

AN EXPLORATION OF 'VALUE' IN THE LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® (LSP) METHOD



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BACKGROUND

Occupational Therapist working with children & young adults in the UK

Interest in developing health services → MBA - University of Bath

Desire for dissertation to encompass my knowledge of play & skill development alongside strategic thinking & business development

= LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®

CONFIRMING THE RESEARCH TITLE



On-going research is required to *'show that LSP can produce richer information than other current techniques'* (McCusker, 2014).

It can enhance creativity; focus ideas; and provide safe spaces to enrich communication and deal with complexity in business (Schulz et al., 2015, Holliday et al., 2007).

An important aspect of strategic thinking tools is the outcome that they can provide.

How can we substantiate these outcomes and remarks?

HOW DOES LSP BRING ABOUT CHANGE?

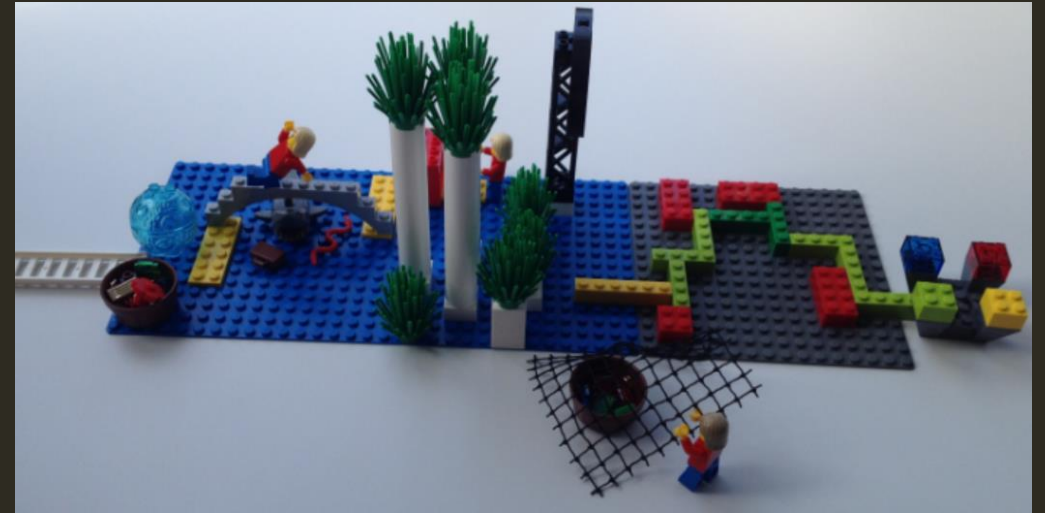
How could you show that *‘people had more awareness’*; that *‘they enhanced their communication’* and that by using LSP *‘they were better off as an organisation’*?

The challenge of learning and development is that often results are not always obvious and measurable, especially in the short-term.

Is there a way of being able to understand the elements of LSP that bring about change?

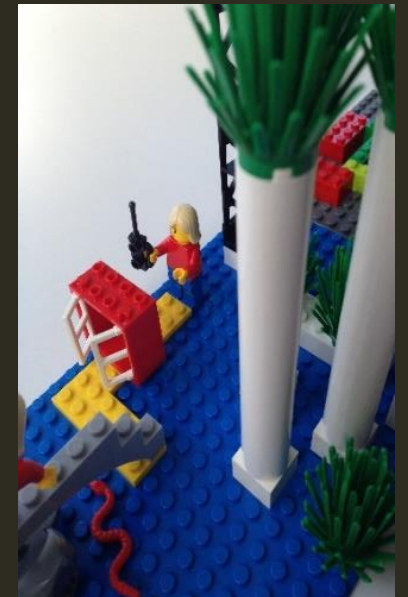
= What are the values and changes elicited from LSP?

LSP FACILITATOR COURSE KARLSRUHE, MAY 2017



'I found a sense of security and direction coming from my hands. I built the model in eight minutes not thinking I knew the answer of where I was going with my research. When I began to talk about what I had built and write down the language I had used and metaphors I had voiced, I realised I knew where I needed to go. It felt like my hands knew where I was going long before my head'.

