

Realistic Evaluation

What works for whom in what
circumstances?

(Pawson and Tilley 1997: 220)

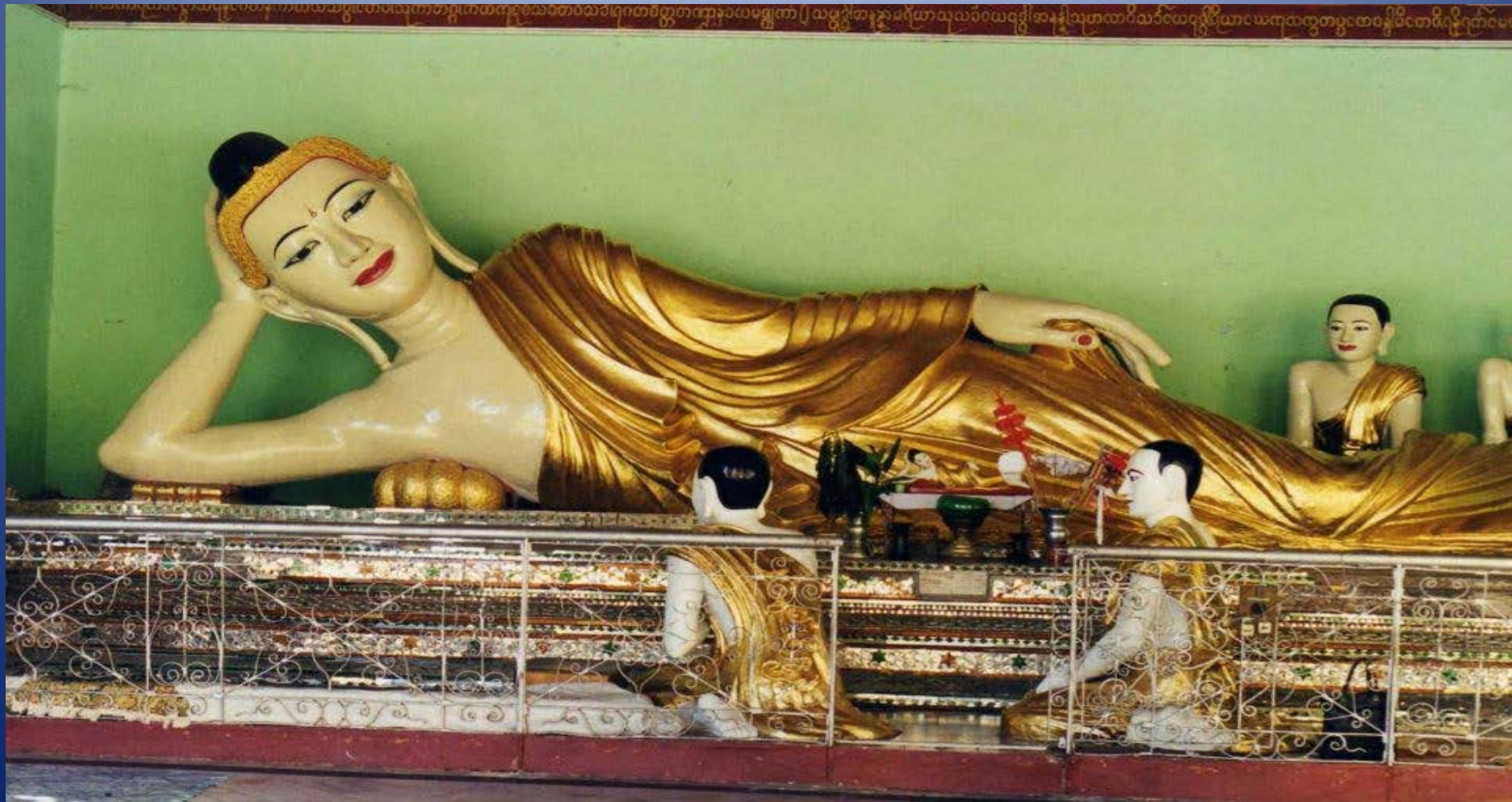
Philosophical Premise

- It is not programmes which work, as such, but people co-operating and choosing to make them work (Pawson and Tilley 1997: 36).
- In the policy driven world of health, this is a worthy point of reflection.

