

*The Shapeshifter [2015] – a performative text*

*I am a shapeshifter<sup>1</sup>, a change facilitator  
I shift power relations*

*From dominant leaders  
To empower our people  
Am I on the right track?*

*Tami Spry says "shapeshifting is a risky business, takes a lot of energy, and is enormously affected by the surroundings"<sup>2</sup>*

*How true*

*Karen Vella's experience working in a university echoes, "change work" is "particularly risky and perilous"<sup>3</sup>*

*When surrounded by my peers - co-facilitators, middle managers*

*Power flows between us*

*creativity sparks*

*endless ideas*

*and solutions*

*and then*

*I enter the executive arena*

*maintaining my equanimity*

*Believing everyone of equal worth<sup>4</sup>*

*and so am I*

*No game face for me*

*I show up as my authentic self*

*Through this autoethnographic "interrogation" I've worked hard to transform my "beliefs, actions and sense of self"<sup>5</sup>*

*Focused on my self-development*

*I've shapeshifted*

*Is this naïve?*

*My energy sapped*

*How can I make a difference?*

*Choking, voiceless*

*I see and hear actions, words incongruent with collegial values*

*This IS a university?*

*Must conceal my body trembles, dread, resentment*

*My fear*

*to challenge their perspectives*

*to shift the power relations*

*For staff to be heard*

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<sup>1</sup> After the archetype "I am the shapeshifter, I move between worlds, I navigate the full spectrum of consciousness, I am a bridge, I am changeable" (Spears, 2013)

<sup>2</sup> Spry (2001, p. 715)

<sup>3</sup> Somerville and Vella (2015, p. 41)

<sup>4</sup> Pogge (1994, pp. 89-90)

<sup>5</sup> Anderson (2006, p. 383)

*creating our future*

*Why don't they see my worth?*

*Like Diana, "They don't appreciate the subtle things that I do. Sometimes you are not noticed and appreciated"<sup>6</sup>*

*Why don't they take me seriously?*

*Hugh Mackay's words resonate "What is the thing that all of us most desire? ...That is to be taken seriously."<sup>7</sup>*

*Maybe I'll go external...*

### ***The learning facilitator [2017-2022]***

*I did not go external*

*I stayed but I moved between the world of HR to the world of academia*

*I feel so external to that person, that student, that change agent*

*I learned so much about disrupting power relations*

*That I don't need to do it anymore*

*I look around at my academic peers and smile*

*I was naïve to think that I could change a culture*

*I just needed to change myself*

*My doctoral study liberated me from working on and within change*

*To collaborating and writing autoethnographies about change<sup>8</sup> in the academy and teaching practice<sup>9</sup>*

*As my shapeshifting continues to reframe my practice*

*I think,*

*I am being taken seriously*

*Does it matter?*

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<sup>6</sup> Interview transcript, Diana, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2011

<sup>7</sup> Mackay (2014)

<sup>8</sup> Taylor, Bryant and Bryant, in progress

<sup>9</sup> Droulers & Bryant, in progress