

To be Professional is to be Human:  
attending to our soul in palliative  
care provision

Oh, long before

You and I were born

Others beat these benches with their empty cups

To the night and its stars

**To be here, and now, and who we are**

Another sunrise with my sad captains

With who I choose to lose my mind

And if it's all we only pass this way but once

**What a perfect waste of time**



Caring Professionals  
are human

Many, if not most, of the challenges caring professionals experience in their working lives are not caused by lack of competence, knowledge or skills but by the fact that caring professionals forget they are persons.

Adapted from Harbaugh (1984)

Sharing our humanity –  
enables the transactional to become therapeutic  
or transformational (for both) and our role to be fulfilling



‘Loving micro-moments of positive human resonance, connection or generosity.....

shared between carer and cared for,  
colleague and colleague.’

Peter Provonost

<https://armstronginstitute.blogs.hopkinsmedicine.org/2016/02/12/patient-care-whats-love-got-to-do-with-it/>

Donald Winnicott – human self inhabited by 2 primary elements: (Cohen 2018)

**Doing**



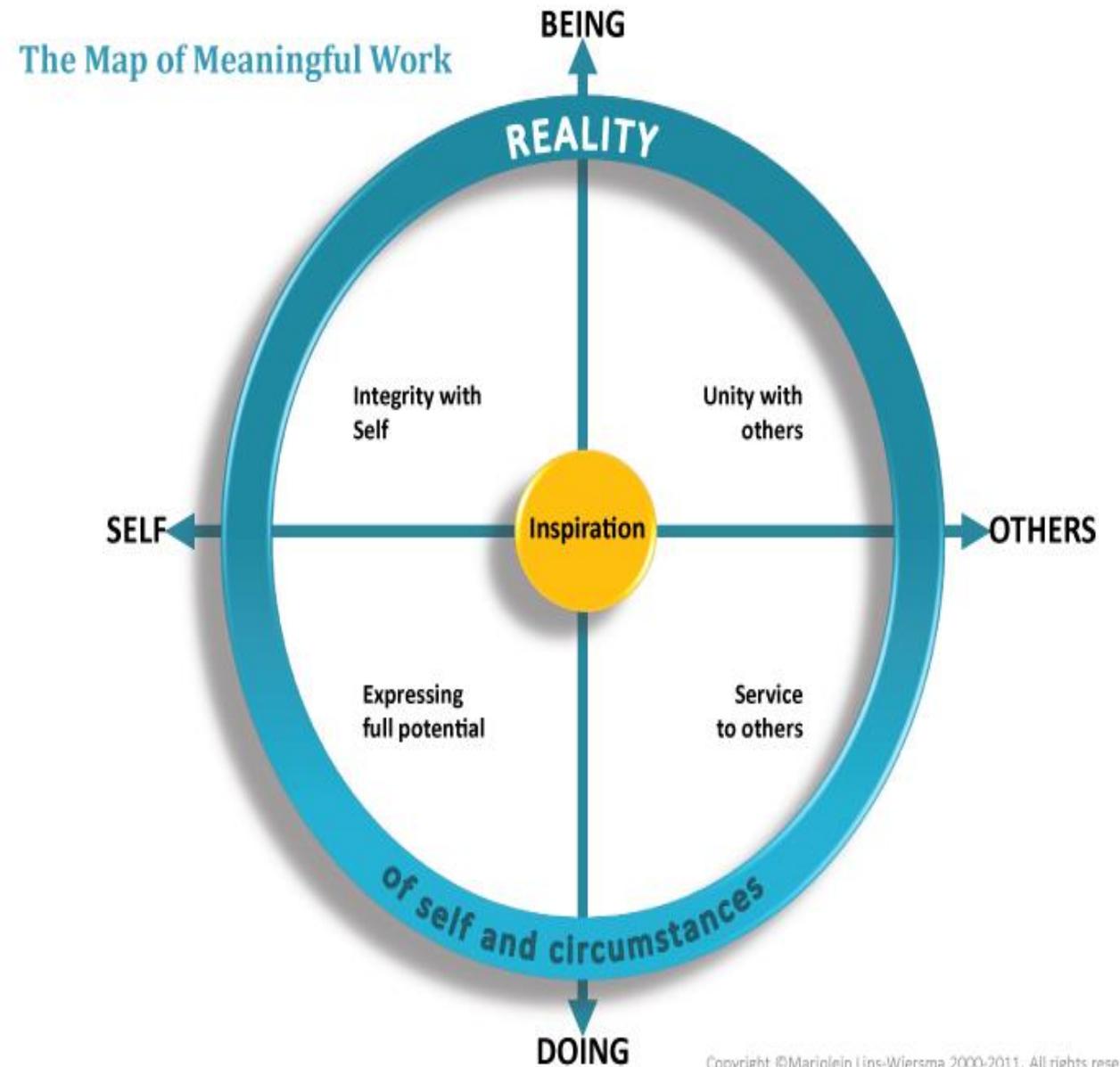
**Being** – basis for self-discovery and a sense of existence



# Map of Meaningful Work

Copyright Lips-Wiersma and Morris (2011)

<https://www.themapofmeaning.org/resources/copy-of-map>



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Being able to live out our core values and finding meaning and purpose at work....

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Enhances wellbeing, resilience and happiness

Lips-Wierma, M. and Morris, L. (2011) *and* Jamison, C. (2008)





Behold

Attending  
to.....our soul

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‘Soul as shorthand for the seismic core of personhood from which our beliefs , our values and actions radiate....’

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(Papova 2016 cited by Stephens 2019, p147)

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Mysterious, elusive, difficult to articulate, evokes curiosity

# Values

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Ideals and motivations that originally attracted people onto their job

The motivating connection between the worker and the workplace.

Feeling that the work you do is far away from the work you want to do can lead to greater burnout

(Montgomery et al BMJ 2019; 366: 14774)

‘There was no soul about how we went about our cricket....’ Brendon McCullum

- ‘For a long time I lost that....the reason why I got into the game....’



- ‘ the new connection....we talk about the little boy who fell in love with the game...and guys play with freedom...’





Soul....

**'...the spark  
of aliveness that comes from the  
belly,**  
drawing the inside out  
and outside in.  
All as it is.'

Sarah Crawford



# Behold and re-member

Write for 6 minutes reviewing today.

Focus on the moment(s) when you felt or glimpsed 'aliveness in your belly' (or even a flicker)

Describe your experience, what was said or shared or connected with, what you heard and what happened – focus what you felt, your inner response, lasting impressions, the impact on you.

Don't think too much – write if you can in the manner of a 'stream of consciousness'.

ONLY FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT

Now re-read  
.....using 3  
ways of  
seeing.....

What do you.....

**Notice**.....are you drawn to – words, feelings, ideas,  
-

**Wonder**.....what are curious about

What has been valued today that resonates with  
your values

And perhaps **realise**.....any aah or penny drop  
moments

So what? .....what action might you take to attend  
to/nuture your soul

Significance of intentionally taking time to be ....  
to attend to what makes us alive in our work



To promote creativity and ongoing learning about ourselves



To identify and seek to meet our needs as well as those of others



To promote resilience through meaningful and purposeful work

# Reflective Practice as attending to the Soul in working context

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‘re-connecting with a place in ourselves which has always been there but has been covered up by a huge amount of stories that we have learnt to accept as reality.’

(Encke in Sohet 2008, 23)

'The many gifts'  
Norman McCaig

The gifts keep arriving

'They come from the lips of people  
And the touch that lifts  
The black burden from bowed shoulders'

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