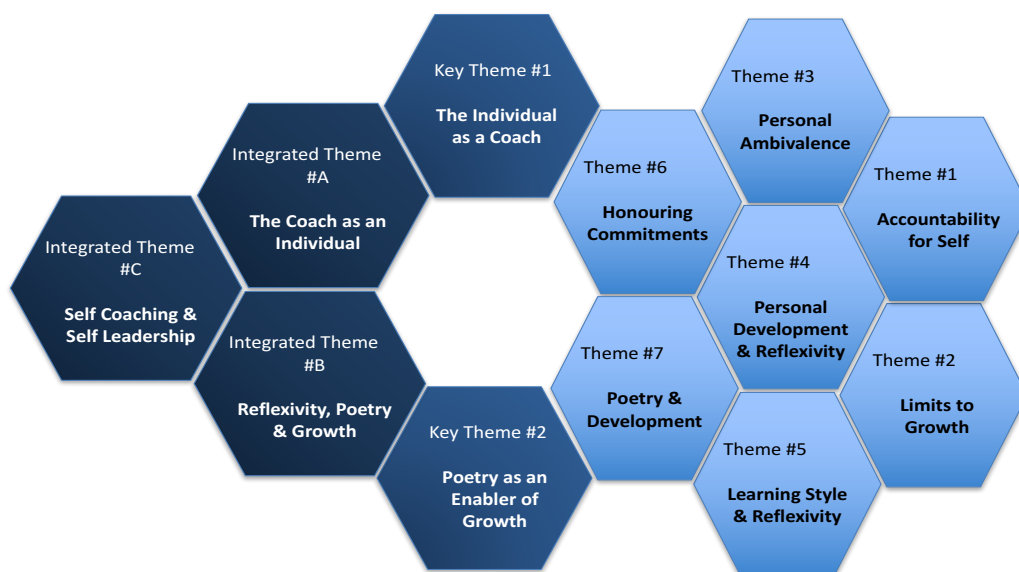
This chapter has explored the integrated theme of Reflexivity, Poetry and Growth by immersion in the data to illuminate, explore and explicate with a view to accessing tacit knowledge, and forging connections through intuition and data interpretation. Drawing upon the interdisciplinary literature and the data from CRs and myself, it appears creative expression supports reflexive practice by essentially acting as a bridge between the subjective and the objective; the intangible and the tangible. It appears important for the individual to find their own preferred form of creative expression and to extend and challenge self in this selection process. Time and space support analysis of such creative expression, facilitating insight, learning and transformation. Such processes essentially reflect notions of self-leadership and appear vital for a coach in support of personal and professional integrity and enrichment (Cox *et al.*, 2014).

Chapter 6 – Self-Coaching and Self-Leadership

This chapter attends to the final *integrated* theme entitled ‘Self-Coaching and Self-Leadership (#C). Data is sourced from interview transcriptions, emails and two key themes (#1 and #2) and themes (#1-#7) with patterns abstracted from individual transcriptions. Diagram 6.1 reflects the emerging narrative by highlighting the relationships that underpin the headline story and draws upon the Illumination and Explication phases of HI. These HI phases draw upon the core heuristic processes of self-dialogue and self-inquiry, tacit knowing and intuition to explore and interpret the data in greater detail. This emergent portrayal is enriched by the unique experience of each of my CRs and reflects my interpretivist, social constructionist approach, embracing indwelling, concentration and discipline (Patton, 2002). As an integrated theme, it blends the essential narratives from the HI and HSSI experience of exploring the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice.

An Overview of Chapter 6

Diagram 6.1



6.1 The emergent story for 'Self-coaching and Self-leadership' (Integrated Theme #C)

This integrated theme attends to the value in understanding, appreciating and respecting self as an individual in support of personal growth and professional practice. This theme speaks to the importance of prioritising self, based upon a postmodernist worldview and expressed by Jade:

I am here in service of you; to do that I must be aware that my first responsibility is to be in as great a service of myself as a whole person as I can.

This example reflects noble, altruistic aspirations alongside ethics of compassion and empathy and a humanistic-based definition of coaching (Cox *et al.*, 2010; Mourkogiannis, 2006). It highlights the value and relevance of a coach's self-knowledge as to personal philosophical stance with an associated congruity of definition and approach to coaching (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015). This theme seeks to enhance such considerations by encouraging coaches to develop an ongoing and enriched appreciation of self and approach as part of a sustained, ongoing focus upon personal and professional development. Such growth draws upon a reflexive mindset, considering poetry as a potential mechanism to support reflexivity and personal growth (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Cunliffe, 2002). The relationship between leadership and reflexivity is proposed by Cunliffe (2009) as a relationship of increasing self-awareness regarding thinking, behaviour, action, values, influence and approach.

6.2. The contribution of themes

Bachkirova (2016, p.145) proposes consideration of self as a vital '*instrument*' in the coaching process and whilst I acknowledge my own discomfort with the modernist metaphor of '*instrument*', the essence of what is being highlighted (the idea of tending to and taking care of something to ensure that it is in pristine condition to support excellent application) resonates. The theme of 'Accountability for Self' (Theme #1) reflects similar considerations of self-care, self-awareness, self-knowledge, congruity and development. Drawing upon deeper, reflexive capabilities to appreciate, explore and consider self (Bachkirova, 2016) and implications for development and professional coaching practice may address considerations of self as a potential 'limit to growth' (Theme #2). Such a call to action focuses upon moving beyond awareness, as demonstrated by Charles who indicated, "*there is a natural tendency to be*

complacent within me” to consider the implications for practice, influence and personal change, consciously and unconsciously. Such considerations are in support of awareness, choice and relevance by upgrading mental models (Senge, 1990) and ‘inconsistencies’ (Bachkirova, 2016, p.148) or ‘Personal Ambivalence’ (Theme #3).

Some CRs expressed support for curiosity, including Jade:

*You are learning all the time about yourself, ... in relation to others
... in relation to the world and about other people and how they
respond*

Jade appears to be advocating curiosity and its potential to support development, personally and professionally. Conversely avoidance of self-scrutiny and reflexive considerations can have consequences, for health and wellbeing, both physical and mental (Wall *et al.*, 2017). Katie highlighted the relationship between mental and physical health for personal wellbeing: “*if I am angry and worried ... my stomach acid will rise*”. Katie acknowledges that this is “*not a developmental mechanism*” attending to a problem within; rather, it is a coping mechanism (Sela-Smith, 2013). Katie and Gina acknowledged awareness of an established pattern of personal behaviour: “*my temptation is to numb*” (Gina), with Katie indicating that whilst such an approach (“*I just throw myself back into ‘oh well never mind and off I go’*”) may afford short term benefit, it does not address underlying causes. Sela-Smith (2016) proposes that unresolved physical or emotional hurt may lead to a journey of internalised pain, compounded over time. This potentially leads to self-sabotage or self-blame which, as it escalates, is ultimately expressed in dysfunctional mental and physical behaviour or activity. Bachkirova (2016) also highlights the importance of self-care and a potentially interesting correlation emerges between self-sabotage (Sela-Smith, 2016) and self-deception (Bachkirova, 2016). Considering self-deception, Bachkirova (2016) appears to be inviting coaches to be gentle but curious about inconsistencies in personal thinking to relieve and reduce physical and mental pressure. From the perspective of self-sabotage, Sela-Smith (2016) invites consideration of patterns of behaviour that are unconsciously but insidiously internalised, leading to the undermining of self. Such considerations may appear challenging as the coach is invited to consider personal trade-offs, limits to growth and accountability for self.

Such sentiments reflect my own distance from and management or containment of emotions and pressure as reflected in the ‘*emotional treacle*’ of the Life Goes On anthology (Appendix E) where my HSSI analysis brings forth tensions between my

personal values and the constraints I experience. My poetry reveals the 'in the moment' cost associated with such imposed limitations, but reviewing the anthology enabled me to identify a personal approach to conflict management of which I was previously unaware. By reflexively engaging with the wider range of anthologies, I appreciate how my narrative was wrapped up in a long-standing identity which I have failed to update (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012), representing a limit to personal growth (Theme #2) and personal ambivalence (Theme #3).

Briggs (2012 citing Heaney, 1980, p.43) suggests poetry is about being finely attuned to personal feelings and how they influence one's being, with one's *'poetic voice ... probably very intimately connected with the poet's natural voice'*. Objectification of subjective lived experience as poetry appears to afford perspective, distance and opportunity to consider the lived experience afresh. It appears that the more authentic the poetic musing(s), the richer the opportunity afforded by the creative expression of reflexive considerations since it may be a dynamic and recursive process. The organisational poetry of Armitage (2014) amongst others may reflect the difference between poetry that is typically observational, offering a commentary *upon* or *outside* something, and which might sit on the *'processing continuum'* (Kolb, 2014, p.70) as opposed to poetry which emerges from the *'perception continuum'*, sitting *within* the experience (Kolb, 2014, p.70). Jade specifically noted that

in May, the poem I wrote was where I was in the pain of the emotional experience and then today, I was writing more from a distance – I could see myself in this situation as opposed to being inside it.

Such a description suggests the reflexive/poetic experience may be a recursive process, fuelling deeper insight and clarity, revealing the unconscious and the unknown over time and space, drawing upon cognitive, intuitive, sensory and physical ways of knowing. Engagement with such self-directed insight may lead to transformative learning and personal growth (Mezirow, 2003; Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003).

Honouring Commitments (Theme #6) informs this integrated theme with Faye's initial enthusiasm typical of all the CRs taking part in the research: (*"I think it's fascinating, I really do, and I'm very curious about it"*) affording positive early indicators in terms of potential data sources. Thus, when the second interviews offered such limited returns with four CRs engaged fully or partially, and three not participating, engagement levels

were considered with respect to my approach as a researcher or my research study. As a researcher, working to a voluntary participation model, my curiosity is to understand how people made their choices and at what level of awareness. It is notable that during the second interviews when exploring this area, my tone of questioning is tentative as I sought to balance curiosity with implied or perceived judgement. Typically, responses appeared self-directed and factual, as indicated by Faye, “*No bluntly I haven’t. My writing, all my writing energy has gone into ...*” and Lucas, “*I didn’t try to write them (notes) as a poem but I wrote them sort of thinking ‘OK, so this could be a poem’*”. Irrespective of engaging with the specifics of the poetic task, it emerged that engagement with the wider research study had impacted upon my CRs in different ways. For Faye, it appeared to have a reflexive impact

you did make me think ... about the possibility. What were my beliefs around writing poetry ... and why did I shy away from it, why was ... what was that really about ...?

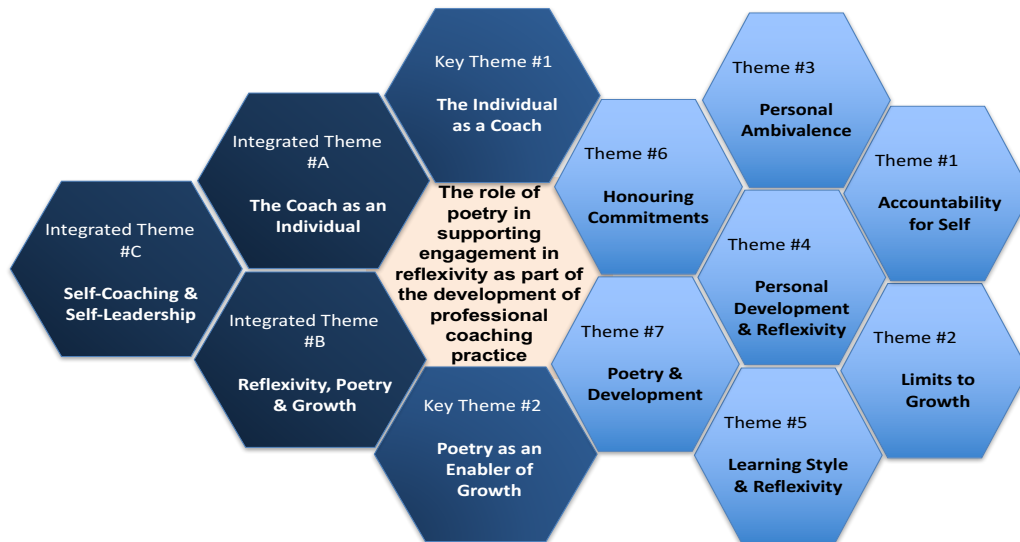
For Lucas, the impact was more direct since “*it opened my thinking up a bit. I got more liberated and maybe a little more creative ...*” It appeared people made personal choices about completing the poetic writing task to a level that suited them (Knowles, 1988).

For most, conscious choices had apparently been made and the research question had raised awareness and potentially influenced either reflexive thinking or practice. Irrespective of the level of engagement with the poetic writing task, engaging with the research study apparently brought forth enhanced considerations of reflexivity, with the potential for growth for self and potentially for application with coaching clients. As a researcher attending to the potential relationship between poetry and development (Theme #7), a poetry-writing workshop might have facilitated greater engagement. Typically, those who engaged with creative expression, whether poetry or writing, embraced the challenge as a valuable experience, perhaps affording opportunity to enhance their ‘*repertoire of skills and techniques*’ demonstrating self-leadership and curiosity (Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Passmore, 2011, p.217).

6.3 The Individual as a Coach (Key Theme #1) and Poetry as an Enabler of Growth (Key Theme #2)

An overview of the Key Themes (#1 and #2)

Diagram 6.2



Alongside my research question and themes, the key themes of 'The Individual as a Coach' (#1) and 'Poetry as an Enabler of Growth' (#2) emerge. 'The Coach as an Individual' (#1) attends to the coach as a unique individual and the responsibilities/professional accountabilities this carries in terms of personal being, personal development and growth as a coach practitioner. The other key theme of 'Poetry as an Enabler of Growth' (#2) considers a possible relationship between poetry and reflexivity and its potential contribution to personal development and growth.

Wall *et al.* (2017), Bachkirova (2016) and Sela-Smith (2016) highlight the importance of self-care in supporting psychological and physical wellbeing and sustaining/improving the quality of coaching practice. Supervision is typically the acknowledged means for addressing issues of understanding, development and wellbeing; however, with apparently variable uptake and practice, accountability for self and quality of practice starts with self (Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Given the important role of the coach in supporting coachee reflexivity and of the coach practising for self as part of professional coaching practice, holding self to account carries weight (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cox *et al.*, 2014).

Katie acknowledged that *"I don't give myself time to either grieve or really do that self-care"* and that this brought *"an accumulative cost surely, over time."* Katie's views reflected that of many of my CRs, whether struggling, like Charles, with the challenges of self-employment (*"it's been a tough six months ... when you have a lot of time on your hands, you have a lot of time to think ... and it is not always positive"*) or the pressures of organisational life as expressed by Gina (*"there is no space ... there is a lot of survival."*) Such tensions may highlight the challenge at a day-to-day level for a coach to move beyond survival to embrace development as part of his/her way of being to support professional coaching practice. The coaching literature suggests that regular supervision is vital; however, my data suggests that the commitment to supervision is variable (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). In terms of self-care, it seems reasonable to expect coaches to be responsible for personal debriefing and wellbeing as they move from one coaching session to another. This may reflect a social constructionist approach, as suggested by Faye (*"reflection tends to be ... writing in a journal ... or I'll talk through with different members of my team"*) or an independent, creative process as embraced by Lucas (*"first reflect, then draw, then kind of visualise ..."*). My data indicates is that there is not a prescribed 'one size fits all' approach when it comes to the self-care of a coach, but rather an urgent recommendation to engage with self-care, however challenging it may be in terms of time, space or content to heal, develop and grow in support of personal wellbeing and professional coaching practice (Bachkirova, 2016). Such self-care starts with consideration of an individual experience, using a medium that is personal in nature and that can be shared with others if desired. This engagement reflects a movement from a subjective, singular based, self-authoring reflective account of an experience to a social constructionist, dialogical model (Cunliffe, 2002; Kolb, 1984). The sharing of experience may of itself reflect a narrative or an interpretation that reinforces/reveals the reality and identity as perceived by the author (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2015). Nevertheless, it falls to the individual to take responsibility and accountability for optimisation of learning, managing personal limits to growth and managing personal health and wellbeing to optimise personal practice between supervision sessions.

When contracting for supervision, Hawkins and Smith (2010, p.153) propose the coach considers what s/he *'wishes to bring'* to what might be a *'normative, formative or developmental or restorative'* opportunity (Bachkirova, 2016, p.152). If a coach wishes to maximise the investment in supervision, and subject to his/her contracting approach (Hawkins & Smith, 2006), then reflecting upon work and experience between sessions

and considering such experience at a deeper, reflexive level, might support supervision preparation. Such self-leadership parallels a coaching perspective where the relationship between continuous personal and professional development is intertwined and the cornerstone of professional practice (Bachkirova, 2016). Respecting Cox *et al.*'s (2014) enrichment of Knowles' theory of Andragogy (1988), the adult learner's inherent interest to self-manage personal learning and the prompt application of understanding and insight might encourage and trust the coach to take responsibility for deep personal learning and see real potential in investing in supervision. The potential challenge of self-deception in effective self-coaching practice is very real and, I suggest, potentially extends to issues of reflection and reflexivity (Bachkirova, 2016). Accountability for engagement with reflection and reflexivity supports considerations of personal discipline self-leadership and self-coaching (Bachkirova, 2016; Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Cunliffe, 2004).

