



**Opening Space for Inspiration**

How do I choose to create  
the story of my own life?



## Opening Space for Inspiration

All too often, our lives seems to be about living up to expectations. These may be real or imagined, imposed by others or imposed unconsciously on ourselves. Designed for young people nearing adulthood, Opening Space for Inspiration offers participants time, space, encouragement and resources to discover a sense of their own unique purpose, to consider, through a systemic lens, what it is that inspires them in their lives, so they can find the foundations on which they may choose to create a life's work.



'Who can I uniquely be?'



'What makes a person valuable?'



'I can feel myself  
becoming a better person.'

A sixth-form student, West London





## Stopping, looking, sensing, playing

'I wish someone had done that for me.'

Opening Space for Innovation grew out of my experience as an adult. Until well into middle age, my life evolved as a busy round of living up to expectations and demands: 'I have to do well in school, I have to be accepted by others, I have to get a good job...' and on and on. Looking back, I wished that someone had helped me, when I was young, to open space for my sense of inspiration. I wished that, much earlier, I had started to quest for the things that I wanted to make the foundations for my life. When I began to work on this idea with young people they enthusiastically agreed.

We (the participants and I) hold this offering as a series of conversations. My intention is not to teach or to preach. We have adopted the symbol of a white handkerchief as a 'flag of truce': any participant can take hold of the flag if they feel preached-to or pressured to accept any viewpoint. All perspectives, philosophies, and worldviews are welcome here. Each person's journey is uniquely their own.

Our conversations are as authentic and heartfelt as I can make them. They have a strong element of play. I invite each person to bring 'their People' to the conversation: that group includes themselves, those directly known to them, and even imaginary figures whose experiences seem real to them. I bring my People to the sessions, too. We all 'try on' ideas and outlooks from the perspective of as many of 'our People' as we can.

In the sessions, we ask ourselves questions like:

- 'What makes a person valuable?'
- 'Who do I deeply admire? What do I most admire about them?'
- 'Where do I belong? Where do I want to belong?'

Our conversations have taken many forms over the last five years. For me, they have been uniformly surprising, fascinating and delightful.

Scott facilitates sessions of OSI at secondary schools in London.

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This series of conversations is designed to align with any and all philosophies or world views, seeking only to support the individual participant in creating a personal vision that inspires and motivates. Considering inspiration through a systemic lens, students receive support to understand their inspiration through different 'ways of knowing', and to unfold a personal vision in the context of the different human systems in which they live. Students are encouraged to be creative in crystallising their inspiration in a form most meaningful for them.

The series is offered as group work, usually for between six and fifteen students. It proceeds through a series of eight after-school sessions that explore:

- Taking Charge – the role of personal responsibility
- Seeing Things Whole – applying a systemic lens
  - ways of 'knowing'
  - ordering principles in human systems
- Beginning with the End in Mind – crafting a personal vision of the future
- Putting First Things First – organising and prioritising to bring inspiration to life
- Taking Stock – capturing learning and adjusting course where needed

Students who complete the programme will be better able to crystallise their own sense of purpose and inspiration, and will have had exposure to a number of experiences, concepts, approaches and exercises which will support them in the ongoing exploration and development of that inspiration.

To learn more about **Opening Space for Inspiration**  
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To learn more about **ecl**'s work  
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