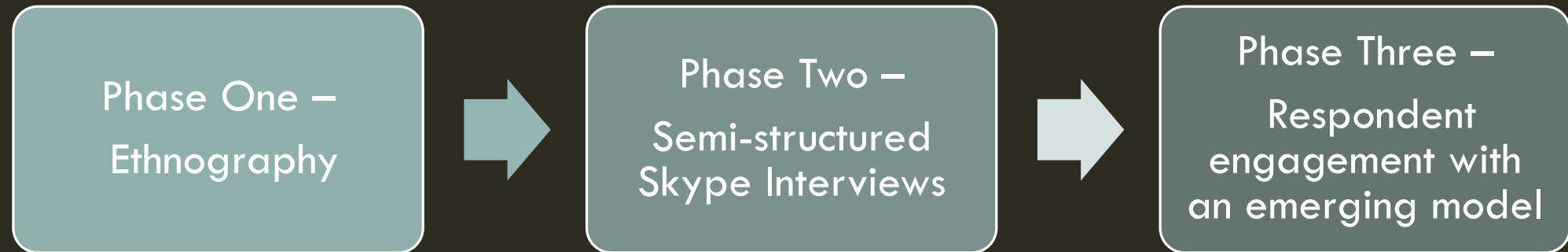
Phrases and metaphors included: *'capturing value', 'extracting the elements', 'not being able to see the wood for the trees'* and hence not yet knowing the values yet to extract, *'needing to check in with others'* to ratify my thoughts and findings.



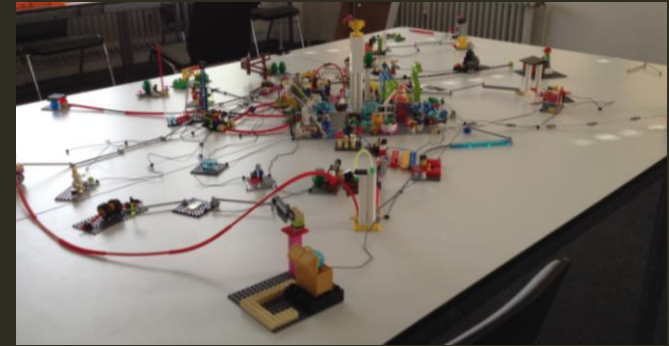
RESEARCH AIMS

-  To theorise and reflect on my experience of participating in a LSP facilitation course
-  To identify key elements and capture what constitutes 'value' within the LSP method
-  To confirm or refute these 'values' with experts and other LSP facilitators in the field
-  To review and consider evaluation of the LSP method
-  To examine the potential practicalities; possible benefits and limitations of evaluating LSP

MULTI-METHOD QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY IN THREE PHASES