Whilst detailed consideration of coaching supervision is outwith the remit of this research, my research interest directly attends to a coach's interests and responsibilities in leading personal growth and development through reflexive engagement. Poetry may offer a medium to support rich engagement with reflexivity, defined as part of who I am and what I do to support my own growth and improve influence and interaction with others (Cunliffe, 2002). Engagement with ongoing reflexive practice suggests that my conversations with my supervisor may start further along the development road, be richer and potentially more rewarding for all.

Poetry appears to offer a medium for the recording of reflection(s), supporting breadth and depth of consideration as part of the process (Bachkirova, 2015). Faye noted that,

*it's that liminal space isn't it between conscious thought and
unconscious thought and that's where I think poetry taps in and ...
brings into focus things ... that are on the periphery of people's
consciousness.*

However, like some of Grisoni's researchers (2017), Polly acknowledges that writing poetry was, perhaps unhelpfully, taking her back into her past and by implication, a place she saw little value in revisiting. This contrasts with Jade, who, writing poetry in support of reflexivity, noted it enabled consideration and objectification of a personal dilemma, afforded perspective regarding roles, supporting time and space to conceptualise options, with the solution being "*captured almost presciently in the poem.*" Jade, revisiting her poetry some months later, noted with interest that the

poem apparently revealed aspects of herself to her, that whilst painful in the moment of writing, over time brought forth pleasure and learning.

Whilst the numbers that chose to engage with the poetic writing task were limited, the numbers who embraced reflexivity and creative expression, were higher. Of this group, all participants indicated they had benefitted either emotionally or in terms of affording choice as to a different way of connecting with self and others. Lucas summed up the sentiments of many as *“I saw ... the possibility”*. In coaching, whether self or clients, that is the start of opportunity ... to expand horizons, to consider alternatives, to explore possibilities (Cox *et al.*, 2014). My research interest inherently reflects a challenge to traditional coaching practice by proposing poetry as a medium with which to embrace reflexive practice (Cunliffe, 2002). Inviting consideration of an alternative, creative approach reflects a challenge to existing practice and opportunity to expand personal capability and practice (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Canhu *et al.*, 2015).

6.4 Self-coaching and Self-leadership (Integrated Theme #C)

The integrated theme of Self-coaching and Self-leadership attends to the accountability and responsibility that sits with the coach for managing and leading self (Bachkirova, 2015; Canhu *et al.*, 2015). My CRs were typically people with a career in coaching built upon careers in interrelated professions. Each has experience of self-management with potential, development and growth emerging from reflexive ability, feedback and curiosity. Internal motivation for sensemaking and learning from experience is suggested as *‘the implicit theme’* (Cox, *et al.*, 2014, p.6) of any coaching intervention and it seems reasonable that this is as relevant for the coach.

With limited literature on the concept of self-coaching in the field of coaching, it is nevertheless clear that self-dialogue is undertaken by coaches for a variety of reasons, including motivation as expressed by Charles:

sometimes it's negative; sometimes it's positive; sometimes it's talking yourself round 'C'mon I need to get cracking with this' and boost yourself up ...

For others, it appears rooted in recognition of personal behaviour, such as Katie who indicated *“I noticed the initial thoughts ... ‘I hope my phone rings and I hope he cancels.’ I was seeking out reasons to not ...”*. Gina spotted personal patterns: *“Hmmm, this is coming back, what's this all about?”* What emerges is that, whatever

the catalyst, it is about being curious, asking self another question to move deeper down into the ‘Ladder of Reflexivity’ (Diagram 2.4), challenging self like Polly (*“how do I do that? ... I’m going to say that I don’t find the time to do it, but that says so much doesn’t it?”*); to improve professional standards as noted by Faye (*“...What’s the state of current thinking from”*) or assess self-development needs like Lucas (*“my sense ... I have a long journey to go to be ...”*) and facilitate robust decision-making like Jade (*“I know I was kind of saying ‘but what’s in it for me; should I do this; am I sure? Why should I do this?’”*).

Jade’s self-dialogue was manifested in a poem that sought to consider and share a dilemma

**‘The invitation intrigues
Weigh up time and benefit.
Remember tendency to over-give,
But then - commitment to CPD
Take further . . .
Keep open . . .
‘Yes’ beckons.’**

generating a poetic response

**Your little verse it makes me smile
Makes me want to go an extra mile
To meet, to explore, to chat, to grow
To learn how poetry supports you to glow?**

During interview, it emerged that Jade and I had interpreted these poems differently, with Jade indicating *“It’s really interesting to me that something that was saying ‘I’m not sure...’ came across as generous”* leading to the sharing of alternative perspectives, resulting in deeper connectivity through laughter and acceptance of difference.

Such a range of reasons for embracing self-dialogue reflects my HSSI experience where a considerable number of poems consider a dilemma or a key question, often reflected in the title of the poem such as *‘What do I know?’* (Appendix E) or *‘Where’s my Shepherd?’* (Appendix E). My HSSI work highlights how I use poetry as a reflexive vehicle, considering experience, emotions, and options to self-coach through dissonance and challenging life events (Canhu *et al.*, 2015; Sela-Smith, 2003). Katie spoke for several of my CRs when she indicated that *“A lot of it is going on in my head and I do go over things in my head, my brain is busy”* before *“I will get paper and ...*

my sharpies and there will be lots of swirlies and mindmap-y type things ...". The delay between mental busyness and writing appears to be around two weeks or so for Katie, with others reflecting varying time gaps. Nevertheless, I noted a pattern of hesitation to engage with writing, poetic or otherwise, and found myself curious as to what lies behind this reluctance when Wall *et al.* (2017), Baker and Mazza (2004) and Pennebaker (1997) each highlight the benefits of emotional release, distance and perspective that writing affords. Cunliffe (2002, p.8) notes the social constructionist nature of reflexivity when highlighting that '*It is in our talk rather than in our minds that we try to order and make sense of our actions and experience.*' Perhaps as coaches, there is a wariness of notetaking and writing, since coaching is primarily a social tradition; however, with increased use of internet-coaching and rapidly evolving approaches to coaching, this may be something that also needs to evolve for the reflexive coach practitioner.

It appears that reflection, self-dialogue, self-coaching, self-management and self-leadership are part of the day-to-day inner work of the coach. My research question attends to the role of poetry as a potential reflexive vehicle to support personal growth and professional practice, with potentially an implicit focus upon self-leadership rather than simply self-management (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). This suggests the necessity of reflecting upon what I do as a coach alongside where I am focusing my attention and why, what I might be missing or avoiding as a result, how I approach things, my influence, my external influences, etc. Moving on from self-management and reflection, self-leadership and reflexivity are natural bedfellows in support of self-coaching and a quest for an enhanced level of sophistication with respect to coaching capability and capacity (Bachkirova, 2016; Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Cunliffe, 2009).

6.5 Summary

The integrated theme of 'Self-coaching and Self-leadership' emerges from an analysis of CRs' data and my interpretivist social constructionist approach to this research study. The theme considers the possibility and potential for the coach to move beyond reflective engagement as an individual practice or during supervision and using poetry as a reflexive vehicle to support personal growth and professional coaching practice. The theme promotes self-leadership and self-coaching as a supportive enabler of ongoing professional practice and valuable supervision sessions. I suggest that investment in self reflects commitment to and accountability for self-leadership, self-care and self-development. Investing in self-care to avoid self-deception and self-

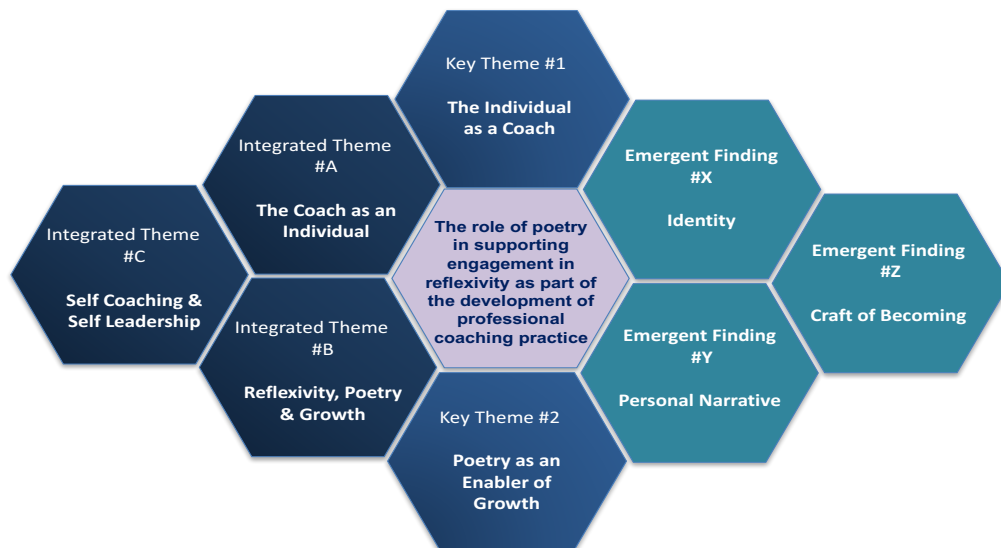
sabotage is in the interests of coach and coachee and supports the enhancement of personal and professional capacity development (Bachkirova, 2016; Sela-Smith, 2016).

Chapter 7 – Integrating Themes and Emergent Findings

This chapter will discuss the findings to emerge from the extrication phase of my analysis of the integrated themes discussed in previous chapters and is an extension of the HI process drawing upon the HSSI methodology. Extrication of the vital messages for each theme draws upon analysis of CR data sourced from interviews, approved interview transcriptions and emails and releases the core elements of each theme. Drawing upon four key lenses emerging through my HSSI analysis, extrication of the vital messages distinguishes and delineates each integrated theme. Such a recursive and dynamic approach supports an enriched narrative that draws upon the integrated themes and delivers three emergent findings. These findings, presented in Diagram 7.1 are 'Identity' (Emergent Finding #X), 'Personal Narrative' (Emergent Finding #Y) and 'Craft of Becoming' (Emergent Finding #Z) and contribute to my research interest regarding the potential role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice.

An Overview of Integrated Themes and Emergent Findings

Diagram 7.1



7.1 The emergent story around ‘The Role of Poetry in supporting engagement in Reflexivity as part of the development of professional Coaching Practice.’

My research study, set within an executive business coaching context, is curious as to the creative use and potential of poetry as an enabler of reflexive practice (Grisoni, 2017; Mazza, 2006; Cunliffe, 2002; Whyte, 1994). Reflexivity attends to an ongoing curiosity as to who I am, how I relate to and am influenced by others and the context in which I/we operate (Cox *et al.*, 2014; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Fook, 2002). Such considerations support enriching and enhancing personal and professional coaching capability and ethical practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2014).

My research study embraces a social constructionist, interpretivist, humanistic approach to the collection and analysis of data, drawn from my CRs and personal experience. The analysis reflects the integration of data from these two sources, using HI (Moustakas, 1990) supported by HSSI (Sela-Smith, 2002) to address my research interest. This chapter draws upon three integrated themes: ‘The Coach as an Individual’ (#A); ‘Reflexivity Poetry and Growth’ (#B) and ‘Self-coaching and Self-leadership’ (#C), discussed in previous chapters. The emergent integrated story focuses upon individuality, learning and self-leadership.

The ‘Coach as an Individual’ (#A) focuses upon the uniqueness of the individual coach, exploring the responsibilities and professional accountabilities this carries for each in terms of personal identity, personal development and personal growth. ‘Reflexivity, Poetry & Growth’ (#B) enriches considerations of personal accountability for ongoing personal development and growth by focusing upon reflexivity as a ‘way of being’ (Cunliffe, 2002). Such interest depends upon an ongoing curiosity about self and one’s relationship with and amongst others and the impact upon praxis. The personal discipline and deeper considerations associated with reflexivity may be challenging and poetry may offer support in engagement (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005). Writing poetry is acknowledged for its sensemaking, acting as a pathway into the unconscious and supporting learning (Grisoni, 2017; Norton, 2017; Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1994).

Embracing a postmodernist worldview, ‘Self-coaching and Self-leadership’ (Integrated Theme #C) attends to the opportunity, value and potential of understanding, appreciating, challenging, respecting and prioritising self as an individual in support of personal growth and professional coaching practice (Bachkirova, 2016; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015). Reflexivity is proposed as the foundation for personal growth

and an enriched set of coaching capabilities, rooted in self-awareness, self-development and the enhancement of capacity.

7.2 The key lenses

The four lenses supporting deeper analysis were Self Deception (Bachkirova, 2015), Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 2001); Adult Development (Kegan, 2009) and Self Doubt (Hindmarch, 2008), which emerged from creative application of the principles of Sela-Smith's (2002) HSSI process when analysing my poetic data. These four lenses extricated additional insight with the validation of such insight, drawing upon the work of Cunliffe and Coupland (2012) and offering the opportunity to experience anew findings relating to my research study and myself (Sela-Smith, 2002). Embracing the same four lenses to analyse the integrated themes that have emerged from my CRs' data, was vital in support of rigour and integrity of process, potential insights and correlation of experience.

Table 7.2 summarises key elements of each lens within the 'coaching context' as a means of considering the potential implications of such considerations as a coach and for coachees. Mapping out the key elements of each lens side by side affords detail whilst bringing forth potential considerations for each integrated theme as emerged and defined by my CRs data. Column by column, the elements of each lens are considered with a view to focusing upon possible key questions to emerge for each theme from a horizontal consideration of this specific set of elements. An abbreviated form of this diagram will be used in subsequent sections of this chapter as a means of identifying key insights relevant to my research interest.

The Key Lenses of

Table 7.2

(a) Self-Deception (b) Basic Emotions (c) Adult Development (d) Self-Doubt

	Lens A: Self-Deception (Bachkistrova & Shannon, 2013; Bachkistrova, 2015)	Lens B: Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 2001)	Lens C: Adult Development (Kegan, 2009)	Lens D: Self-Doubt (Hindmarch,2008; Petherick, 2016)	Integrated Theme (#) (Considerations)
Level 1					
	<i>'Part of being human'</i> (Bachkistrova, 2015, p.10) – the outcome of fear; threat to self image/ego death (Albrecht, 2012)	Evolutionary based <i>'responses to significant situations in an individual's life and often motivate action'</i> (Plutchik, 2001, p.346)	An evolutionary process of personal development where the early stage subjective focus evolves to a more objective, sophisticated stance in response to life's complexities	<i>'negative feelings associated with evaluating one's abilities/perceiving them as inadequate to carry out a piece of work effectively'</i> (Hindmarch, 2008, p.8)	<i>Theme focus</i>
Level 2	Address through awareness compassion and support.				
Level 3	<i>'bounded awareness'</i> (Bachkistrova & Shannon, 2013, p.2) reflects failure to engage with available data	Stimulus -> cognitive response -> emotional response -> overt behaviour -> effect	Pre adolescence reflecting qualities of impulsiveness/singularity self centredness/ reactivity	Skills/Ability focus - task - emotional - self belief	
Level 4	<i>'wilful blindness'</i> (ibid., 2013, p.3) implies choosing to ignore data	Emotions offer feedback to enable restoration of individual equilibrium	Socialized Mind – short term reciprocation, belonging, subjectivity		
Level 5	<i>'cognitive dissonance'</i> (ibid., 2013, p.3) seeks to reduce contradiction by downplaying argument/ tension	Primary Emotions Vigilance : Amazement Ecstasy : Grief Admiration : Loath Terror : Rage	Self Authorship of identity and individuality	Issue of Control	
	Unconscious bias based upon sex or colour (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Primary dyads = mix of primary emotions at varying levels of intensity	Transforming - intense curiosity as to inter and intra being	Arises as outcome of change	
	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5