Key Use

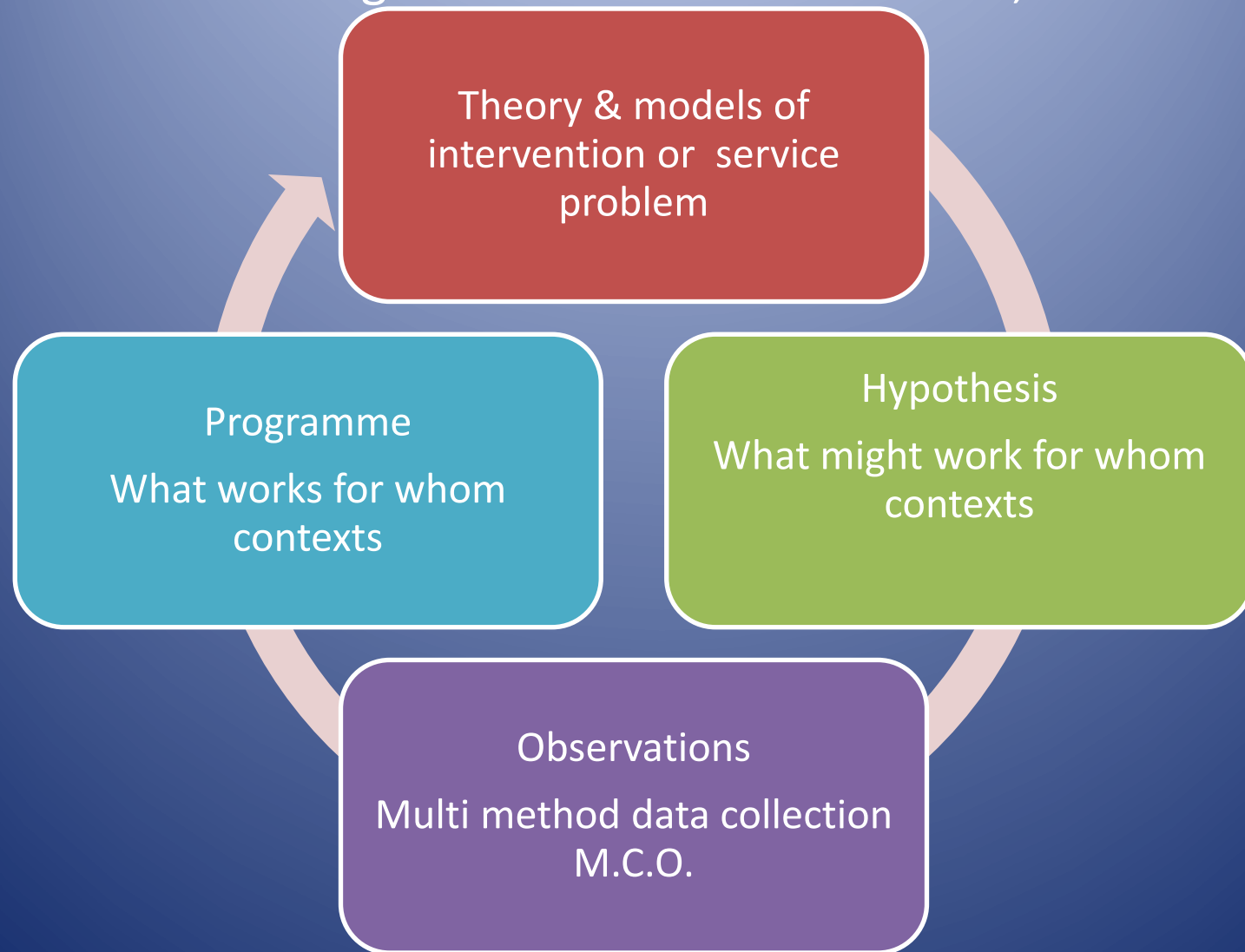
- A programme *is* its personnel, its place, its past and its prospects (Pawson and Tilley 1997: 65).

Philosophy: The Very Foundation of Research



Realistic Evaluation Approach

Based on existing assessment of mechanisms, contexts and



CMO's

- A CMO configuration is a proposition stating what it is about an initiative which works for whom in what circumstances.

What direction to take a RE study



Oil Painting

Qualitative



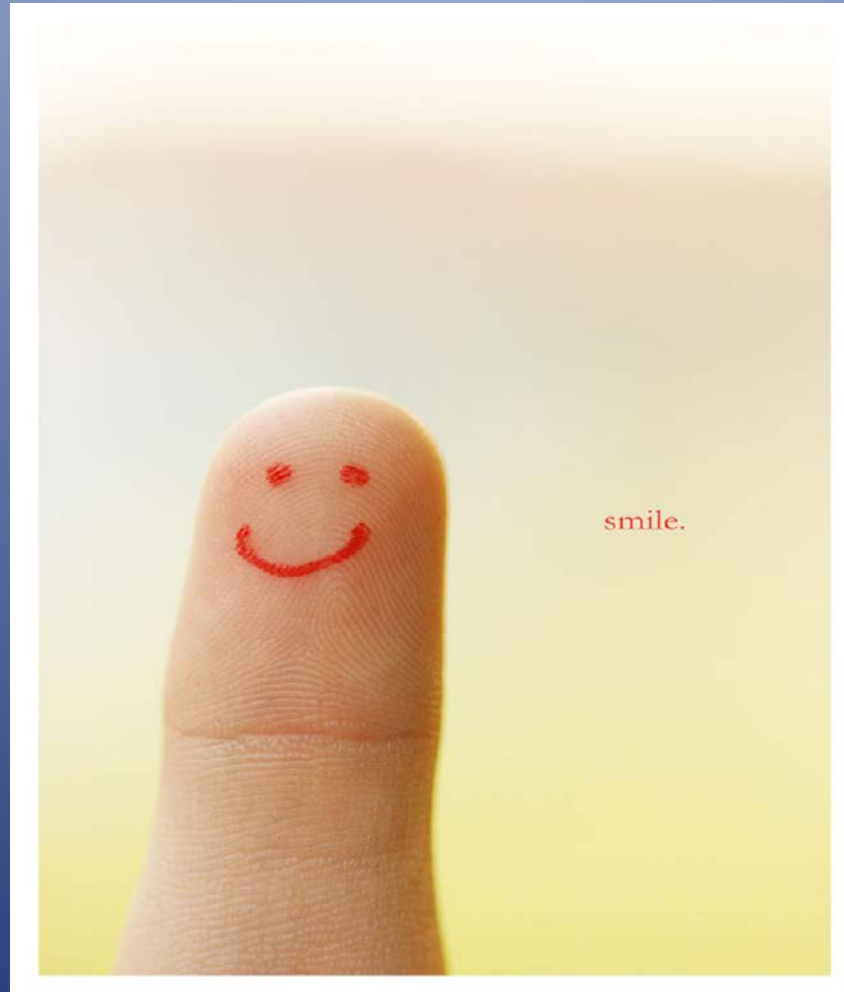
- blue/green colour, gold frame
- smells old and musty
- texture shows brush strokes of oil paint
- peaceful scene of the country
- masterful brush strokes