ETHNOGRAPHY — PHASE ONE



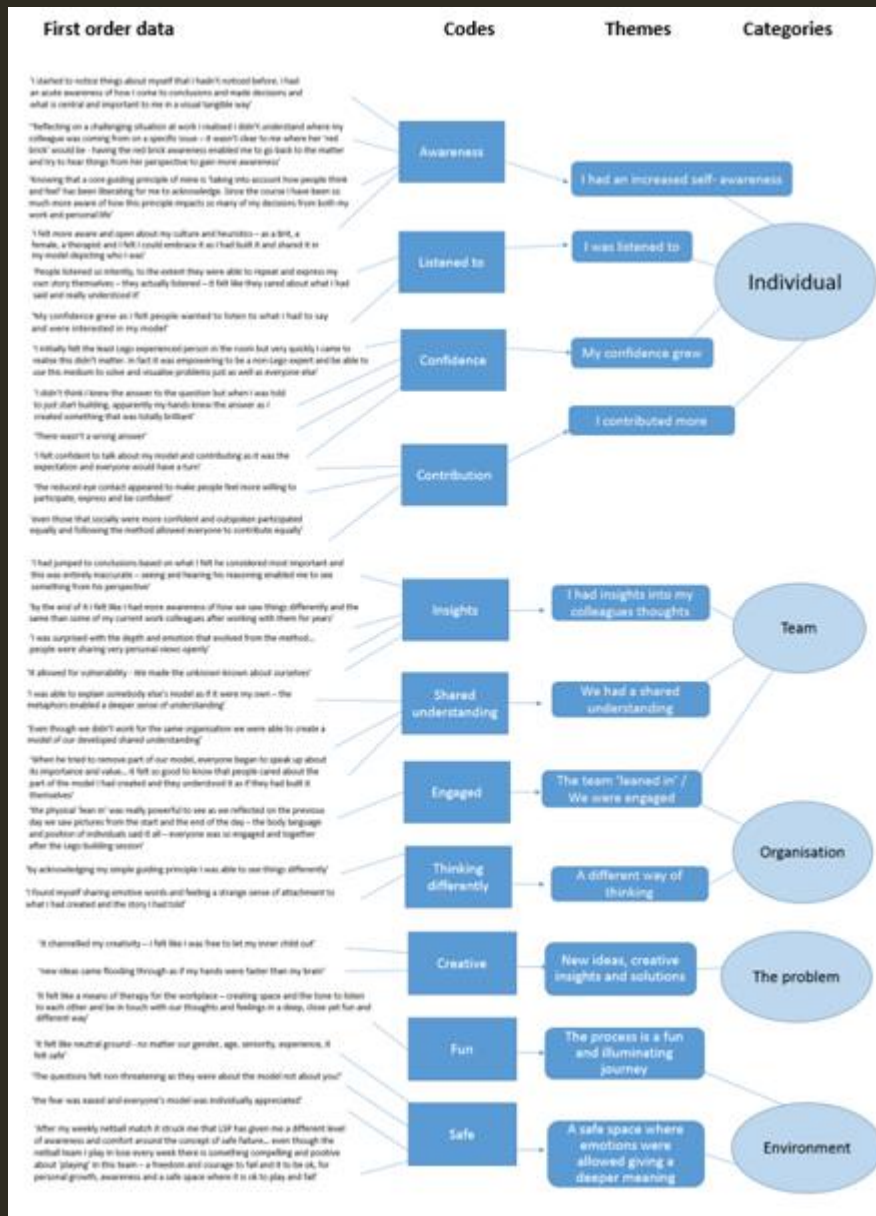
Ethnography literally means ‘a written account of a people or ethnic group’. Interpretive ethnography places its emphasis on subjective impressions rather than on objectivity (Saunders et al., 2016).

Researchers immerse themselves into a culture or specific location in order to practically experience a situation and gain insight (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).



= Attended LEGO ® SERIOUS PLAY ® Facilitation Training

I CREATED CODES AND LANDSCAPED THEMES INTO CATEGORIES



New ideas creative insights and solutions

A different perspective and way of thinking

We were engaged

Safe space = emotions allowed

We had a shared understanding

I had insights into my colleagues thoughts

The process was a fun and illuminating journey

The team leaned in

I contributed more

I had an increased self-awareness

I felt listened to

My confidence grew

12 CORE VALUES

- I felt listened to
- My confidence grew
- I contributed more
- I had an increased self-awareness
- I had insights into my colleagues thoughts
- We had a shared understanding
- The team leaned in
- A different way of thinking
- We were engaged
- New ideas, creative insights and solutions
- A safe space where emotions were allowed giving a deeper meaning
- The process is a fun and illuminating journey

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK CAPTURING THE VALUE IN LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®

