Susan and Derek have worked together since 2007-2008 when we were both in the Student and Enrolment Services Division of our University. We collaborated often around students in crisis and as many of you will know, these collaborations can result in close bonds between colleagues. Derek has continued to work in SESD and about 2 ½ years ago, I shifted to a new role at the teaching and learning centre at our University. We no longer collaborated regarding students in crisis, but the bond and friendship remained.

About a year ago, having a visit over coffee, Derek and I appreciated aloud, again, that we found our conversations consistently went in a direction of deep questioning and reflection, and that sometimes, we felt we were arriving at places we found personally profound. Given this recurring experience, and Derek’s residency in his doctoral program at the U of A, we decided last spring that we would begin a writing exchange as a way of documenting our dialogoue and would see where it took us.

One of the places it has taken us: Educational Developers Caucus at U of C. Our presentation today is about this collegial and intellectual exchange.
Today’s presentation

✧ Context
✧ Intentions
✧ Method
✧ Emerging ideas
✧ Discussion

Susan: We are aiming to share an approach to reflection, to cause you to wonder if you could collaborate with a colleague in a similar way, and to inspire you to do so across professional identites/roles in the university.
Susan:

- Phys ed degree
- First job as a recreation coordinator, which I came to understand, was also a student services role
- Began my student affairs career and education, earning a Masters of Educational Policy Studies at the U of A in 1995, working at Grant MacEwan Community College, working at the U of S in a variety of student services roles before entering a PhD program in Educational Administration at the U of S in 2003 and in 2005 rejoining our student services division as a Director of a group of support services: among them, Health, Counselling, DSS, Employment, ASC
- Transforming a mid-career crisis of sorts (with the help of an understanding husband) into the freeing act of responsibility quitting my job without one to go to!
- Soon, our Director, Jim Greer, was inviting me to apply for roles in T&L, and here I am learning to be an ED, learning how to support and inspire program and curriculum renewal by faculty.
- Also, since leaving my role in SESD, I have taught twice as a sessional instructor, once an existing leadership course for agriculture students, and once a newly developed for pilot purposes leadership course for kinesiology students.
Derek’s career path reflection...

wordle created using wordle.net

Derek
Our context and who we are

Emerging ideas:
Inhabiting and crossing paths (as ‘interstitial’ fluid)
Our intentions, overall

Explore significance of our
  o Pedagogical
  o Professional → ROLES
  o Administrative

Explore our contribution to
  o Fragmentation
  o Holistic transformation

Susan

Derek and I have articulated our natural discussions into these broadly stated intentions of exploration.
In the form of research questions

- How are we *experiencing* our pedagogical, professional, and administrative roles in the University?
- How are we *experiencing* the faculty-student learning context?
- How are we *contributing* to fragmentation and to holism in the university?
- How are we *seeing* our intersecting and interweaving paths?
- How are we *creating* our versions of change in the university?
- How are we *protecting* our versions of the core of the university?
- How are our metaphors *bringing* us new insight/improved clarity?

Susan

These can also be stated in the form of research questions. The first set we have actively been addressing, and the second set are being foreshadowed.
Our method

- “Dialogical narrative reflection”

- Exchanges, both written and spoken, between two colleagues

Derek
Derek to start, Susan to chime in
Interweaving nature of our work

Where is your value?
Where is the good that you bring?
What can you (EDs) do to engage with student affairs colleagues?