



Daring, doing & muddling through

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The issue

“[w]hile one would advocate a majority of elder women on the executive committee or councils in large organisations, yet we would find ourselves less likely to become narrow were the very old ones of twenty years included there also. The young women of today will be more sympathetic & keen-sighted in her understanding of her sister’s needs, than she who was the young woman of twenty years ago”

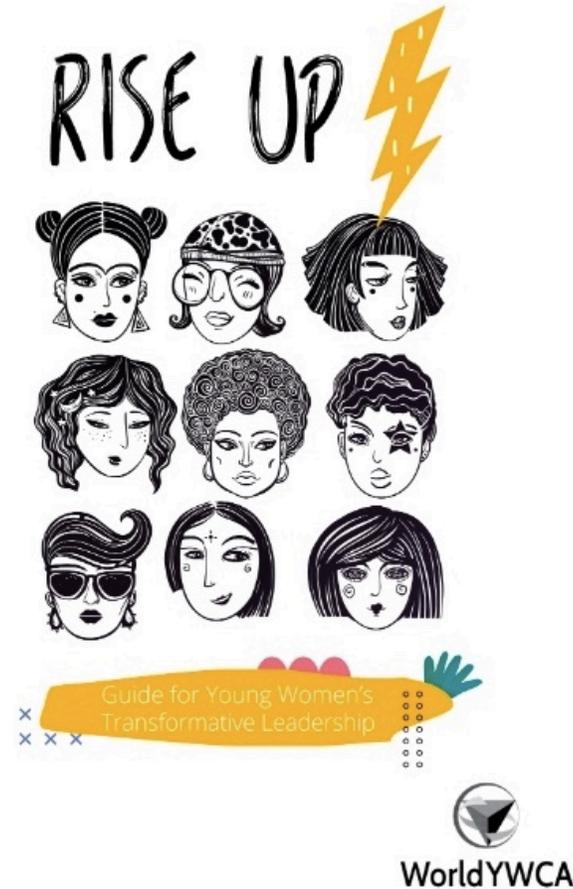
Annie Reynolds, First General Secretary of the World YWCA (1898, p63)

Background

- ▶ How can we strengthen young women's leadership within the organisation?
- ▶ Nine weeks in the field, attended 72 meetings/events in person, via skype or telephone
 - ▶ Key field work - Strasbourg May 2013, Bangkok May 2013, Yangon June 2014, Stuttgart Oct 2014, Bangkok Oct 2015, Canberra Oct 2015.
 - ▶ World Cafés - Yangon June 2014, Stuttgart Oct 2014, Bangkok Oct 2015
- ▶ Engaging 184 women, from 51 countries

Research with....

- ▶ Speakers
- Solivalealofiolenu'u Wilson - Samoa
- Avah Naomi Woyengu - Papua New Guinea
- Nirmala Gurung - Nepal
- ▶ www.facebook.com/elin.l.hakansson/videos/10156383975208814/



Daring

- ▶ “a living, emergent process that cannot be predetermined but changes and develops as those engaged depend their understanding of the issues to be addressed and develop their capacity as co-inquirers both individually and collectively.” (Reason & Bradbury 2008, p4)
- ▶ *So, interestingly for someone who likes to know what the rules are, and doesn't mind following the recipe I'm committed to a research style that will challenge me in it's messiness and uncertainty. Which comes back to the question of control. Is it ceding control - or is it co-operative research, so not so much about control as collaboration. (Research Journal - 29 Oct 2012)*

Doing

- ▶ “if your hearts are in the right place you will have an exciting time, and even if the process is at times stormy and difficult, it is most likely that you and your co-inquirers will learn a lot” (Reason 1988, p20).

Muddling through

- ▶ “participatory research combines three activities: investigation, education, & action...
- ▶ It is a method of social investigation of problems, involving participation of oppressed and ordinary people in problem posing and solving. It is an educational process for the researcher and participants, who analyse the structural causes of named problems through collective discussion and interaction. Finally, it is a way for researchers and oppressed people to join in solidarity to take collective action, both short and long term, for radical social change.” (Maguire 1987, p35)

Tidied Up

- ▶ “Initially these women were part of a larger group that was intended to be a co-operative inquiry group (Heron, 1996). ...The group met once in person and six times by skype and just as the process seemed about to gain some momentum with group members other than the researcher taking ownership of the work, organisational changes put the project on hold.
- ▶ This was a scary time in the research, the intention was to undertake a participatory project, but the idea of a co-operative inquiry no longer fit into my co-inquirers work plans.
- ▶ In order to re-start the research process a different way of engaging was needed. ... Initially the research process had been in addition to the work the organisation, which meant additional meetings just for the process of the research. However, in order to regain access, the data gathering processes were moved to being more integrated with the everyday work of the organisation.
- ▶ Having made this switch, it became significantly easier to access the organisation and to build ongoing relationships with both programme participants and the women who would be part of the *core group*. The project had become more genuinely one of shared inquiry, precisely because the forms co-operative inquiry (Heron, 1996) found in the literature had been released. (Lewis 2017, pp102-103)

Thank you



References

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- ▶ MAGUIRE, P. 1987. *Doing participatory research: A feminist approach*, Center for International Education, School of Education, Amherst, MA, University of Massachusetts.
- ▶ REASON, P. 1988. The Co-operative Inquiry Group. *In: REASON, P. (ed.) Human inquiry in action : developments in new paradigm research*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- ▶ REASON, P. & BRADBURY, H. 2008. Introduction. *In: REASON, P. & BRADBURY, H. (eds.) The SAGE Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- ▶ REYNOLDS, A. M. 1898. Report of the General Secretary. *In: WORLD YWCA (ed.) Report of the First Conference*. London: L. E. Newham & Co.

Questions to you?

- ▶ Is there a story here worth telling, or is this everyone's story of their first engagement with participatory research?
- ▶ What do I need to do/read/contemplate to strengthen my practice the next time I set out to do this?

Questions from you?

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