The problem in question

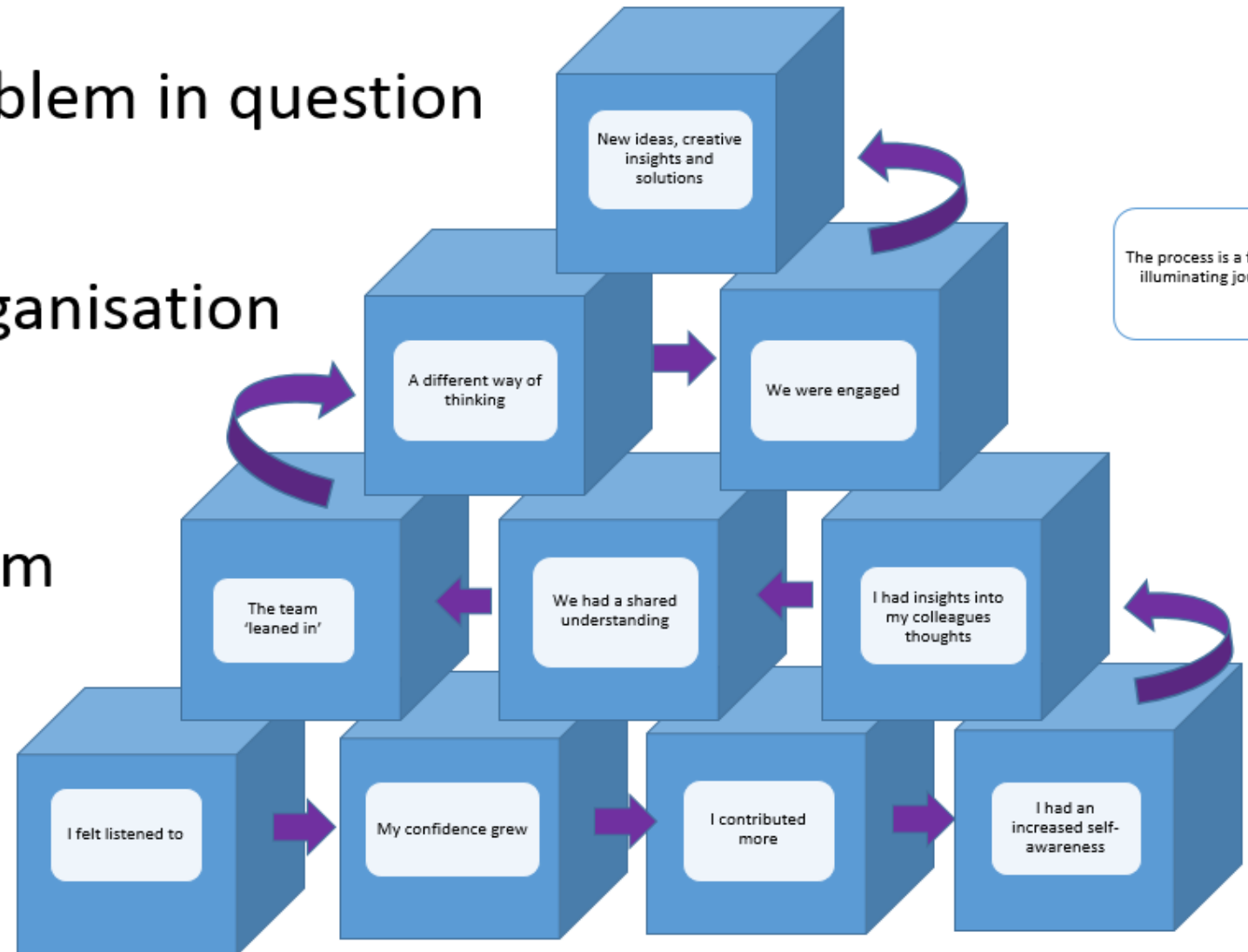
Organisation

Team

Individual

A safe space where emotions were allowed giving a deeper meaning

The process is a fun and illuminating journey



INTERVIEWS — PHASE TWO



- 6 Skype interviews with various LSP facilitators
- 7 questions around the topic of values in LSP and the evaluation of the method
- Interviews transcribed and codes identified as I highlighted repeated notions and aspects that appeared striking
- From these codes themes were derived

