

Abstract

This dissertation is a result of an encounter with a quote from a book on social construction theory that suggested that the individual, autonomous self is dead (Burr, 2003, p. 23). This statement created a personal dissonance that I could not ignore. I felt that statement was incorrect because of my understanding of and experience with my Self. At the beginning of this project I took the stance that I needed to defend the existence of the Self within social construction theory. By the end of this project my perspective shifted and my thinking transformed through the application of relational and dialogic ideas and practices.

The first section has three chapters: an explanation of my personal framework called the Self and the Me, how I have used the framework throughout my life, and the theoretical and methodological foundations for this project. Section two contains five chapters, each of which is an analysis of my dialogue with one philosopher's work on the concept of the self. Section three discusses what I have personally and professionally learned from working on this project over a period of three years.