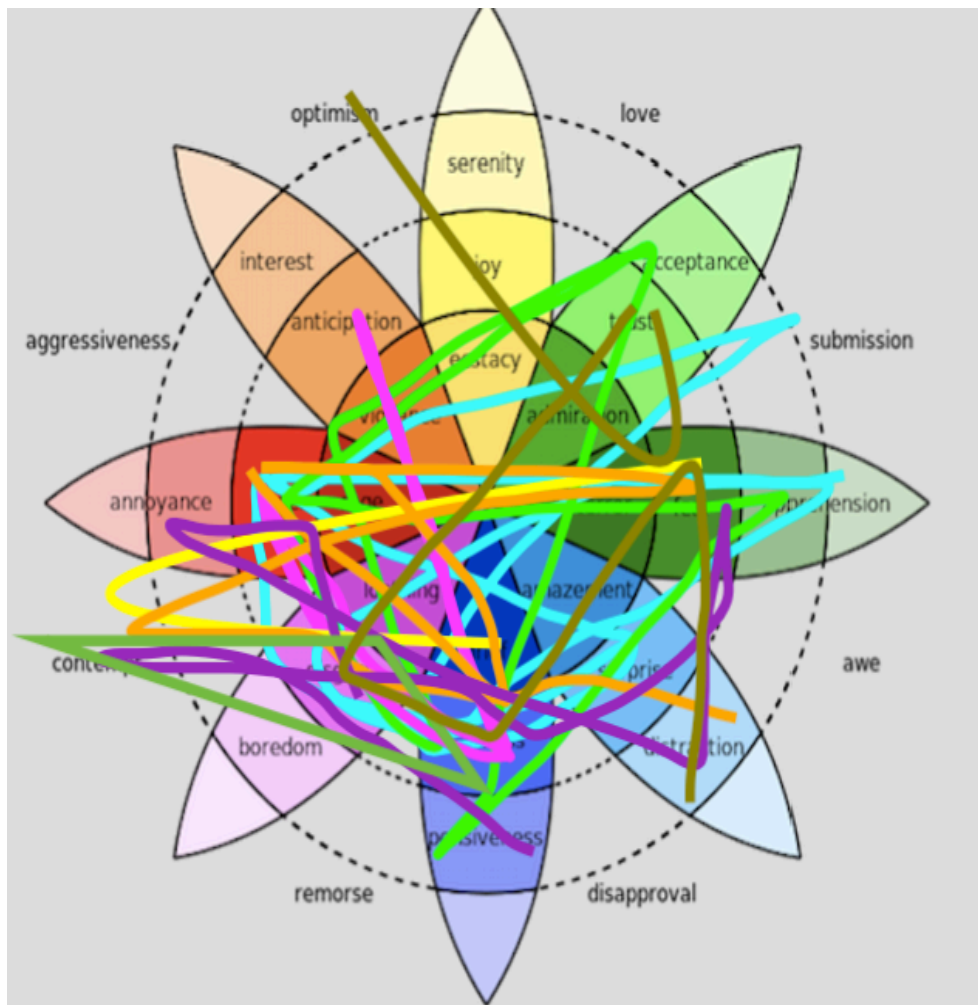
Column 1 attends to the challenge of 'Self-Deception' (Lens A), specifically in coaching and self-leadership (Bachkistrova, 2015; Bachkistrova & Shannon, 2013). With a wide range of definitions, the term 'self-deception' typically carries negative overtones; however, Bachkistrova (2015), apparently reflecting an existentialist perspective, proposes that self-deception is part of what it means to be human. Given that coaching typically attends to learning from an exploration of the perception and understanding of lived experience, it appears important for a coach to consider the concept for self and for coachees (Bachkistrova, 2015). Ongoing consideration of such concepts is vital for development and ethical coaching practice (Cox *et al.*, 2014). The elements of self-deception identified highlight issues of data management and engagement, minimisation of an emergent narrative that is supported by data but ignored, or a lack of awareness of personal bias (Bachkistrova & Shannon, 2013), each of which, I suggest, may inhibit learning.

Acknowledging my own philosophical paradigm, I am particularly interested that, embracing psychoanalytic and existential paradigms, Bachkirova (2015, p.15) highlights self-deception as '*an outcome of fear and as a threat to self-image*'. Such sentiments reflect Albrecht's (2012) positioning of fear of 'ego death' at the top of his 'fear-archy', concerned with threats to self-constructed perceptions of identity (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Drawing upon such ideas as part of my HSSI process (Sela-Smith, 2002) enabled identification of my primal defining emotion and reflexive consideration of the implications for my being, my identity, my relationships and my praxis (Cunliffe, 2004).

Column 2 attends to the concept of 'Basic Emotions', drawing upon Plutchik (2001, p.136) whose work, founded upon evolutionary principles, considers the emotional response to '*significant situations in an individual's life*' through cause and effect relationships at the level of stimulus/cognition/emotion/behaviour and effect.

Emotional theory is extensive and beyond the scope of this research; however, Plutchik's (2001, p.350) model of eight primary emotions, extended by degrees of intensity to twenty-four emotions and with '*primary dyads*' based on combinations, approaches this complexity in an accessible manner. Drawing upon Plutchik's (2001) model enabled an intuitive plotting of emotional patterns in my poetry to be drawn, explored and conceptualised as indicated in Diagram 7.3. From a coaching perspective, an appreciation of basic emotions appears vital when seeking to balance ongoing organisational tensions around the role of emotions in a postmodernist world, particularly when many senior executives have built their career in a positivist context (Bachkirova & Cox, 2015).

Plotting the Emotions in my Poetry on Plutchik's Circumplex (2001) Diagram 7.3



As coaching is focused upon learning, development and growth (Cox *et al.*, 2015) so the third column in Table 7.2 attends to Adult Development, particularly drawing upon the work of Kegan (2009). Kegan (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009), like Plutchik (2001) embraces an evolutionary approach in consideration of his constructive development theory. Consequently, learning and development are positioned as a quest for sensemaking of individual reality, with a shift over time from subjectivity to objectivity and an ongoing curiosity as to personal identity and individuality within the wider world. Such consideration of development is in harmony with Cunliffe's (2016) exploration of reflexivity as a recursive process, taking account of inter- and intra- relationships coupled with issues of personal narrative and identity (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Writing poetry offers a medium in support of the objectification of subjective reality enabling sensemaking and revealing the unconscious in the creation of poetry (Morgan, 2010; Kegan, 2009; Whyte, 1994). Kegan (2009) acknowledges that growth

can be uncomfortable since it involves an evolution in the individual's way of being and thinking. Personal experience of HSSI was occasionally painful as my unconscious reality emerged through reflexive consideration of my poetry (Bolton, 2009; Sela-Smith, 2002).

Learning, transformation and personal change can bring forth feelings of uncertainty and vulnerability as previously held paradigms are explored, scrutinized, and occasionally modified (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Thus, a fusion with established patterns (whether helpful or not) emerges as the primary challenge in catalysing development (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Hawkins (2015, p.4) posits that coaching is as much about '*unlearning*' established routines of behaviour as it is about learning new ones, plus the challenge, deconstruction and analysis of individual '*theoretical and methodological presuppositions*' (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005, p.6). As part of a process of personal transformation and change, early emotions and '*growing pains*' may include confusion, sadness and self-doubt as to one's ability to change (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009, p.16). Such consideration is slightly different from Hindmarch (2008), in column 4, who appears to consider self-doubt a response to negative feelings, specifically in relation to skills and abilities. Petherick (2016) extends such considerations to an employment context. Petherick (2016) posits that it is important for a coach to be conscious of his/her own areas of self-doubt to avoid '*the paradox of self-deception*' (2016, p.130). Highlighting the importance of awareness of self-doubt within coaching, Petherick (2016) and Hindmarch (2008) explore the implications of self-doubt for a coach's ability and practice and from the perspective of coachees, for whom it is often a recurrent coaching issue. My HSSI analysis suggests self-doubt may be an outcome of intense emotion associated with change and issues of control or familiarity (Sela-Smith, 2002). For me, the relationship between emotional and physical wellbeing alongside ethical considerations lead to a reduction in self-esteem and self-doubt resulting in a temporary withdrawal from coaching practice (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Petherick, 2016). Petherick (2016, p.142) identifies the importance of supervision as a '*holding environment*' to support growth and development. I suggest that poetry can act as a holding space or receptacle for the intensity of experience, supporting creative expression of lived experience and creating time and distance to reflexively consider the potential for learning and growth.

Column (5) reflects the title, reference and focus of the integrated theme alongside potential areas for consideration. The following sections attend specifically to column

5 and draw upon different elements of thinking, level by level, to offer additional perspectives in consideration of the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity and growth in competent coaching practice. Thus, Level 1 embraces the work of Cox *et al.* (2014), who highlight the importance in coaching of congruity between the personal and professional approach of the coach. The quest for such congruity is potentially undertaken as part of '*a long and often painful*' development journey, which may be underestimated in terms of the personal effort and discipline required by the coach (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009, p.51).

Level 2 considers the concept of '*bounded awareness*' (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013, p.2) where the response to working with data is reactive and controlled, whether attending to negative feelings with respect to personal abilities or the task at hand (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Plutchik (2001) and Kegan in Bachkirova & Kegan (2009) propose enhancing the sophistication of response to benefit self-esteem and proactively engage with negative feelings to learn and grow professional and personally.

Level 3 reflects the individual's acknowledgement of others whilst choosing to ignore data, including emotions, even when such consideration might facilitate a return to homeostasis ((Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Plutchik, 2001). The '*socialised mind*' (Kegan, 2009, p.47) evolves to a level of comfort with self and personal values, beliefs and goals that can lead to a level of complacency and comfort (Plutchik, 2009). Thus Level 3 implies the importance of critical reflection and reflexivity, which posit a deeper, more considered approach to recognition and analysis of personal approach and influences (Kegan, 2009; Bolton, 2009; Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Cunliffe, 2002; Mezirow, 2009).

Level 4 considers rationalised self-deception, in which attempts to reduce disparity between beliefs and behaviours are asserted by an individual in support of self-identity and personal narrative (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Hindmarch, 2008; Plutchik, 2001). Embracing the primary emotions as potential feedback for understanding and insight creates a platform for progress and reconciliation.

Level 5 reflects an increasing level of emotional sophistication, with emergent awareness of established unconscious norms and transformational change playing a vital role in personal growth (Bachkirova, 2015; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009, Plutchik,

2001). Such change may lead to uncertainty, ambiguity and self-doubt, with a reflexive appreciation of the core emotions involved enabling attention and action (Petherick, 2016; Plutchik, 2001).

Whilst my poetry detailed the lived experience of shattered illusions and self-doubt, and revealed the unconscious self, analysis of my poetry revealed a quest for equilibrium and a return to homeostasis, with self-deception and intense emotion revealed in time and space (Bachkirova, 2015; Plutchik, 2001). My HSSI journey reflected an identity and personal narrative committed to learning, supported by values and beliefs focused upon making sense of a period of enormous personal turmoil (Morgan, 2010; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). In reflecting my true self back to me, my poetry essentially offered feedback, creating a platform for analysis and the reorganisation of personal structures, and thinking (Kolb, 2014; Kegan, 2009; Canham & Satyamurthi, 2003). Such reorganisation challenged and facilitated release from unconscious but felt emotion and associated behaviours and actions, carrying significant implications for personal narrative and identity (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Moustakas, 1990). As a coach, by practising upon myself, such heightened awareness afforded learning into development and growth, personally and professionally (Cox *et al.*, 2014).

In coaching, acknowledgement of the interweaving of self with practice is a cornerstone of professional coaching, suggesting it is vital for a coach to personally practice in congruity with a professional approach (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016; Cox *et al.*, 2014). Personal experience of working with these four lenses is shared in consideration of the potential implications for each integrated theme to be explored in the forthcoming sections.

7.3 The Coach as An Individual (Integrated Theme #A) through the four lenses

'The Coach as an Individual' (#A) attends to issues of accountability for professional standards and personal/professional growth; enrichment of a professional capability mindset drawing upon reflexive capability, experience and knowledge with personal accountability for self-care, learning, and growth (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2015; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Cox *et al.*, 2014). This integrated theme is also informed by considerations of the potential of identity and personal narrative. Table 7.4 explores 'The Coach as an Individual' against the backdrop of the four lenses discussed with pertinent questions explored, level by level.

Considering ‘The Coach as an Individual’ through the four lenses **Table 7.4**

Lens A: Self-Deception (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013; Bachkirova, 2015)	Lens B: Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 2001)	Lens C: Adult Development (Kegan, 2009)	Lens D Self-Doubt (Hindmarch, 2008; Petherwick, 2016)	‘The Coach as An Individual’ (Integrated Theme #A) Possible Considerations
‘Part of being human’ Bachkirova (2015, p.10)	Evolutionary based	Gradual process Internalisation > externalisation enabled by individual’s idiosyncratic construction of reality	-ve feelings arising from self assessment of abilities to achieve task	Focus: Accountability for self including holding self to account for growth; wellbeing; practice and relationships.
‘bounded awareness’ (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013, p.2)	Emotional and visible response to external prompt and reaction	Pre adolescence	Skills/Ability focus	How to embrace multiple aspects of data?
‘wilful blindness’ (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Emotions offer feedback	Socialized Mind		How to respond to personal limits to growth?
‘cognitive dissonance’ (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Primary Emotions	Self Authoring	Issue of Control	How to ensure consistency and congruity at every level of being?
‘unconscious bias’ (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Primary dyads	Transforming	Outcome of change	How to optimise who you are and who you can be personally and professionally?

Attending to ‘The Coach as an Individual’ (#A), Bachkirova (2015, p.10) highlights the dangers of self-deception as *‘part of being human’* which may suggest that construction and interpretation of personal reality is fraught with danger (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Nevertheless, minimising self-deception is lauded as an important part of being a coach, with a suggestion that starting with self as a data source seems *‘reasonable’* (Bachkirova, 2015, p.5) in preparation for working with coachees (Cox *et al.*, 2014). Inviting people to engage with the research study resulted in some CRs considering concepts for themselves which were available to them prior to the research, but with which they had not engaged. Faye noted *“it did make me think ... what were my beliefs around writing poetry and why did I shy away from it ...?”* Such awakening and expressions of restricted awareness were outlined in a variety of situations such as Katie who reflected upon a coaching relationship where,

I counted seventeen interruptions in our first session what I noticed in me ... I hope he’s not there or I hope ... he might cancel ... paying lip service.

For others like Gina, the paradox and challenge demanded intense, emotional consideration *“which one do I leave?... maybe there is another question I need to find*

because I can't.... don't want to answer that question". Polly indicated a professional paradox stating, *"I am not terribly focused upon gender differences, I would actually say ... men find it more difficult than women to ...".* These quotations offer discrete examples from my CRs as part of a wider conversation, some working independently or with a supervisor to address the issues highlighted.

The challenge of embracing difficult emotions as feedback was acknowledged (Plutchik, 2001). Gina noted

*I am a woman who has emotions ... I know that I am a master at
locking it up ... letting emotion emerge, you know that is a risk.*

Bachkirova (2015) suggests that subject to philosophical approach, either compassion or support might be the way to address issues of self-deception, thus it might be that embracing difficult emotions as a source of feedback or data affords opportunity for self-care development and healing ((Bachkirova, 2016; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Sela-Smith, 2002). For Charles, the apparently intuitive, reflex response (Kegan, 2009) was *"C'mon, I need to get cracking with this and boost yourself up, you know?"* whilst Katie indicated, *"I use it [activity] as a diversion and distraction technique from what's hard and hurting and stressful".* Whilst appearing to deliver short-term benefit, Katie acknowledged the consequences of failure to resolve the underlying issue(s):

*If I am consistently being angry and worried that means that my
stomach acid will rise ... and you just have that pain ... for four days
before the medication kicks in*

and is resolved to embrace more permanent change. Meantime Jade indicated *"I find poems that I have written ... at very poignant moments"*, and values the creative expression of emotion as a means of catharsis, sensemaking and wellbeing (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Baker & Mazza, 2004; Pennebaker, 1997). It may be that such an approach is rooted in Jade's sense of self-identity, curiosity and instinctive quest for knowledge and learning. (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009).

Whilst self-deception may reflect an element of what it means to be human, it typically carries negative connotations, suggesting applied effort might be required to acknowledge, embrace and learn from it (Bachkirova, 2015). Individual responses to emotional turmoil, highlighted self-awareness as stated by Gina: *"until I actually show myself ... I need trust, I can be experienced as a very kind of measured cold, ice queen"* perhaps identifying a narrative rooted in control, self-awareness and choice (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Hindmarch, 2008; Plutchik, 2001).

Issues of identity tension emerged, with Katie highlighting that *“I own a business and I behaved ... like I didn’t own a business ...”* whilst for Lucas, *“I see myself as more of a business guy than a coach.”* Lucas’s view apparently indicates a correlation between financial value and competency, although expressed as capability i.e. *“if you’re going to charge good money you should have spent a lot of years building up your capability around this.”* Petherick (2016) acknowledges the propensity for self-employment amongst coaches, but challenges my CRs’ thinking that business management/leadership are incompatible with the delivery of coaching practice. Further prompting led to Lucas offering a slightly different, more intimate challenge of assessing personal capability: *“putting a value on my coaching I see it as a hang up ...”*, forging possible connections between identity, capability and self-doubt (Petherick, 2016; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Kegan, 2009). As a coach, such considerations may represent underlying limitations to personal and professional growth through personal dialogue and narrative (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012).