RESPONSES WERE ANALYSED AND FORMED CODES → THEMES → CATEGORIES

First order data	Code	Category	Theme
Speed and efficiency Do good work in a fairly focussed and intense way Maintains motivation provides that corridor of challenge, keeps momentum and discovery A stronger proposition of having an outcome Time limit is valuable as the things that first come into people's minds are expressed	Time	Process level	Efficient and focussed process
Unique opportunity to see something in real terms - helps to see that in a practical way, Very visual, easier to remember, the power of stories Enables people to use different abilities - some more visual, some are more auditory, memorable, personal and insightful stories It's a holistic multi-sensory approach The right level of challenge - individuals feel engaged and it dissipates anxiety or boredom	Practical method		Multi-sensory approach
You are talking to the model, it's not personal - helps you to look and deal with something in a safe way that could be a very emotional response Unanimously they said they were having conversations they had never had before That negotiation of can I live with this? It is a really healthy way of looking at conflict Gives everybody a language to express themselves Thinking, communication and problem solving process Puts you into an exploratory mind-set - more valuable if you are trying to create specific outcomes as people are less resistant, they feel less threatened and are more likely to take risks	Model helps communication	Individual level	Model and method gives a new way of communicating / a new language
A safe space for negotiation enables a process of letting go, being more open	Safe environment		A safe space
Immediately people are seeing ways it can be used and how it is helpful even after only have a short experience It ignites possibility It is fun and creative - develops something interesting and something new The mode of using play is valuable - it is exploratory and positive	Play being valuable		It ignites possibility through positive exploration