Quantitative



- picture is 10" by 14"
- with frame 14" by 18"
- weighs 8.5 pounds
- surface area of painting is 140 sq. in.
- cost \$300

Support, Mentoring, Inspire, Listen and Encourage (SMILE)



The programme

- While essentially an anti-bullying programme, SMILE also seeks to help young people at the school who are experiencing problems relating to others, under peer pressure or having family problems, as well as those who are having issues with substance misuse, anger problems or poor school performance.

School bullying

- Within the context of young people (12- 25 years of age), bullying is associated with low self-esteem, passive acceptance of bullying, and negative school climate across high school age groups.

Hypothesis

- SMILE is minimising experienced school bullying through providing supportive relationships
- SMILE works for marginalised children
- SMILE works in the context of being student initiated
- SMILE will be creating unintended outputs .

Data collected

- The quantitative survey tool sought to identify a pre and post measure on self-efficacy, emotional resilience and exposure to bullying. Round one of survey data collection was distributed at the beginning on the 2013 school year with round two being collected 6 months later.

Data collected

- Standard audit data was collected from the school's student information data base. 2011 data was sought as a pre SMILE measure followed by the data for 2012 and 2013. Data was sought for bullying, behaviours impacting on school climate or culture and truancy. Audit data was collected from the school data base from 2011-13, N= 27 mentees.
- Exploratory qualitative method has been used in this evaluation, semi-structured group interviews that sought rich and in-depth accounts of lived experiences.

Themes

- Theme 1: Making a difference
- (Mentor) “I just think that the people who bully are handled, and the issues are handled. It’s not put under the rug..... we support the people who are bullied so once it has started it can be ended” .

Themes

- Theme 2: Compassionate leaders
- (Staff member) “Rather than school leaders who are more styled as ‘political leaders’ SMILE leaders are more focussed on the inter-personal, the humane”.
- (Mentor) “I want to make my parents proud and to help people out and to help the school out”.

Themes

- Theme 3: Connections
- (Mentee parent)“It was so wonderful to know that my child was supported within the school by elder students who understood what he was going through, and were there whenever he needed, to chat, listen or connect. A brilliant program we are so thankful to all those involved in the Smile program”.

Works for who

- Mentees
- Mentors
- Year advisors in the junior high school years reported reduced pressure due to the impact of SMILE.
- As reported by teaching and welfare staff SMILE works for the school.

Outputs

- Lowered levels of bullying and aggressive behaviours
- Increased student wellbeing by 'topping up' work by the existing welfare team
- A higher workload for the welfare team to run and support the programme
- Altered school culture that is now known as being serious about vulnerable young people and passing on positive values from one school generation to the next
- An increase in the school culture for volunteering
- A new type of student leadership that is based on empathy and compassion
- A new type of student leadership that is based on positive role modelling
- Improved cross age group communication, co-operation and understanding
- Improved confidence and self-esteem for both mentees and mentors
- Better mentee engagement with school work and school community
- Smiles .

Contexts

- Congruent with Department of Education and Communities policies
- Support from the School Head and Deputy Head
- The wider Woolgoolga community has a lower socio economic profile than surrounding areas
- The wider Woolgoolga community has a high proportion of high school aged people in its population.

Mechanisms: how SMILE works

- The most important enabling mechanism for SMILE is student initiation and ownership of the programme
- The relationship between mentor and mentee being based on mutual trust and confidentiality
- The training programme which gave opportunity for mentors to bond through telling personal stories
- Mentors bonding into a and being distinctive team

So: CNM

- Lets now apply the RE approach to something closer to home.
- The CNM offers people a new resource which they interpret, make new choices around and hence enact different behaviours.

RE of CNM

- What theories can we frame?
- What might be some hypothesis to pose?
- What might be some expected mechanisms ?
- What might be the contexts ?