The challenges in noticing and attending to personal narrative with inherent personal patterns of thinking/behaviour and action appear potentially unremitting and demanding (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Katie acknowledged that *“If I have to do stuff that I don’t like, that’s not my happy place”*, and carry implications for personal wellbeing. Using the metaphor of *“a bouncy Labrador”* to describe the impact upon self of working with *“like-minded peers with similar values”* apparently affords a solution, but may also prove to be a personal limit to growth. The relationship between personal narrative, accurate data assessment and self-leadership continued with Jade, noting, when discussing contribution, that *“my first instinct is always to apologise and feel that I haven’t done enough and that I haven’t given enough”* (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Cunha *et al.* (2015, p.2) propose *‘self-leadership as a process of personal development through reflexivity’*. This requires individuals to acknowledge *‘a number of dualities’* (ibid., 2015, p.2) or as Charles suggests *“drivers in me that conflict”*, including professional and personal fulfilment balanced by challenge and routine; prioritising self in relation to others balanced with health and wellbeing (Bachkirova, 2016; Cunha *et al.*, 2015). Such balance reflects *‘a creative tension’* between the (emotional) reality of the present and future aspiration (Senge, 1990, p.195). Reflexivity as a process may enable an individual to identify when such balance is potentially compromised, enabling identification of resultant personal limitations to growth which mask underlying issues of self-esteem and self-doubt

(Hindmarch, 2008). However, reflexivity is not a simple task: it can and does take numerous forms, with data potentially sourced from a wide range of situations (Cunha *et al.*, 2015).

Change also appears to have a significant impact, whether self-directed or imposed, upon 'knowing' and confidence (Hindmarch, 2008). For Gina, in the face of leadership change, this resulted in a sense that *"we are not clear what game we are trying to win,"* reflecting the apparent challenge and danger of not knowing who I am in terms of what I do, where I fit and how I relate to others (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Cunliffe, 2002). For Charles, the challenge appears more complex, carrying implications for praxis as *"If someone says, 'oh what's this?' I dunno it's a bit difficult ...; it's a bit complicated, isn't it? ... I dunno you know"* (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Cunliffe, 2002). In the coaching context and my research interest, the challenge appears to lie with acknowledging the fragility and dynamic nature of knowing and the potential impact of rapid and unexpected change upon the self-confidence associated with 'knowing' (Bachkirova, 2016; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Against this backdrop, the importance of assiduous self-awareness, personal discipline and self-care is highlighted in the quest for personal growth and professional coaching practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016). Such considerations may essentially require coaches to update personal terms of preference, reference and personal identity on an ongoing basis. Polly expressed a view that *"I wish I could go back to being normal ... and not having [sic] this sort of constant ... sense of self-awareness ..."*. However, Cunliffe (2002) suggests that embracing reflexivity is to embrace a way of being with the coaching literature advocating a reflexive mindset as a vital aspect of what it means to be a coach (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova 2016).

Discussions with each CR offered a unique interpretation of my research question, based upon personal narrative, identity, experience, knowledge and context (Cox *et al.*, 2014; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). As the story of this theme evolved, it became clear that embracing an opportunistic approach to personal and professional growth may result in an emergent challenge for coaches to lead and uphold personal and professional accountability for development and growth as part of their identity (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Bachkirova and Lawton Smith (2015) encourage a reflexive mindset in support of the enrichment and expansion of capability, which implicitly challenges coaches, as highlighted by Gina, *"to practice (their) own medicine."* Cox *et al.* (2014, p.144) extend such a view with respect to the importance

of coaches '*reflecting on and practising techniques*' on self in advance of using them, perhaps reflecting considerations of technical congruity and consistency (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017).

Consideration of 'The Coach as an Individual' through the four lenses brings forth the underlying complexity of self-leadership for the coach who endeavours to move beyond aspiration to action, bridging the gap between intent and application with respect to personal development (Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Supervision is promulgated as the vital enabler of ethical competent coaching practice, but my data indicates that investment in supervision is variable in terms of time and focus (Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Opportunities emerge in the formal development of coaches and supervisors to potentially address the development of a reflexive mindset in support of self-leadership and a quest to minimise issues of self-deception and self-imposed (unconscious) limits to growth, to support self-care and ongoing self-management (Bachkirova, 2016; Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Senge, 1990). Poetry offers a mechanism in support of reflexive practice that includes sensemaking, tapping into the unconscious and learning and evidenced by the experience of one of my CRs and myself (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010; Sela-Smith, 2002). An invisible gap emerges in my research question between embracing the means such as poetry and the practice of reflexivity whereby, as a part of being and identity, a coach can externalise the internal in support of objectification, sensemaking, insight and action as a '*deliberate learning process*' (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009, p. 15). Embracing reflexivity as part of one's ontological and epistemological being carries important consequences for relationships and praxis as a coach and may suggest an evolution in personal identity (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Cunliffe, 2004). A starting point may be to assume a conscious, proactive, systemic way of being where an ongoing commitment to self-leadership and personal learning informs an existential appreciation of personal being, and of approach and of practice (Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Coughlan & Brannick, 2010; Cunliffe, 2004). Such considerations are likely to impact upon personal identity and to enrich personal narrative as one expands and deepens personal being (Bachkirova, 2016; Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012).

7.4 Reflexivity, Poetry & Growth (Integrated Theme #B) through the four lenses

'Reflexivity, Poetry & Growth' (#B) is concerned with the potential relationship between poetry and reflexivity and its possible contribution to personal and professional development and growth within the world of coaching. Consideration of this integrated

theme through the lenses of Self Deception (Bachkirova, 2015), Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 2001); Adult Development (Kegan, 2010) and Self Doubt (Hindmarch, 2008) is presented in Table 7.5, with pertinent questions presented level by level. Cunha *et al.* (2015) propose a correlation between reflexivity and creativity when proposing reflexivity as evidence of self-leadership, with an outcome of self-leadership being a higher level of creativity, and such a narrative emerges in the essence of this theme and Table 7.5. Data is drawn from CR input into the HI process and supported by my experience as an HSSI participant. The two CRs who actively participated in the poetic writing task had quite polarised experiences. Jade indicated that “*writing this down in this way helped me to come to that insight*” whilst for Polly, “*poetry is not a way that I would naturally express myself.*” For me (as shared with Lucas), writing poetry enabled me “*to navigate my rapids*” and to offer a metaphor that appeared to resonate for my CRs (“*Oh ... I like that. That’s fantastic.*” (Katie)).

Consideration of ‘Reflexivity Poetry and Growth’ through the four lenses Table 7.5

Lens A: Self-Deception (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013; Bachkirova, 2015)	Lens B: Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 2001)	Lens C: Adult Development (Kegan, 2009)	Lens D Self-Doubt (Hindmarch,2008; Petherwick, 2016)	‘Reflexivity, Poetry & Growth’ (Integrated Theme #B) Possible considerations
‘Part of being human’ Bachkirova (2015, p.10)	Evolutionary based	Gradual process Internalisation > externalisation enabled by individual’s idiosyncratic construction of reality	-ve feelings arising from self assessment of abilities to achieve task	Focus: Potential relationship between poetry & reflexivity in support of personal & professional development and growth.
‘bounded awareness’ (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013, p.2)	Emotional and visible response to external prompt and reaction	Pre adolescence	Skills/Ability focus	How to enhance skills and capabilities?
‘wilful blindness’ (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Emotions offer feedback	Socialized Mind		How to tend and question positive and negative emotions and experience?
‘cognitive dissonance’ (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Primary Emotions	Self Authoring	Issue of Control	How to develop a mindset that encourages engagement beyond the familiar/known?
‘unconscious bias’ (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Primary dyads	Transforming	Outcome of change	How to enhance awareness of personal bias?

Consideration of Reflexivity, Poetry and Growth (#B) focuses upon the potential of using poetry as a form of creative expression to engage with a deeper, critical review of personal ways of being upon self, upon others and upon praxis. Research study

participation encouraged engagement with reflexivity, as confirmed by Faye (*“you did make me think”*) and creative expression (Cunliffe, 2002; Pennebaker, 1997). This apparently brought opportunities for skills and capabilities enhancement, with Lucas noting *“I was encouraged to use words that might be thought of as poetic”* and Gina expressing *“love in this process”*. Additionally, participation heightened awareness and created the potential for structured reflexive practice as suggested by Charles: *“I need to think about what pains that’s causing”*. Engaging with personal emotions was not necessarily easy or comfortable and the choice and personal steps to learning and action resided with each CR (Cox *et al.*, 2014). Katie was not alone in embracing learning, typically personal in nature, when she indicated, *“I was able to challenge and ... think differently about what I wanted”*, supporting curiosity, decision-making and learning, or just being, as Polly noted, *“a very interesting experience.”*

HSSI analysis of my poetry confirmed that writing poetry that speaks of in-the-moment, lived experience and emotion created an opportunity to embrace the essence of its inherent poetic meaning (Moustakas, 1990). Revisiting such poetry through HSSI to consider its individual and collective meaning, I felt the inherent value of poetry as a reflexive vehicle, enabling sensemaking, the forging of connection between the conscious and the unconscious and personal transformative learning (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010; Sela-Smith, 2002; Whyte, 1994). Faye endorsed such sentiments when noting *“It’s that liminal space between conscious thought and unconscious thoughts ... where poetry taps in.”*

Gina and Faye draw upon a small collection of *“particularly evocative poets”*, whose poetry *“gets to the parts that any logical or any analytical models don’t”*, thereby using poetry as an *instrument* of choice in coaching. Gina’s rationale for embracing poetry was *“it was relevant from what presented itself or what we were talking about”* and enabled coachees to *“tell me how it resonates or what stands out ...,”* with an overall goal of *“opening eyes to bigger potentials.”* Using third-party poetry as an instrument or metaphor resonates with the potential value of poetry as a sensemaking tool, facilitating connections and enriching relationships and learning between people (Grisoni & Darmer, 2011; Morgan, 2010). Its use reflects something of the coach’s epistemology, since the decision to use poetry and which poem to use, resides with the coach. Faye expressed this as *“it’s what comes up for me when I’m coaching somebody”*, with its purpose as *“a reflection on a coaching session”* or *“as a starting point ... for our own (coach) development.”* Such sentiments may reflect a cognitive,

reflective, sensemaking approach, perhaps owing more to Armitage's (2014) descriptive use of poetry to share observations. On the other hand, writing poetry that draws upon lived experience for self or to share with others as a reflexive endeavour, emerges as a gift which Jade suggested *"cemented another bit of the web of connections ... through the subtlety of communication"* (Windle, 1994). Like Jade, I have written poetry that sits somewhere between the reflexive poetry which forms the core of my HSSI study and the observational, reflective poetry of the external third-party which when shared with a coachee has been received *"in the spirit"* of *"a gift"*, generous, *"open hearted ... intimate."* (Jade)

Whether using poetry as an instrument or writing it as a gift, consideration as to purpose and follow-up appear vital (Mazza, 2006). Poetry supports an enriched perspective by offering data and feedback, whether to coach or coachee, including the potential to minimise self-deception (Bachkirova, 2015). Jade, having exchanged some poetry with a colleague, noted *"it was a bit smartarse and he writes back and tells me I am a smartarse in a haiku"*, conveying potentially challenging feedback to self and/or others. Nevertheless, poetry afforded the opportunity to enrich inter/intra relations, as Jade acknowledged *"I love that because it is like humour"* (Cunliffe, 2016; Plutchik, 2001).

Coaching and supervision are typically posited as learning processes, whilst acknowledging some assumptions regarding the intrinsic motivation and self-direction of adult learners (Hawkins & Smith, 2006; Cox, 2006). In considering this theme, definitions and assumptions also emerged from my CRs, such as Jade, who considered *"development is always about bringing out the potential... released through experience and ... learning from that experience."* With implications of self-direction and accountability, Jade indicated, *"every single day I am more developed than the day before"*. Charles, working to a different set of presuppositions, indicated that internal development typically attends to professional performance improvement with learning achieved through external, theoretical delivery. Each reflects a personal interpretation of learning, whilst potentially challenging an underlying assumption of the Reflexivity, Poetry & Growth theme that people want to continue to learn (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Such an assumption is congruent with my humanistic stance and was expanded during the research study as my CRs offered different interpretations of learning supported by variable levels of participation in the poetic writing exercise.

Whilst volunteering to support the research study, many secured value from engagement in the research in different ways. Faye indicated that consideration of a new approach and challenge to existing bias emerged when she reflected upon “*why don’t I write poetry?*” For Lucas, the research invited him to open “*my thinking up a bit. I got more liberated and maybe a little more creative*”, whilst for Gina, it brought forth an “*opportunity to see where I might be self-deceiving*”. These CRs apparently reflected a sense of curiosity as to current and potential possibilities beyond the familiar and the known whilst managing risk and exposure (Passmore, 2011; Fook & Askeland, 2007).

For Polly, the poetic writing task proved different than anticipated. In advance, Polly reflected “*what I expect to take away is ‘OK, so what are you going to do with it?’*” and afterwards advised “*it’s been a not good [sic] experience*”. The poetic writing task appeared more challenging than anticipated as she found herself confused, with a sense of “*where do I start?*” Polly’s experience was particularly interesting in my role as researcher as I embraced the real-time difference between researcher and coach:

I’m genuinely curious as to your experience. [Me as researcher]

Did you notice any patterns of behaviour that it highlighted for you? [Me as coach]

I intuitively acknowledged the potential for identity confusion and boundary transgression. Polly responded, “*it was very practical*” with the interview concluding a few minutes later. The opportunity for CR and researcher to learn from this exchange was potentially significant but underscored by an assumption that as adult learners, there is a personal accountability for learning as well as ownership of the learning agenda (Cox, 2006). In this discussion, I was not in the role of coach but that of researcher, where the emphasis on learning lay with me and with opportunity and choice residing with my CR. In terms of coaching, Cox (2006) offers considerations of the coach’s role in challenging underlying assumptions or patterns of behaviour and emotional responses with a view to enabling coachee awareness, choice, decision-making and action as part of the transformation process (Mezirow, 2003). In a research study, whilst the contract, responsibilities and the boundaries are written in the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix A.5), real-time reflexive considerations are vital in upholding the integrity of the contract (Cunliffe, 2002). I suggest that such issues are as relevant for coaching practice as for research, whether the context is academia or practice (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009).

Jade reflected identity considerations when it comes to writing poetry, suggesting pre-task that *"Oh God, they'll think I'm even more flaky than they think I am already."* However, having engaged with the poetic writing exercise, Jade could envisage different possibilities, anticipating that *"I can imagine writing a poem to my client ... and I know she would receive it in the spirit I sent it."* Similar notions of risk, possibly for both coach and coachee emerged from Faye as she considered a more prescriptive approach in which, on sharing a poem with a coachee, she might say *"For the next session, read this poem and then we'll discuss it." That's too directive.* However, following engagement with a professional development programme, the value of writing appears to have been progressed within a more structured coaching intervention whereby, as a coach, Faye might focus upon getting *"people to write narratives and then we coach them by going back in writing"*. The relationship between writing, reflexivity and learning is apparently well documented in therapeutic research and typically but not universally supported, in this coaching based research study (Haertl, 2014; Baker & Mazza, 2004). Considerations of self-doubt with respect to poetic skills appear speculative, since these do not emerge clearly in the research; however, such considerations do perhaps highlight the amount of support, trust and curiosity required to engage with creative expression in any form (Hindmarch, 2008).

Research and reading suggest that capability enhancement and mindset transformation may take time, conscious application and practice (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Mezirow, 2009). Furthermore, growth and development may incur *'growing pains'*, thereby fostering an additional commitment challenge to be addressed (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009, p.16). Given the rich variety of knowledge, experience and approach of individual coaches, my research has explored whether poetry may offer an alternative means of making sense of lived experience by creating the opportunity to express emotions and reflections in a compassionate and self-directed manner (Bachkirova, 2016; Cox *et al.*, 2014; Morgan, 2010). My research suggests that poetry, as a form of personal creative expression may also act as a means of surfacing and engaging with deeper, underlying emotions and issues, thereby making the invisible, visible (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Baker & Mazza, 2004; Whyte, 1994). Additionally, poetry can act as a mechanism to objectify subjective experience, supporting self-management and self-leadership whilst affording the opportunity to update identity and personal narrative (Cunha *et al.*, 2016; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Briggs (2012, p.34) notes how poetry can *'capture with*

words his/her feelings as uniquely and idiosyncratically as is his/her' voice and experience, highlighting the sensitivity, skill and maturity required to appreciate, interpret, and cultivate transformative learning (Bachkirova, 2016; Mezirow, 2009; Kegan, 2009).