Applicable across all cultures and all organisations. Involving everyone giving it a stronger impact Very participatory, from 20/80 to 100/100 - so people don't dominate, everybody's opinion and ideas shared Even footing because of the process - democratising tool Gives a level playing field	Accessible	Individual level	All can participate on the same level
People feel heard, engaged, involved, motivated, empowered, people feel understood and part of something	Listened to		People feel listened to and a part of something
Everybody to conceptualise their own view and idea on a given question before they see everybody else's, without being influenced by others or by feeling intimidated Enables their own pure response As you build you discover things, the process enables you to see different interpretations of things Each person gives their own contribution and then comment, they are not influenced because they are able to express thoughts and ideas first in a model Explicit your experience or knowledge, what you have in your mind it comes out in the model	Response		A unique response of my own - unlocking my potential

Organisation Values



We benefitted from diversity



We committed to working differently



We have broken our habitual way of thinking



The problem in question

We have spent our nights and days to another task

Team Values



'We Teamed in'



Hierarchies were suspended



We had authentic conversations



We developed a shared understanding

Individual Values



I was listened to



I was able to unlock my own unique response



The model and method gave me a new language



I contributed more

Process Values



An efficient and focussed process



A multi-sensory approach



A safe space

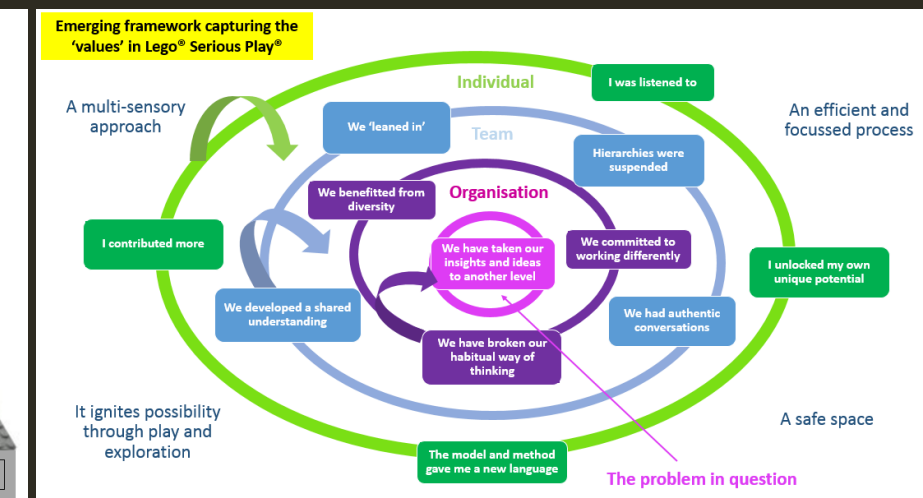
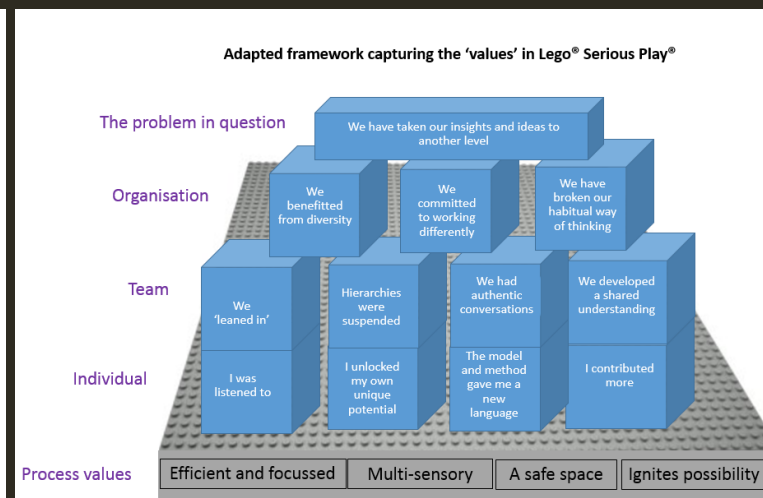
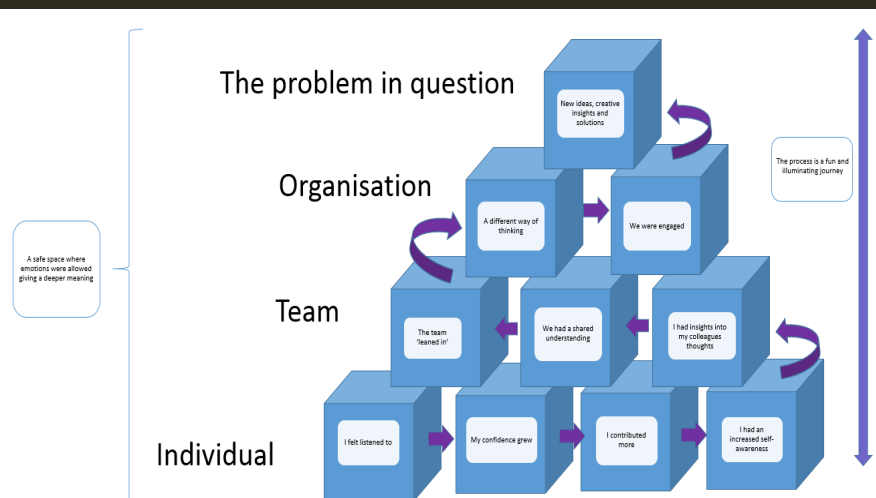
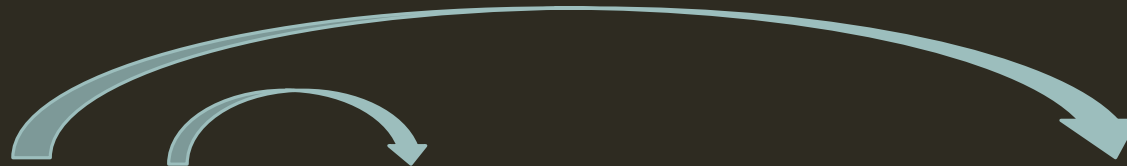


It ignites possibility through play and exploration

ENGAGEMENT WITH CONCEPTUAL MODEL — PHASE THREE

Written or verbal feedback requested on a proposed conceptual model

Comments compiled and utilised to further develop and adapt the conceptual model

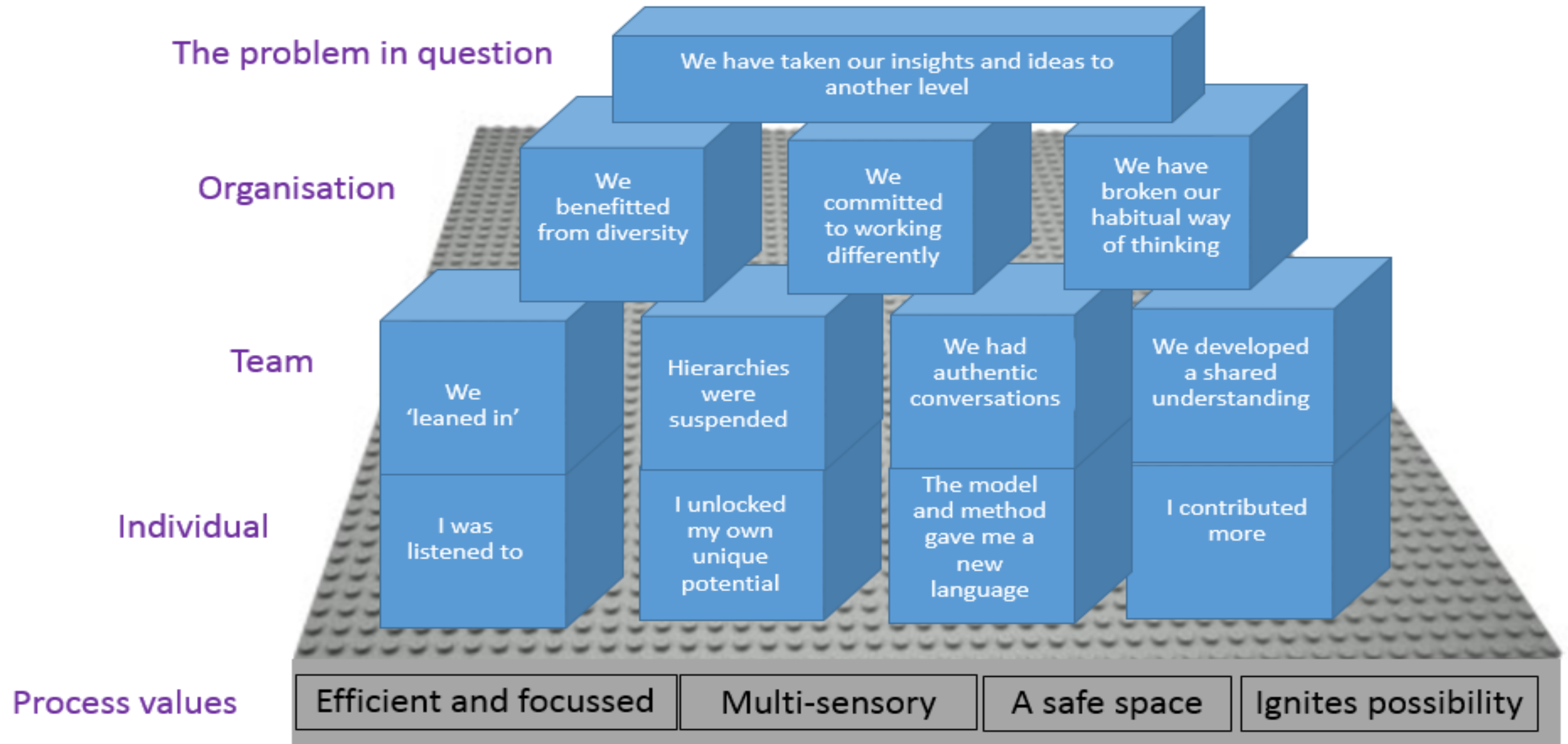


Initial themes	Category	Combined emergent themes
• The process is a fun and illuminating journey • A safe space where emotions were allowed giving a deeper meaning	'The environment' which developed into 'Process level'	• Efficient and focussed • Multi-Sensory • A safe space • Ignites possibility
• I felt listened to • My confidence grew • I contributed more • I had increased self-awareness	Individual	• I was listened to • I unlocked my own unique potential • The model and method gave me a new language • I contributed more
• I had insights into my colleagues thoughts • We had a shared understanding • The Team 'leaned in'	Team	• We 'leaned in' • Hierarchies were suspended • We had authentic conversations • We developed a shared understanding
• A different way of thinking • We were engaged	Organisation	• We benefitted from diversity • We committed to working differently • We have broken our habitual way of thinking
• New ideas, creative insights and solutions	The problem in question	• We have taken our insights and ideas to another level

→ 5 CATEGORIES

→ 16 EMERGENT THEMES

Adapted framework capturing the 'values' in Lego® Serious Play®



Emerging framework capturing the
'values' in Lego® Serious Play®



THE WHAT AND HOW TO MEASURE CHALLENGE

Responses included:

“I think it’s the measurable that’s difficult. What does that mean, that it’s measurable? How do you measure that we just accomplished more in one day than we ever have before?”

“It’s very hard to measure it other than in the feedback you get. For me, measurable suggests consistently measurable.”

“A lot of the learning is in the process. It’s the actual process that changes something in the group and changes something in someone’s head. How can you measure this?”

‘Often you are trying to impact behaviour and impact how they communicate with others. That doesn’t change in a month, it takes time for them to change habits’.

Others highlighted the challenge of outcomes i.e. what you set out to achieve is something very different to what actually develops from using the method.

EVALUATION

Evaluation taking place tended to relate to reviewing the facilitator's performance and the actual workshop, rather than the impact or change to the participants or business.

Most report they did not follow up months later as they don't have an evaluation tool for this and it is hard to prove and measure the changes that have taken place.

Some facilitators noted that people don't like doing evaluation forms and just do them as quickly as possible.

Others hoped a tool could be developed to help endorse their work and demonstrate LSP's worth.