Poetry offers a unique approach to embracing reflexivity, creating opportunity to enhance personal capability, insight, learning and practice (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Cunliffe, 2002). Such considerations appear vital for professional coaching practice where the ongoing challenge in an unregulated profession is for each coach to hold self to account for authenticity and congruity, alongside ethical practice and professional standards (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cox *et al.*, 2014). As suggested by Haertl (2014), Baker and Mazza (2004) and Pennebaker (1997), in this research study those who engaged with the writing task appeared to benefit emotionally, cognitively and practically. Additionally, many of the coaches, including myself, benefitted from consideration of related issues of self-care, wellbeing and development (Wall *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016). Kegan, in discussion with Bachkirova (2009, p.18) notes *'it turns out to be interviewed this way is intrinsically rewarding'* as people feel they are being listened to in a genuine and authentic manner and that in turn, *'they are being understood.'* These sentiments were endorsed by Faye as *"openness, allowing and at the same time holding and containing"* provided *"a level of security and understanding"* that speaks to feeling valued and accepted as an individual in support of expansion, congruity and learning (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). Such gifts of appreciation and acceptance may be catalysts for personal, transformative growth and a move beyond existing personal narrative to realise true potential. However, responsibility for such endeavour relies upon the personal motivation, and curiosity of the individual coach (Cox *et al.*, 2014; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012).

7.5 Self-coaching & Self-leadership (Integrated Theme #C) through the four lenses

The emergent story around the final integrated theme (#C) of 'Self-coaching and Self-leadership' attends to the opportunity, value and potential of understanding, appreciating and respecting self as an individual in support of personal growth and professional coaching practice (Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Bachkirova, 2016). This theme supports a sentiment that coaching supervision is the key means of continuous professional development and ethical practice and seeks to encourage preparation

and focus for the coach between supervision sessions and pre/post coaching sessions (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Table 7.6 explores 'Self-Coaching and Self-Leadership' against the backdrop of the four lenses discussed with pertinent questions presented level by level.

Consideration of 'Self-Coaching and Self-Leadership' through the four lenses
Table 7.6

Lens A: Self-Deception (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013; Bachkirova, 2015)	Lens B: Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 2001)	Lens C: Adult Development (Kegan, 2009)	Lens D: Self-Doubt (Hindmarch, 2008; Petherwick, 2016)	'Self Coaching and Self Leadership' (Integrated Theme #C) Possible considerations
'Part of being human' Bachkirova (2015, p.10)	Evolutionary based	Gradual process Internalisation > externalisation enabled by individual's idiosyncratic construction of reality	-ve feelings arising from self assessment of abilities to achieve task	Focus: The opportunity, value and potential of understanding, appreciating and respecting self
'bounded awareness' (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013, p.2)	Emotional and visible response to external prompt and reaction	Pre adolescence	Skills/Ability focus	How to use data to learn about self?
'wilful blindness' (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Emotions offer feedback	Socialized Mind		How to hold self to account?
'cognitive dissonance' (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Primary Emotions	Self Authoring	Issue of Control	How to embrace fear and threat as to self perception ?
'unconscious bias' (ibid., 2013, p.3)	Primary dyads	Transforming	Outcome of change	How to access deeper, unconscious self?

'Self-Coaching and Self-Leadership' (#C) focuses upon being attentive to self to sustain health and wellbeing, thereby maintaining the integrity of self within coaching practice which is dependent upon the interweaving of self and practice (Bachkirova, 2016). Such attentiveness suggests the potential for reducing self-deception since awareness, compassion and consideration are the proposed means for addressing self-deception (Bachkirova, 2015). Proposing fear as one of the catalysts of self-deception, it might be helpful to consider to what the fear or apprehension might pertain (Bachkirova, 2015; Albrecht, 2012; Plutchik, 2001).

Katie referenced the challenges of a coaching relationship in which *"I hope my phone rings and I hope he cancels."* Katie used this data to learn about self by spending time

“consciously becoming aware of what this was really about”, which challenged and revealed information, enabling further self-questioning and personal consideration. Katie sought *“supervision”*, where insight emerged about resistance, style and choices as a coach and a human being. In holding herself to account, Katie acknowledged a behavioural pattern whereby *“I never stopped to give myself time to do that ... self-care,”* which in her view carried *“an accumulative cost over time”* and was *“definitely not a developmental mechanism.”* For Gina, appreciating a similar approach, it becomes about *“self-activating your survival self,”* potentially as an issue of self-management which for Gina, becomes *“the struggle I’m having in the day-to-day.”*

As a coach, the importance of *time* and *space* for coachees is acknowledged and apparently freely given as Gina indicated: *“it took her 45 minutes to actually get into ...”*. My own research journey started by giving myself time and space to complete a learning log. However, the importance of giving time and space to self, of addressing possible issues of wellbeing and/or self-deception may be underestimated so that the self-deception is inadvertently, as Katie noted, *“leaking into the relationship”*, with both coach and coachee *“paying lip service”*. In such circumstances, there is an apparent cost to coach and coachee, as Gina suggested: the coach can be left feeling *“a bit lost”* or, as experienced by Katie, becoming *“very unwell”*. Self-leadership includes tending to and caring for self, whilst embracing the intense curiosity of reflexivity as Jade indicated: *“I see how fascinated I am by my own process”* (Cunha *et al.*, 2015). Such an approach may be simultaneously challenging and compassionate (Bachkirova, 2016; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Cunliffe, 2002).

Ozertugrul (2015) highlights the importance of reflexivity in considering self and self within society as part of an HSSI approach that prioritises the acknowledgement of feelings and emotions as a vital source of data (Bachkirova & Shannon, 2013; Sela-Smith, 2002; Plutchik, 2001). However, Sela-Smith (online) also acknowledges that *‘it takes courage to really look at ourselves’*, to move beyond the awakening and awareness and to critically engage with the data to explore and tend to the associated emotions and their sources. Like many, Gina acknowledged, *“my temptation is to numb”* or to avoid challenging and difficult aspects of self to survive day-to-day challenges. Whilst this may be a survival strategy, *“it is definitely not a developmental mechanism”* (Katie) and as a coach with a focus upon learning, it may highlight a challenge at the heart of a coach’s personal practice.

Cunha et al., (2015) note the importance of listening to less than convenient responses as a source for development, with encouragement to think creatively and differently about personal responses to a single experience. Such reflexive exploration offers the potential for self-leadership through ongoing self-discipline and self-development, with a focus upon finding personal equilibrium. Writing poetry can act as a reflexive enabler with review and analysis of the poetry offering fresh perspective and insight. Writing poetry helped me to face into the discomfort of reality by bridging a gap between 'I-who-feels' and 'it-who-sees' using poetry as a cathartic, sensemaking structure whilst "*navigating my rapids*" (in discussion with Lucas; Wilber, online; Sela-Smith, 2002).

Haertl (2014, p.13) notes *'the power of the heuristic process in coming to personal and collective awareness of the phenomena studied'*. Within the context of coaching where encouragement to move beyond the competence of self-awareness to embracing a reflexive mindset is evidenced, poetry, as a form of self-expression might be a useful means to access deeper aspects of self (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Mazza, 2006; Whyte, 1994). Such an approach may afford opportunity to *'illuminate new understandings'* (Grisoni, 2016, p.15) by examination of language, inherent primary emotions and reflexive consideration of context, personal patterns of thinking, behaviour and identity to consider and explore different constructs (Grisoni, 2016; Bolton, 2009; Plutchik, 2001). It may create opportunity to update existing paradigms, unlearn established patterns of thinking and embrace new insight, choices and ways of being that are congruent personally and professionally (Bachkirova, 2016; Hawkins, 2015; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012).

Life-changing events were the catalyst for what became a transformative journey of self-discovery reflecting *'a call from our true self'* (Sela-Smith, online) as charted in my poetry and its analysis using HSSI protocols (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Sela-Smith, online). Personal motivation fuelled my curiosity and analysis of the poetry challenged me to face my fears and attend to the *'real source of the problem'* (Sela-Smith, online). Personal contact with Sela-Smith (2016) encouraged me *'to focus upon the authentic self'* and to embrace *'internal inquiry in a world that is becoming more and more superficial and seems to be avoiding all that goes on in the unconscious'*.

Embracing HSSI as a highly reflexive self-search methodology, is emotionally and cognitively demanding, as well as intensely rewarding. Diagram 7.7 is an example of my own approach to HSSI drawing upon my own poetry and in this instance where I

Comparing the revelations between Poetry and Narrative

Diagram 7.7

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return to homeostasis, (Plutchik, 2001; Pennebaker, 1997). The power of creative expression in therapy is evidenced and those CRs who engaged with creative writing in some form indicated it brought forth personal benefit (Mazza, 2006). Gina indicated that *“Writing ... is one way to connect to ‘what am I feeling?’”* and *“it gave me an intimacy with myself”*.

My HSSI analysis of my poetry revealed my deeper, unconscious self through intrinsic patterns of thinking, behaviour and knowledge and whilst intensely challenging, supported insight, choice and transformation. As the concept of identity emerged for my CRs, *“I also started to write about who am I? ... like an identity”* (Gina), I revisited my poetry, drawing upon Cunliffe & Coupland (2012) and shown here in Table 7.9 as an alternative approach to extricate additional insight and learning.

Exploring Narrative with Cunliffe & Coupland (2012)

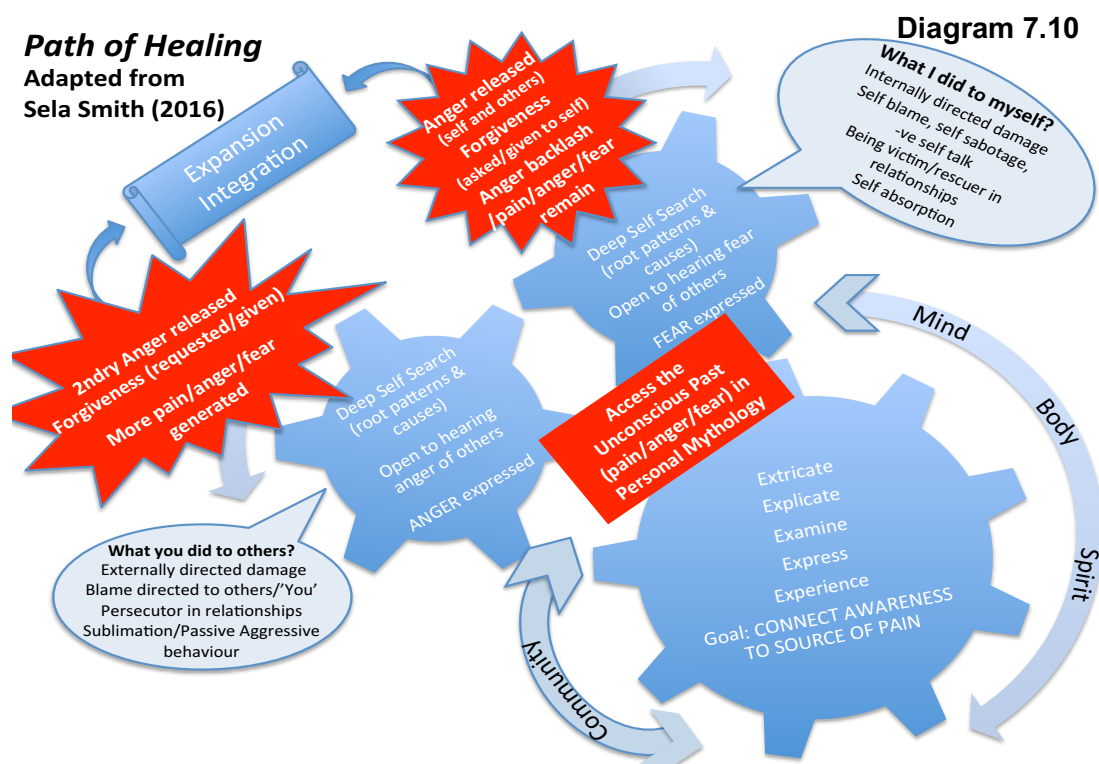
Table 7.9

JMM's voice in Poetry (written on day) & Written Notes (3 months later)	Cognitively	Emotionally	Physically	Intuitively
Sets context – emotional and physical high as a couple Final stage of M.Sc. process	Contextual setting Poem annotated Work with data	21 st & Inauguration emotional highlights as parents	“My head it hurts My heart more so”	Context impacting during distress
Metaphorically landed with a huge bump	New information	“implosion”	“into orbit hurled”	ML facial cues
(Desperate) urge to escape	Identifying own emotional state	Sense of being “trapped” Focus on separation	“running” Breathing shallow Legs like jelly Head in chaos Voice – cold, specific, determined	Fight/flight Phone = hard evidence of something
Christy telcall Feedback ex this situation re mental state	Hot drink as antidote Buy time Text to ML phone which I have (so not!)	Self nurturing/caring Attention to Christy Anger	Dynamic shift Internal to external dialogue/self to child Text sent	Prioritisation
Both are retrospective presentations of experience “artificially separated in retrospective sensemaking” (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012, p.26)	Questions not answers Practicalities eg cats Future e.g. Cam	Fear (projected onto my sons’ wellbeing)	Cold < 30 mins sleep Headache	Protective instinct
Identity – Husband/wife; Father/mother Central characters/audience (passengers) Controller/controlled Drama triangle (victim/persecutor/rescuer) Travellers (life/fight) Passengers (flight) Limitations – volume of data/rationality & objectivity assumed possible	“the imagined audience” with “their spoken and unspoken criticisms” (ibid., 2012, p.22) “narrative identity (ibid., 2012, p.26) incl rationality > Closure	“our marriage a void into which I stare”	“I snatched ...”	NB Intuitive (verbal/facial) focus to weave “sensible” story i.e. return to homeostasis by all parties

Jade talked about *“four ways of knowing ... cognitive, emotional, bodily knowing and intuitive”* and the framework developed supported rich sensemaking with *‘plausibility and narrative rationality’* (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012, p.31), revealing to me a more authentic self-identity. Sela-Smith (online) highlights the quest for and acceptance of development insights demand courage, focus and discipline (Kegan, 2009). The value of, commitment to and accountability for self-care and a reflexive mindset are issues

of self-leadership, highlighted by Jade as “my first responsibility is to be in as great a service of myself as a whole person”, prioritising self with a view to being able to support others (Bachkirova, 2016; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015; Cunha *et al.*, 2015). Such considerations appear vital in a complex helping profession such as coaching with its dependency upon the interweaving of the self of the coach with professional practice (Bachkirova, 2016).

‘Diving deeper into with an unwavering and steady inward gaze’ (Moustakas, 1990, p.13), my HSSI analysis continued, working through my three anthologies in support of enriching insight as to the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. Embracing the rigours of HSSI was essentially emotional and challenging, revealing my enduring commitment to the importance of practising techniques upon self before proposing to clients or CRs whilst enriching my CR data as a participant (Cox *et al.*, 2014). Correspondence with Sela-Smith (2016) revealed my intuitive approach for healing, development and transformation by facing into the emotional challenges reflected in my poetry and reflexively surfacing the inherent narrative (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Deep self-search enabled the extrication of patterns of behaviour rooted in personal mythology, as synthesised in Diagram 7.10, the Path of Healing, was vital in a quest for integration expansion and transformation (Sela-Smith, 2016; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009).



Intuition and poetry directed me away from a Path of Hurt (Sela-Smith, 2016), and its attention to the suppression and avoidance of the hurt. Such hurt is internalised and manifested through self-inflicted hurt or self-sabotage and self-blame. Alternatively, it may be *projected* onto others, directly or indirectly, physically or behaviourally or indeed in more defensive, subtle and socially-acceptable behaviours, such as passive aggression.

Bachkirova (2016, p.144) notes the importance of the '*self of the coach*' in determining the success and integrity of the coaching relationship. Such sentiments were echoed by my CRs as Faye observed "*it is kind of looking systemically at how they operate*" alongside "*a lot of intrapersonal work*", focused upon "*how do they just be as successful as they can be and handle the pressure and handle the situation*". Faye, as an internal organisational coach, drawing upon her knowledge and experience, acknowledged "*I am very confident of the context in which they work*" (Bachkirova, 2016; Cox *et al.*, 2014). As a self-employed individual, Polly offered an alternative perspective, reflecting her psychotherapeutic training and commercial HR practice, describing herself as "*a therapeutic coach*," working "*with people around ... transition ... and development of their own potential, looking at bringing together their brain and heart*" whilst drawing upon "*the worldview of where that person is*". Many coaches, like Katie, expressed a desire "*to be helpful*" whether in coaching or my research. As Charles noted "*there's a gift-giving; a warm feeling of helping someone, helping them to explore an issue.*" It is such reciprocity or underlying '*exchange*' which as Jade postulated, is potentially "*generative and just so lovely*," which emerges as a vital driver for a coach to proactively engage with self-care and to enhance personal reflexive capabilities in support of professional and ethical coaching practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015). However, in the desire to be helpful, a coach may underestimate the challenge(s) associated with development and the impact of observing or being the catalyst for releasing other people's emotional stress as part of their development journey which may prove challenging to a coach's sense of personal narrative and identity (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009). It appears that coaching, like poetry, has a role in sensemaking with an ability to explore and act as a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious whilst facilitating development and learning (Grisoni, 2017; Cox *et al.*, 2014; Morgan, 2010; Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009; Whyte, 1994).

Exploring the integrated theme of self-coaching and self-leadership through the four

lenses reveals the challenges of effective self-leadership, efficient self-management and the crafting of authentic being, identity and narrative appear to be ongoing and unrelenting (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). The craft of becoming mirrors such sentiments. The potential of poetry or creative expression acting as a reflexive vehicle for cathartic release, sensemaking and revelation plus the analysis or review of the poetry, emerge as examples of self-leadership for some CRs (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Haertl, 2014). As a coach, the potential returns of focusing beyond the known and familiar to move into the unfamiliar and unknown appear to lie in the enhancement of capability and capacity, plus personal and professional fulfilment (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2014).

7.6 Summary

This chapter focuses upon the extrication of findings from consideration of the three integrated themes of 'The Coach as an Individual' (#A), 'Poetry, Reflexivity and Growth' (#B) and Self-coaching and Self-leadership (#C) through the four key lenses of Self Deception (Bachkirova, 2015), Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 2001), Adult Development (Kegan, 2009) and Self Doubt (Hindmarch, 2008). These themes and lenses emerged from HI analysis of CR data plus HSSI analysis (Sela-Smith, 2016; Ozertugrul, 2015; Hiles, 2008) to facilitate deeper insight and experience anew the insights and findings, as the research moves towards conclusions and contributions. To experience anew is to consider the potential use and learning to emerge from the research and in this spirit, the three themes evolve to become conclusions to be presented in the next chapter.

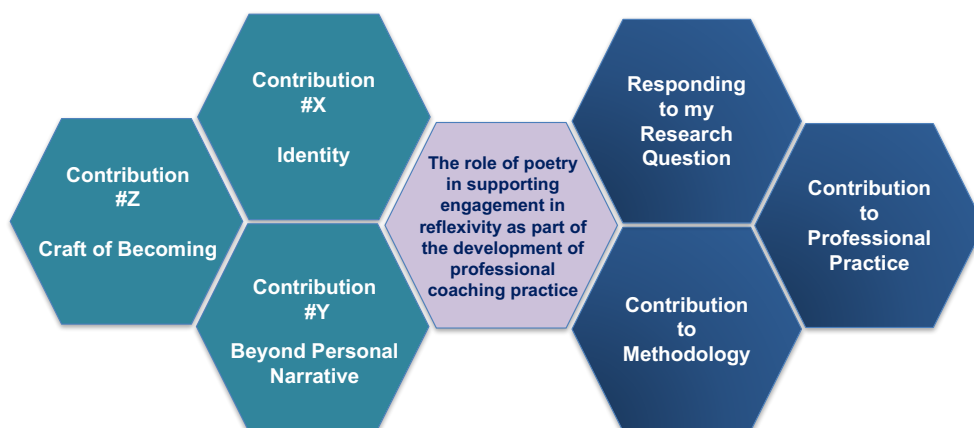
Chapter 8 - Conclusions

This chapter draws together the findings and conclusions of my work in a quest to contextualise the research within the literature and the research question, which lies

at the heart of the study. My research interest considers the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice shown at the centre of Diagram 8.1, alongside the findings and proposed contributions. This research study has addressed a small number of key objectives which includes the use of HI with seven CRs, as a methodology to develop an understanding of poetry in support of reflexive coaching practice. Additionally, the research study has delivered an original contribution to the knowledge of reflexive coaching practice within the professional coach and coaching supervisor community. In making such a contribution, the final objective will be addressed in the generation of a practical example of reflexive self-coaching practice using poetry as a development tool for the coaching profession.

An Overview of Chapter 8

Diagram 8.1



HI was the primary methodology embraced in this research and was enriched by HSSI to review personal poetry. HI was supported by seven CRs whilst HSSI focused upon my poetry, concentrated within a three-year period. In analysing the data from my CRs and my poetry, themes and findings from each data source were interwoven to develop three contributions that respond directly to my research question and reflect the essence of the experience of all who engaged with the research. These contributions

attend to identity, narrative and the craft of becoming as shown in Diagram 8.1. In addressing my research question, the first contribution considers the relationship between individual identity and the role of reflexivity in supporting a quest for congruity and personal growth. The second contribution explores the enrichment of personal narrative through development of a reflexive mindset. Finally, the third contribution explores the responsibility of the coach for self-leadership and self-management.

One of the final stages of the HI process is Creative Synthesis, which offers a creative representation of the key characteristics and essential elements of the study. Throughout my research, I have drawn extensively upon my business consulting background in using tables, pictures and diagrams to enrich the research narrative plus word clouds and mind maps to analyse, summarise and synthesise thinking. My research has involved alignment and integration of two complementary methodologies; the recursive and dynamic interweaving of data; the unique colour and contribution of each CR. The helix at the centre of Table 7.2 acts as a metaphor for the complexity, multiplicity and ambiguity and very human process of coaching; for the unification of my business self with my research self; and for the potential of a creative process in the positivist world of business. The recursive, dynamic nature of the helix reflects the blending and interweaving of one primary research methodology with another, with life breathed into the research by the lived experience of my CRs, supported by that of myself. Each element in Table 8.2 reflects a vital ingredient of the emerging narratives, each entirely complementary to the other, although potentially regarded as uniquely independent of the other.

Researcher	Participant
Heuristic Inquiry	Heuristic Self Search Inquiry
Co-Researchers	Participant
Business	Poetry
Reflection	Reflexivity
Inter	Intra
Competence	Competency
Capability	Capacity
Engagement	Participation
Collective	Individual
Subjective	Interpretivist

Continuing with my creative synthesis, word clouds developed from the summary of the integrated key theme descriptions in chapter 7 are presented in this chapter alongside the description of my research findings.

8.1 Contributions to Practice by Answering My Research Question

'Identity'

My findings indicate that a clear appreciation of the distinctions between reflection and reflexivity may not be confidently assumed by professional associations, academics, supervisors, coach and supervisor training providers or coaches, with consequences for growth, application and practice (Mezirow, 2009; Kegan, 2009). Based upon the final description in chapter 7 of 'The Coach as an

'Identity'

(Reflexive Coach Practitioner Word Cloud)

Diagram 8.3



Individual', Diagram 8.3 presents the key words associated with this theme in word cloud formation which distil the essential elements of the experience from my research. Discussions during the first phase of interviews demonstrated an appreciation of reflexivity but a lack of coherence in terms of definition and importance, its relationship with reflection or coherent and consistent practice and application (Alvesson *et al.*, 2008; Cunliffe, 2004; Fook, 2002). The importance of reflexive practice within coaching is typically positioned by academics as an enabler of ethical maturity (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova *et al.*, 2016). However, my research notes a difference in narrative on this topic between the professional coaching associations, the coaching literature and my CRs with respect to the training, development and maturation of the coach practitioner (Bachkirova *et al.*, 2016).

As an arts-based creative practice, the writing of poetry supports self-expression and the bringing forth of alternative perspectives, insight and choice as to who I am and how I wish to be (Briggs, 2012). Such existential considerations support clarity of identity and way of being in a postmodernist world of ambiguity and change (Cunliffe, 2004). As a coach, such considerations support differentiation, alongside a wider contribution to the development and enrichment of personal and professional coaching practice (Bachkirova, 2015).

An opportunity emerges to bridge a '*relevance gap*' (Wall, 2014, p.190) between theory and practice, by positioning reflexivity at the core of coach and supervisor training and development (Bachkirova *et al.*, 2016). Acknowledging my own philosophical bias, such an approach promotes coaching as a humanist profession, drawing upon principles of emotional maturity and self-leadership (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova *et al.*, 2016). The importance of understanding self as a coach, including the implications for personal and professional identity and the values carried as a practitioner, is vital, particularly in an unregulated profession that relies upon personal integrity and supports '*reflexive agency in others*' (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017, p.98).

A further gap emerges between the value of, and encouragement and motivation to, embrace a reflexive mindset as a coach practitioner and the challenge of bringing such ambition into reality (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015). Reflexivity is proposed and defined, but not necessarily understood in the coaching profession. The arguments for embracing reflexivity in the interests of personal and professional growth and ethical competent coaching practice appear insufficient to bring about behavioural

change or to manage the challenge of personal evolution from reflection to reflexivity (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2015). A first step on the journey might be an appreciation of the terminology with respect to reflexivity and its implications for the mindset, development and practice of the coach practitioner (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Such considerations offer opportunities for coach practitioners, coach supervisors, professional associations, coach and supervisor training providers.

When seeking to impact and improve coaching disciplines and practice, it appears vital to embrace considerations of relevance and prioritisation in terms of professional coaching practice, and individual maturation in support of ethical coaching practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Knowles, 1988). Such an approach may afford a broader and deeper appreciation of the deeper complexity and challenge(s) of being a coach whilst facilitating intention and choice in terms of professional and personal development and growth (Cox *et al.*, 2014). Facilitation of personal deliberation as to the what, how and why, focuses upon proactive ownership of one's personal development agenda, with accountability for its application residing with the individual, which carries potential implications for identity and personal narrative as a reflexive coach practitioner.

'Beyond Personal Narrative' by means of personal poetry as a reflexive craft

As an ongoing process of discovery and growth, reflexivity demonstrates a commitment to exploring and learning about one's self, one's influence and the influence of others upon self. Reflexivity draws upon personal experience and insight, which emerge from one's relations and interactions with and through others (Cunliffe, 2004). Often viewed as a dialectical process to be undertaken in

'Beyond Personal Narrative' Word Cloud
Diagram 8.4



conjunction with a supervisor, Diagram 8.4 reflects the essential elements of the experience to emerge from my research as reflected in the 'Reflexivity, Poetry and

Growth' theme in Chapter 7. Embracing reflexivity as part of one's ontology and way of being affords ongoing opportunity for growth, resulting in supervision conversations that will potentially start further along the road, and be richer and more rewarding (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). The essential elements of the experience of my researchers are presented in Diagram 8.4. Personal responsibility and accountability for such practice resides with the individual coach, with implications for professional, ethical and competent practice (Bachkirova, 2016). The creation of poetry emerges as a creative practice which facilitates a smooth transition between reflecting upon an experience and reflexively engaging with an experience. Such an approach may support personal challenges of engaging with reflexivity whilst facilitating wider and deeper self-awareness, and bringing forth alternative perspectives, insight, choice and learning for the individual (Grisoni, 2017).

Reflexive considerations of my research question and analysis of my research data brought forth two additional considerations. When 'development' is considered as a potential outcome of the use of poetry as an instrument in support of reflection, attention might be paid to the enrichment of skills, whether of the coach or the coachee. However, my research interest attends to the 'creation of poetry' as an enabler of reflexive practice, which directs attention towards 'growth' or breadth and depth of the whole person, drawing upon personal experience and enabling a platform for discussion, debate, collaboration and fresh insight for all parties (Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015). Such an approach is likely to be systemic, occasionally uncomfortable, focused upon improvement and growth, with ongoing questions regarding impact and influence. Such thinking is endorsed by the experience and contribution of one of my CRs and my HSSI research. Notably, when extending the term beyond poetry to creative expression, support for the concept garners greater momentum and a pathway emerges for those who are interested. Opportunities for additional research might consider the relationship between learning styles and reflexivity. There is considerable literature about the concept of reflexivity within the healthcare and academic sectors and amongst researchers but in the coaching practitioner context, it is sparse.

The research also highlighted an (unconscious) assumption within my research question, suggested by the limited engagement of my CRs in the poetic writing task and in the work of Kegan (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009), which sustains existing patterns of behaviour and presented as some form of resistance or antidote to change or

development. The challenge of bridging the space between motivation and application, even when motivation is apparently high, requires consideration as part of the process of engagement. Developing an appreciation as to the current stage of individual development will help to bridge the gap between motivation and application, which can be underpinned with unknown behavioural patterns that seek to limit growth whilst reinforcing current norms (Bachkirova & Kegan, 2009).

Materials were provided at the first interview to support experimentation and manage any unconscious, perceived risk regarding the poetic writing task, but this proved to be less than required. Whilst a poetic workshop was offered to all, CR take-up rendered it unviable. My intuitive observation is that without a clear appreciation of the concept of reflexivity, engagement with an innovative approach such as writing poetry to engage with reflexivity may be a step too far without direct support to bridge the experience-gap (Palmer & Iordanou, 2015). Such support may be vital in managing the individual's 'inner judge and jury'. In Passmore (2011), Davidson and Schwarz highlight the challenge of self-compassion and the necessity of extending compassion to others, embracing innovative arts-based approaches. For those who engaged in writing poetry or creative writing, the experience brought forth mixed reviews, which serves to highlight the importance of the individual finding the 'right' creative medium for self. Those who were comfortable with their preferred choice found great benefit, whereas for someone who had never written poetry before, the experience proved challenging.

'The Craft of Becoming' as a quest of self-coaching and self-leadership

Within coaching, an ambition to help others may cause a coach to underestimate the demands upon self, emotionally and intellectually. Iordanou *et al.* (2017) and Bachkirova (2016) highlight the importance of self-development and self-care, whilst my research brings forth a distinction between self-management and self-leadership in coaching. If a coach is accountable for self-leadership, then reliance on external third parties such as supervisors/training/therapy may not be enough.

My research study does not privilege one over the other, but as demonstrated in Diagram 8.5, highlights the essence of the elements a coach might embrace to survive, develop and grow as a coach practitioner and as a human being. This word cloud emerges from the final description of the 'Self-Coaching and Self-Leadership' theme in Chapter 7.

'Craft of Becoming' Word Cloud

Diagram 8.5



My research suggests that self-management, with its emphasis upon competencies and professional standards, may be an important plan for survival; however, self-leadership is an ongoing quest for personal growth through capability enhancement, personal care, and expansion. Professional coaching practice reflects the alignment of professional conduct, standards and values, which are in turn congruous with identity and narrative (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). Such congruity is an outcome of disciplined, ongoing investment in self-leadership and self-coaching, implying an awareness and curiosity about self and others whilst embracing and engaging with the emotional highs and lows associated with growth (Canhu *et al.*, 2015). With an understanding that perfection is unachievable, the aspiration for personal and professional congruity, development and growth is demanding, unremitting and reflects the highest levels of intent (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017). As a means of sense-making and revelation of self to self, poetry can support professional coach development through the interweaving of skills development (*techne*), episteme (*knowledge of the field*) and into a mature level of practical wisdom (*phronesis*) (Bachkirova, Spence & Drake, 2016). Poetry facilitates the navigation of the complexities of life by embracing the plurality of what it is to be human and a professional coach in the twenty first century (Canhu *et al.*, 2015, Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1992).

My research suggests that such considerations differentiate between self-management and self-leadership, with self-leadership encompassing self-nurturing and self-nourishment with the aim of ongoing expansion and learning. It appears that self-management may offer a short-term coping mechanism, but self-leadership

affords long-term growth and development, based upon self-understanding, recovery and investment in reflexive practice (Cunha *et al.*, 2015). Self-leadership, rooted in a quest for balance across apparently competing dimensions such as mind and body, self and others, work and play, the new and the familiar, reflects a commitment to learning and in coaching, congruity (Cunha *et al.*, 2015). It appears that at the core of self-leadership lies courage, curiosity and compassion for self.

8.2 Contribution to Methodology

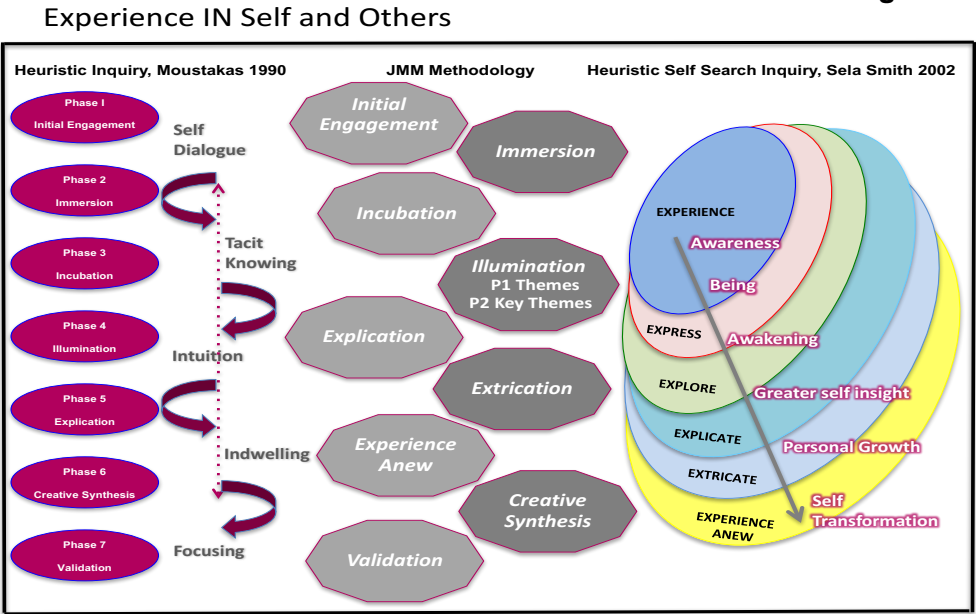
HI was the primary methodology throughout this research study, expanded and enriched with HSSI. Such expansion seeks to address a criticism levelled at HI with respect to the nature and degree of personal transformation available to the researcher arising from a tension in roles throughout the HI process (Ozertugrul, 2015). HI and HSSI are relatively new methods of research and a literature search offered no examples which engaged both methodologies in such a complementary manner. The goal of HI is to rationalise and explain the meaning of a specific personal experience or concept, to enhance understanding and supporting authenticity. HSSI embraces an experiential, reflexive approach, drawing upon feelings associated with lived and real-time researcher experience in search of personal transformation (Sela-Smith, 2002). Embracing HI and HSSI supported an enriched intellectual and sensory appreciation of the role of poetry in supporting engagement in the development of professional coaching practice and enabled personal transformation for myself as participant.

HI and HSSI are complementary processes: dynamic, recursive and mutually supportive. In Diagram 8.6, the typical process for each methodology, each of which attends to experience, whether in others (HI) or self (HSSI) is presented, with the central methodology indicating the process used in this research. In the central model, Moustakas's (1990) traditional HI approach was enriched in two stages by HSSI, with a view to expanding its rigour and integrity.

Expansion of 'Illumination' (Phase 4) allowed for the transparency and congruity of my own thinking as researcher as I explored my CRs' data to develop themes and subsequently, key themes. Inclusion of 'Extrication' (Phase 6) from HSSI in HI enabled me to use the four lenses that emerged during the HSSI work to deepen understanding of my CRs' data. This in turn facilitated additional insights to be considered. Congruity

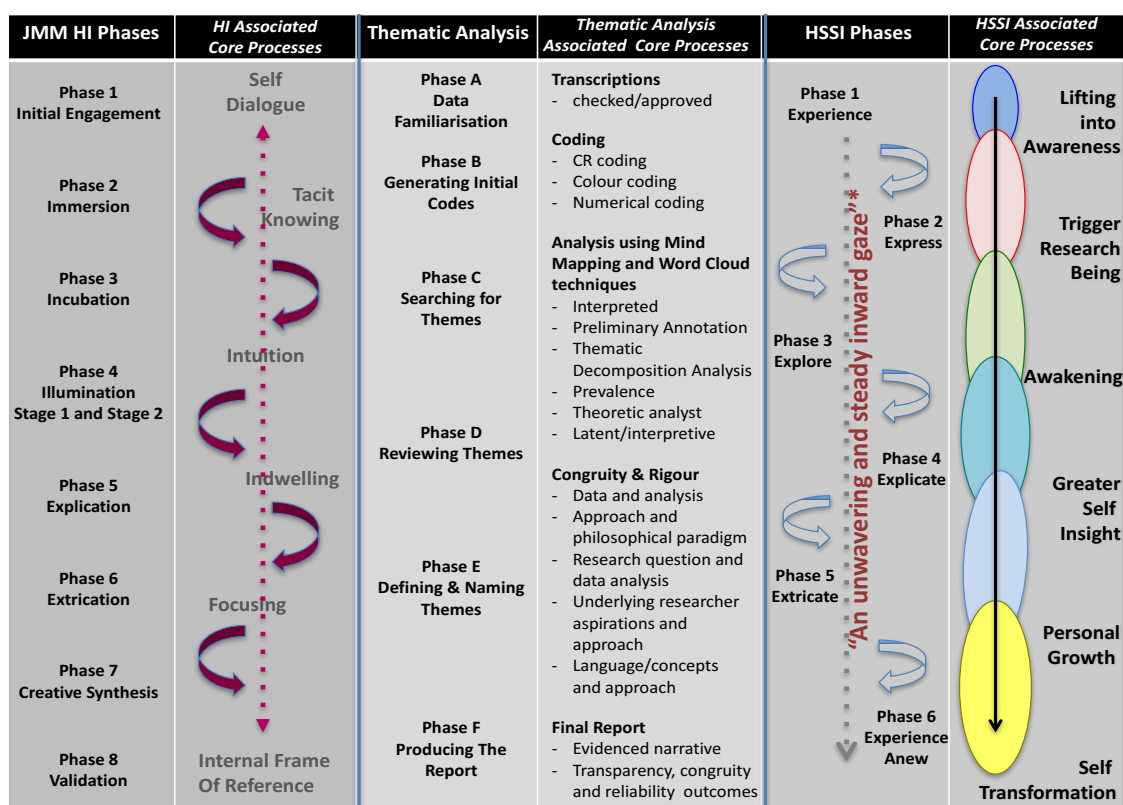
and rigour were my aim in embracing such complementary methodologies and this extended to data analysis of my HI/CR data and my HSSI material.

Diagram 8.6



At various points in the research, data has been managed and analysed with mind mapping and word cloud techniques, as shown in Diagram 8.7. These approaches, supported with notes, have aided data interpretation, revelation, integration and prioritisation, and reflect the creative and innovative aspects of my being that embrace poetry, colour, reflexivity and application. I have also expressed my own professional persona as a consultant in my use and application of tables, slides and graphics, realising that these are a vital part of my personal being.

Research Analysis (Process & Content) by Methodology Diagram 8.7



Working with HI and HSSI as separate processes reflects an effort to balance the duality of ‘I-Researcher’ and ‘I-Participant’ with integrity and responsibility (Ozertugrul, 2015). Embracing HI and HSSI as collaborative processes has revealed much to me as a coach, as a reflexive researcher and as a human being. I find myself more appreciative, compassionate and forgiving of personal vulnerabilities (Cunha *et al.*, 2015). There is no conclusion to learning or self-leadership, however, my sense is that my HI and HSSI work is for me, seminal. Cunha *et al.* (2015) talk about self-leadership as an ongoing effort to balance life’s dualities; accepting the polarities and associated tensions as part of what it means to be human, rather than seeking to reconcile what might appear to be polarised sentiments.

8.3 Contribution to the Professional Practice of Coaching

My research afforded me the opportunity to investigate potential relationships within and between poetry and reflexivity; reflection and reflexivity; development, learning and growth, all within the context of coaching, with its focus upon learning and change (Cox *et al.*, 2014).

Whilst the number of CRs who enthusiastically embraced poetry is small, the benefits for my CRs and myself were valuable and suggest that poetry has much to offer the reflexive coach practitioner. Those who actively engaged in creative writing rather than poetry perceived value. However, through the research study, two key assumptions emerged that are relevant for the wider coaching community. The first assumption attends to individual accountability for ongoing development and growth, which lies at the heart of the professional coach practitioner's practice. The second assumption, inherent within the first, is that reflexivity is a concept widely appreciated within the coaching community. The coaching literature and the professional coaching associations appear to endorse these assumptions, which my research indicates may be a little idealistic (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015).

The literature appears to reflect a discrepancy between the perspectives of academics, professional associations and practitioners as to what is meant by 'reflexivity' within coaching and how it might contribute to coach development and improvements in professional standards (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015). My CRs offered data as to the distinction between reflection with its attention to competences and skills development and reflexivity with its focus upon capability and growth. Such differentiation of coach identity, alongside the narrative, development and investment required, is vital for the coaching profession, and professional standards (Bachkirova, 2016). To focus upon the associated development of coaching skills, competencies and capabilities necessitates differentiated approaches. Irrespective of the level of investment in the development of coaching capability, the associated narrative and identity of the individual coach must support self-leadership, including a principle whereby the coach is practising upon self the principles of development, learning and change (Cunha *et al.*, 2015; Cox *et al.*, 2014). Effectively, coaches need to practice self-coaching as a reflexive process. Everything a coach does must focus upon addressing considerations of ethical coaching practice in support of the craft of becoming, whether coach or coachee (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Bachkirova, 2016).

8.4 Limitations of the Research

HI and HSSI are highly demanding research processes in terms of time and intensity. Each methodology is presented as linear but the iterative, dynamic nature of each process is challenging and unpredictable, and not necessarily suitable for those seeking a more stable and managed methodology.

8.5 Potential Areas for further Research

There are several areas that emerge from my research, which offer further opportunity. One area which would benefit research is reflexivity as a triple-loop learning process and the potential of such insight for the training and development of coaches and supervisors. Triple-loop learning, with its potential deep-dive and recursive examination of self, the influence of others upon self and praxis, offers a disciplined structure for the reflexive process whilst bringing forth opportunities for personal change and growth.

The relationship between learning styles and reflexivity may also merit further investigation in support of facilitating engagement and learning. Exploration of alternative arts-based methods in support of reflexivity may also be worthwhile.

8.6 Conclusion

My research confirms that, whilst poetry is not for everyone, for those who choose to embrace poetry, it is a useful reflective enabler, whether writing lyrical poetry or drawing upon that of others, for sensemaking and learning (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010). My research also reveals that the creation of poetry as a preferred medium of creative expression offers support for reflexive engagement, facilitating sensemaking, access to the subconscious and learning as it can act as a useful receptacle for emotional release, objectification and perspective (Grisoni, 2017; Morgan, 2010; Whyte, 1994). Writing poetry offers space, time and distance to facilitate perspective, deeper consideration of personal values and beliefs, the influence of self and others in both real time and retrospectively and choice and opportunity for proactive learning and growth (Grisoni, 2017; Cunha *et al.*, 2015).

In a helping profession like coaching, coaches have a responsibility for self-leadership in support of professional practice (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Cunha *et al.*, 2015). Self-leadership attends to balancing multiple dualities, including physical and emotional wellbeing, alongside an ongoing commitment to continuing personal and professional development. Attendance to professional and personal identity affords an opportunity to consider alignment and congruity of personal narrative, but also requires the coach to hold self to account for investment in self and for role modelling the behaviours and practice being proposed to coachees. This is likely to require a coach to step out of familiar areas to explore potential in the unknown. The virtues of a coach embracing a reflexive approach support of ethical competent practice and poetry offer unique

value in enhancing personal awareness, insight and learning (Iordanou *et al.*, 2017; Grisoni, 2017). However, reflexivity and poetry can also bring challenges as each demands the author to face into aspects of self that can be difficult and uncomfortable. As a coach, such challenges form part of the coach's developmental journey on the craft of becoming ... it appears that embracing poetry can support self-leadership and navigation of life's rapids in a quest for wellbeing and growth.



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Appendices

Appendix A – Participant Engagement Materials

Appendix B – Poetry Workshop Invitation

Appendix C – Interview Structure PI and PII

Appendix D – Interview Support Materials

Appendix E - List of Poetry Anthologies and Poems

Appendix F – Experience Anew

Appendix A - Participant Engagement Materials

- 1. Recruitment Invitation to Executive Coaches**
- 2. Twitter Invitation to Executive Coaches**
- 3. Invitation to Organisations**
- 4. Interview Consent Form**
- 5. Participant Information Sheet**

Appendix A: A1 Recruitment Invitation to Executive Coaches

Invitation to Participate in Research

OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY

HELP REQUIRED

A professional doctorate is the aim
Poetry Practice & Profits is the name
Research stage here to be planned
Could anyone possibly lend a hand?

Reflexive practice and poetry
Are they partners in harmony
In your world as an executive coach
Supporting your development approach?

How does poetry deliver a result
Help you with yourself to consult
To reflexively engage with your own practice
Using poetry to ensure there is no malpractice.

Two interviews each of 90 minutes
A 3 hour workshop if it suits
9 short months, starting Jan 2016
Participation from business coaches keen.

Would you be interested to take part?
To offer insight into your creative art?
Just drop me an email saying yes or no
Info will be sent to make the process flow.

Jacqueline M McCartney
Doctoral Student Faculty of Business
Oxford Brookes University
E: jacki.mccartney@syat.com

Appendix A: A2 Twitter Invitation to Executives Coaches

Twitter Ad

[#Doctorate](#) research study
Poetry, practice, profits-best buddies?
More info required 4 u to decide?
Revert to me using this device.

Appendix A: A3 Invitation to Organisations



Date: 28th January 2016

VP Coaching
Talent, Leadership & Organisation Development

Dear

I would like to invite your organisation to take part in a coaching related research project, which is being conducted as part of a doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring. I am particularly interested to engage with any Executive Coaches within your organisation who might benefit from taking part in a study that focuses upon how the creation of poetry supports reflexive self coaching practice to a deeper level of awareness, insight, learning and growth.

The study concerns how the writing of poetry facilitates reflexivity in support of ethical and competent coaching practice. I am looking for volunteers to take part in a nine-month study, which will involve two interview sessions and a voluntary 3 hour group workshop to explore poetry as part of the development of professional coaching practice, specifically within the world of business

The details of the research are given in the Participant Information Sheet attached. I am of course more than happy to discuss this in more detail; my contact information is given below.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline M McCartney
Doctoral Student Faculty of Business
Oxford Brookes University
E: jacki.mccartney@syat.com

Appendix A: A4 Interview Consent Form

Interview Consent Form		OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY
One copy of this completed form will be given to the participating interviewee and the other will be retained by the interviewer		
Study: "How does poetry deliver results for reflexive coaching practice"		
Researcher: Jacki McCartney, School of Business and Law		
I have had an opportunity to read the Participant Information Sheet, to ask any questions related to this study and to receive satisfactory answers and any additional details I wanted. It is my understanding that this project had been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Research Ethics Review Board at Oxford Brookes University.		
(To be completed by participating interviewees)		
I agree to take part in the above study and am willing to (please tick those with which you agree)		
Be Interviewed	☐	
Have notes taken during the interview	☐	
Have my interview audio recorded	☐	
Take part in a voluntary workshop	☐	
Take part in a voluntary poetic writing journal	☐	
I understand that my information and associated data will be anonymous and will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations.) All data will be kept securely and used anonymously.		
I agree to the data being used:- (please tick those with which you agree)		
In the production of a written dissertation	☐	
In the production of articles submitted for publication	☐	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.		
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Interviewer	Date	Signature
International Centre for Coaching and Mentoring Studies, Wheatley Campus, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1HX		

Appendix A: A5 Participant Information Sheet



Date: 28th January 2016

Participant Information Sheet: Coaches

Study title: "The role of poetry and reflexivity in coaching"

I would like to invite you to take part in the research study and this Participant Information sheet explains why this research is being undertaken, what being a participant will involve and how the data emerging from the research will be managed. Please take some time to read the following information carefully and feel free to contact me if you require any further information.

Background to Research Study

The aim of this study is to explore the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. The study will focus upon how writing poetry supports coaching practice through the key capabilities of reflexivity and criticality ie self awareness, insight and personal growth. The findings from this research will aim to inform future research and practice within the coaching profession. An exploration will be undertaken to understand what current approaches to reflexivity, personal development and ethical and competent coaching practice coaches use. Such an exploration will include whether or not poetry has been used and how this informs individual reflexive practice, learning and personal growth.

The research model I am using is a qualitative one and it is from this perspective that I will be drawing upon descriptions of your experience in terms of reflexive practice - how you approach it; whether you use poetry or not; your interest to embrace the writing of poetry as a means of reflecting/reflexing upon a recent coaching experience; how this impacts upon your personal awareness, insight, development and practice.

It would be helpful if we could discuss your coaching experience and background at our first interview in order to establish a basis for our conversation. This will not form part of the data collection process but will anonymously inform a contextual background for the study.

Approach to Research/Data Collection

You are one of a small group of eight coach practitioners who have been invited to take part in this process. In accordance with the coaching profession's Codes of Ethics, it is professional practice to disclose any areas of possible conflict of interest and this will be discussed with each coach as part of the process.

Taking part in this research study will afford you the opportunity to review your experiences of self coaching, self leadership and your development as a coach through supportive face to face semi structured interviews, whilst potentially embracing some reflective learning and participating in research that is focused upon enhancing the coaching profession. Exploring challenging or sensitive experiences can raise anxiety and I will be alert to this throughout the process. Under no circumstances will you be put under any pressure to reveal details of any experiences that might distress you in any way. Should any aspects become problematic for you, I will ensure that appropriate support is made available (eg coach or counsellor) to you.

If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and you will be required to sign a formal consent form before we commence our first interview. Please note that if you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

The duration of the research will be approximately January through to September 2016. We will meet at a mutually convenient location, taking account of confidentiality, for approximately 90 minutes on at least two occasions ie 3 hours in the 9 month period above. In addition there will be an opportunity for participants in the research process to engage with a poetic writing process which will comprise a voluntary 3 hour workshop to be held at the offices of GSK in Brentwood, Middlesex on 4th April (2pm – 5pm) followed by an invitation to use poetry over a three month period in order to explore the impact of this experience on your personal development and coaching practice. With your permission, I will audio record both of our interview discussions. The audio recordings will be transcribed and shared with you for accuracy and review. If there is anything you wish to be deleted from the transcript, this will be actioned and excluded from the data.

Appendix B: Poetry Workshop Invitation

Date:-

Time:-

Location:- Oxford Brookes University,
Wheatley Campus, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1HX

Background:-

My DCaM research is exploring the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice, specifically within the world of business. Deep reflexive learning is a professional coaching competence/capability endorsed by key researchers such as Moon, 2006; Hawkins & Smith, 2006; Bachkirova & Lawton Smith, 2015. Reflexivity moves beyond reflection to consider the influence and interplay of the individual's deeper, underlying values, assumptions and beliefs (Argyris & Schon, 1974) upon perceptions of an experience. My study is considering whether as an alternative narrative form, poetry can avoid the potential pitfall of reflexivity becoming nothing more than mere technique.

Attendees:-

Executive coach practitioners, who are interested in exploring their own experience through poetry in order to help develop and refine an approach to reflexivity in coaching through the use of poetry.

Workshop Objective:-

As part of wider research process, which includes two rounds of 1:1 semi structured interviews, this workshop will explore the creation of poetry and its possible benefits.

Agenda:-

15 minutes	Welcome and Introductions (including any current interest in poetry)
20 minutes (Plenary)	Turn on the Tap
30 minutes (Plenary)	Roll the Dice! Round 1
30 minutes (Plenary)	Collective Poem – “Reflexivity”
15 minutes	Coffee? Tea?
30 minutes (Pairs)	Roll the Dice! Round 2
30 minutes (Individual)	“Through the Mirror on the Wall”
10 minutes	Feedback and Close

Appendix C: Interview Structure P1 and PII

The Role of Poetry and Reflexivity in Coaching

Interview Structure (1st round)

1. Welcome and Introduction

Tell me a little about your work

What's your background?

**How would you describe your coaching practice? (style/approach/
volume/% of time)**

**Do you have supervision? Frequency? Nature of? Approach to
Devt?**

**2. How do you define 'reflexivity'? How do you embrace
'reflexivity'?**

3. How do you use poetry? Why? Is the focus for yourself/others?

Do you write/read other people's work? Frequency?

What benefits does it bring? Do you analyse your work?

**How does poetry support your reflexivity and criticality ie self
awareness/insight and personal growth?**

Appendix D: Interview Support Materials

- 1. Reflexivity and Poetry Overview**
- 2. Reflexive Log**
- 3. The Role of Poetry and Reflexivity in Coaching**

Appendix D: D1 Reflexivity and Poetry Overview

Reflexivity

“Reflexivity, like hypnotherapy, has various levels.
Some dabble near the surface,
dipping into reflexive moments, flirting with the images evoked in the
reflection, before
returning to the safety of the mundane.
Others attempt to confront the fear of the monster lurking in the abyss
by descending into the deeper realms of reflexivity. It is those who
confront the beast
who will truly know what is there, in the dark beyond . . .”
MacMillan (1996)

Have you ever had a moment where you think to yourself

“what just happened?”

If you take this into *reflection*, then you might review *“how did that happen?”*

If you dive a little deeper you might consider *“what on earth was I thinking?”*

A reflexive individual will move into

“where was my attention directed at that time? What are the mental, emotional and value structures which allowed me to lose attention and make that error?”

Reflexivity is about owning who I am and how I influence/impact a situation. It is engaging with my involvement; my impact, my assumptions and myself in relation to others.

When it comes to practising reflexivity, it might start as technique but with practice over time, it will become part of who you are and what you do. Taking responsibility for creating personal, social and organisational reality with a clear sense of self/identity/influence through everyday interactions and conversations. A reflexive person will pay attention to and expand personal awareness of his/her own un/conscious assumptions/actions/influences in order to generate different perspectives and interpretations. This will enable the testing of personal limitations, dilemmas, doubts, contradictions and possibilities in order to develop and grow. In practice, it's about exploring personal experience and questioning the story I tell myself.

Why bother?

Reflexivity is focused upon thoughtful personal growth; questioning what I notice and consider; what assumptions I make; how and why these things matters to me?

Reflexivity offers three key opportunities to consider

- who I am and what sort of person I want to be?
- how do I relate to others and to the world around me?
- what did I do and what part did I play in what happened? Why?

Reflexivity is about intense introspection in order to learn more about self and create choice for self – it's only naval gazing if the information is ignored!

How?

A diary; a journal; a formal log; a poem

Appendix D2: Reflexive Log

Date:	
Brief description of activity: (eg. objective, time, desired outcomes, session outline).	

Record below and overleaf, in whatever format works best for you (e.g. text, mind map, pictures etc), your *reflections* on the activity/experience and how you can apply them to inform and develop your practice. Your reflection should demonstrate an awareness of power relations and any diversity and ethical issues. These include: application of ethics and standards; contracting and setting appropriate boundaries; holding of role; active listening and effective questioning; use of language; challenging and supporting, as appropriate; planning and goal-setting; and progress and accountability.

Reflections: (eg. What went well? What might I want to do differently next time? What different questions might I have asked and why? What did I learn from this experience?)
How can I use this learning to improve my effectiveness?

Moving into a more reflexive space, revisit the above and consider what does your recount of events say about you?

Thoughts: (eg. What did you notice? Experience? Pay attention to? What assumptions are reflected in your recount? What is missed in your earlier reflections? How did you influence what took place? How did the experience impact upon you? How might someone else recount the experience? What differences are there? Why? What metaphors/ language did you use?)
What insights emerge here and how might you use them in the future?

March 2016

Appendix D3: The Role of Poetry and Reflexivity in Coaching

The Role of Poetry and Reflexivity in Coaching

The Participant Information Sheet refers to an invitation to use poetry over a three month period in order to explore the impact of this experience on your personal development and coaching practice.

As you know this study aims to explore the role of poetry in supporting engagement in reflexivity as part of the development of professional coaching practice. My specific focus is upon how writing poetry supports coaching practice through the key capabilities of reflexivity and criticality ie self awareness, insight and personal growth.

My interest here is quite specifically to explore

- the impact of writing poetry on you and your practice
- any insights which emerge as a result

Please note I am not interested in making any judgements or observations as to your poetic skills; I am interested in the impact which creating poetry has on you and your reflexive practice.

Appendix E – List of Poetry Anthologies and Poems

(1) Life Between Chapters Anthology - Volumes 1.1 – 1.3

1.1 Part One – Life Goes On (2013)

(1.1#13.01-#13-16)

Title of Poem	Number	Date	Total wk/series/volume
Chocolate Custard	#1/Week 1/CDML	January	
Shape	#2/ML	February	
Perfect Prefect	#3/CTML		
The Ally Pally	#4/Palladium		
Christy for SBP	#5		
Towards the End	#6/MSc	March	
Christy	#7/Rap	2 nd April	
Acknowledgement & Thanks	#8		
Back to Front	#9		
Endings & Beginnings	#10	2 nd April	
Happy 21 st Birthday	#11	29 May	
Sirona	#12	June	
PhD Jest?	#13	August	
Poetry and Business	#14		
To My Darling Boy	#15	December	
Peas and Carrots	#16		16/16
Verses = 80			Words = 2253

1.2 Part Two – Betwixt and Between

(1.2#13-1.1 - #13-26.6)

	Number	Date	Total wk/series/volume
The Power of Seven	#1/Week 1	5 th April	
Betrayal	#2		
Implosion	#3		
Headache	#4		
Implosion Plus	#5	9 th April	
Divided	#6		
One Week On	#7	12 th April	7/22
Class Will Out	#1/Week 2		
Information is Power	#2		
Caught in Other People's Shit	#3		
What do I know?	#4		4/11/26
Where's My Shepherd?	#1/Week 3	19 th April	
Snakes and Ladders	#2		
To Whom It May Concern	#3		3/14/29
Unintentional Victims	#1/Week 5	3 rd May	
The Future is Honest	#2		
The Regret of No Discipline	#3		
Chit Chat	#4		
The Power of Numbers	#5		5/19/34
As Is	#1/Week 7	17 th May	
As Is	#2		2/21/36
Angels	#1/Week 8	24 th May	1/22/37

What do I owe to me?	#1/Week 10	7 th June	
Hope Through Pastime	#2		
When It's All Too Easy	#3		3/40
Eleven Weeks On	#1/Week 11		1/41
Belonging	#1/Week 12	21 st June	
Shadows	#2		
When the Magic's Gone	#3		3/29/44
I doubt	#1/Week 15	12 th July	
Behind Closed Doors	#2		2/46
In Time and Space	#1/Week 16		
Into The Dark	#2		
Me or You	#3		3/49
Impromptu	#1/Week 17	26 th July	
19 Days	#2		2/51
Thursday?	#1/Week 18		1/52
The Jigsaw	#1/Week 19	9 th August	
2 nd Best	#2		2/39/54
What's Left?	#1/Week 22	30 th August	
Addiction	#2		#2/56
Humans	#1/Week 23		#1/42/57
Why?	#1/Week 25	20 th September	
Shadows	#2		
The Rock and The Sea	#3		#3/45/60
Torn and Bruised	#1 Week 26+	4 th October	
Soup for the Soul	#2		
Time	#3	1 st December	
On The Starters Grid	#4	February 2014	
What Have I learnt?	#5	March	
What Would I do if I weren't Afraid?	#6	March	#6/51/66
		Verses = 219	Words = 6331

1.3 Part Three – Life Goes On (2014)

(1.3#14-0.1- #14-0.7)

	Number	Date	Total wk/series/volume
Loose the Weight	#14-01		
2 Years 6 Lines 6 Words	#14-02		
Alone Again	#14-03	22 nd June	
Friendship	#14-04		
Friday, 18 th July	#14-05		
Finding My Space	#14-06		
Ready for the Next Season	#14-07	30 th Dec	#7/73
		Verses = 40	Words = 968

(2) Cancer Anthology (2014)**(2.0#14-2.1C- #14-2.10C)**

	Number	Date	Total wk/series/volume
Cancer	#1C	August	
Stress	#2C		
MRI	#3C		
Angst	#4C		
It's Theatre Dahling	#5C	September	
My Week	#6C		
Oncology	#7C	October	
Tears	#8C		
24 Hours	#9C		
Vulnerable	#10C	December	#10/83
Verses = 45			Words = 831

(3) Autumn Winds Anthology (2015)**(3.0#15-3.1- #15-3.18)**

	Number	Date	Total wk/series/volume
To My Mummy	#1	January	
Ontology Epistemology & Me	#2	February	
Conceptual Encounter	#3	March	
Silver Tears	#4	April	
Silent Grief	#5		
Empty Nester	#6		
Two Peas in A Pod	#7		
Jealousy	#8		
Adaptive facilitation	#9	August	
Literature review	#10		
Literature Review Chap 2	#11		
Reflecting the Poet	#12		
Tired of Being Strong	#13		
What's a Poem	#14		
Depression	#15		
LinkedIn Ad	#16	October	
Twitter Ad	#17	October	
Josie – Vielen Dank!	#18	December	#17/101
Verses = 75			Words = 164

Appendix F: Experience Anew - courtesy of Cunliffe & Coupland (2012) and Sela-Smith (2002)

Husband's voice	Factual recall	Cognitively	Emotionally	Physically	Intuitively
JMM - "Who're you texting? Let me see. Give me your phone."		"Trying to deal with 'oh shit'"	"Sheer Panic"	"Sick to stomach"	Fearful
I stood up on plane and gave you the phone. You just insisted "I want the phone."		Consciously I did not want major row in front of people on plane	Deep down fear		Fear of exposure Desire to hide
Can't remember getting off the plane or anything about arrivals other than "when I got though you'd gone."		Can I close this down as quickly as possible?			

JMM's voice in written notes (July 2013)	Cognitively	Emotionally	Physically	Intuitively
As the plane touched down and I smiled excitedly at my husband so I glanced down to the phone he held in his hand. My heart stopped dead. "Who are you texting? Martin, who are you writing to?" As he looked at me, his expression told me what I did not want to hear. I snatched the 'phone from his hand and asked again "who are you writing to?"	Written from 1 st person singular. Reading his facial expression gave me information.	The next few minutes are a blur but I remember a desperate urge to disappear; to get away from him.	"My breathing was shallow, my legs were like jelly, my head in complete chaos – I had to get away." What did his face say? Physical aggression	Questions indicate intuitive response to situation What did his face tell me?
As he looked at me so the words came slowly "I've been seeing someone."	Listening Follow up question reflects	Shock	Shock	
Requests ex husband for phone met with 'no'	Out of corner of left eye, aware of people in row behind watching us. Gathering up of possessions.	Voice – cold, specific, determined	"I was trapped in a tin can full of people with too many bags and holiday momentos, in a queue that moved slowly."	Fight/flight Phone tangible evidence of something

JMM's voice in Poetry (written on day) & Written Notes (3 months later)	Cognitively	Emotionally	Physically	Intuitively
Sets context – emotional and physical high as a couple Final stage of MSc process	Contextual setting Poem annotated Work with data	21 st & Inauguration emotional highlights as parents	"My head it hurts My heart more so"	Context impacting during distress
Metaphorically landed with a huge bump	New information	'implosion'	"into orbit hurled"	ML facial cues
(Desperate) urge to escape	Identifying own emotional state	Sense of being "trapped" Focus on separation	"running" Breathing shallow Legs like jelly Head in chaos Voice – cold, specific, determined	Fight/flight Phone = hard evidence of something
Christy telcall Feedback ex this situation re mental state	Hot drink as antidote Buy time Text to ML phone which I have (so not!)	Self nurturing/caring Attention to Christy Anger //	Dynamic shift Internal to external dialogue/self to child Text sent	Prioritisation
Both are retrospective presentations of experience "artificially separated in retrospective sensemaking" (p.26)	Questions not answers Practicalities eg cats Future eg Cam	Fear (projected onto my sons' wellbeing)	Cold < 30 mins sleep Headache	Protective instinct
Identity – Husband/wife; Father/mother Central characters/audience (passengers) Controller/controlled Drama triangle (victim/persecutor/rescuer) Travellers (life/fight) Passengers (flight) Limitations – volume of data/rationality & objectivity assumed possible	(p.22) "the imagined audience" with "their spoken and unspoken criticisms" (p.26) "narrative identity incl rationality > Closure	"our marriage a void into which I stare"	"I snatched	NB Intuitive (verbal/facial) focus to weave "sensible" story ie return to homeostasis by all parties

Summary of Tables

Chapter	Table Heading	Reference No
2	A comparison of the use of creative writing	2.2
	Difference through the Lenses of Shared Characteristics	2.3
	Ladder of Reflexivity	2.4
	Summary of reflexivity and its potential considerations for coaching	2.5
	How might Poetry support Reflexive Practice?	2.6
	Identity, Narrative & Craft	2.7
3	An Overview of the Philosophical Terrain	3.2
	A comparison of HI/HSSI/Autoethnography	3.4
	Detailed co-researcher engagement process	3.6
	Reflexive Practitioner Approach	3.10
	Data Sources	3.12
	HI Analysis	3.13
4	My Co-Researchers	4.3
	Consideration of Relationships between Form, Mood & Identity	4.6
	A sample consideration of one anthology - Cancer	4.8
	Theme Alignment	4.9
5	The Power of Poetry and Reflexivity	5.4
7	The Key Lenses of (a) Self-Deception (b) Basic Emotions (c) Adult Development (d) Self-Doubt	7.2
	Considering 'The Coach as an Individual' through the four lenses	7.4
	Considering 'Reflexivity, Poetry & Growth' through the four lenses	7.5
	Considering 'Self-Coaching and Self-Leadership' through the four lenses	7.6
8	Creative Synthesis	8.2

Summary of Diagrams

Chapter	Diagram Heading	Reference No
2	An overview of Chapter 2	2.1
3	Philosophical Alignment	3.1
	Methodology: Autoethnography	3.3
	Methodology: Heuristic Inquiry	3.5
	Methodology: Heuristic Self Search Inquiry	3.7
	HSSI detail	3.8
	Moving Beyond Reflection into Reflexivity	3.9
	JMM Approach to Methods and Analysis	3.11
	Mind Map example	3.14
	Approach to Data Analysis of CR Interviews	3.15
	An example of HSSI analysis (Phases 1-4)	3.16
	Integrating HI & HSSI processes & themes	3.17
4	An overview of Chapter 4	4.1
	Mind Map H	4.2
	Poetic Writing Task Engagement	4.4
	Rationale for CR Approach to Poetic Writing Task	4.5
	An overview of The Individual as a Coach (Key Theme #1)	4.7
	Considering Fear & Growth together	4.10
5	An overview of Chapter 5	5.1
	An overview of Poetry as an Enabler of Growth (Key Theme #2)	5.2
	Mapping different perspectives on learning	5.3
	The Path of Healing	5.5
6	An overview of Chapter 6	6.1
	An overview of the Key Themes (#1 and #2)	6.2
7	An overview of Chapter 7	7.1
	Plotting the Emotions in my Poetry on Plutchik's Circumplex (2001)	7.3
	Comparing the revelations between Poetry and Narrative	7.7
	The Power of Seven Word Cloud	7.8
	The Path of Healing	7.10
8	An overview of Chapter 8	8.1
	Identity as a Reflexive Coach Practitioner Word Cloud	8.3
	Beyond Personal Narrative Word Cloud	8.4
	Craft of Becoming Word Cloud	8.5
	Experience IN Self and Others	8.6

	Research Analysis (Process & Content) by Methodology	8.7
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