





ABOUT THE BRAID KIT.

The Braid is a *Diagrammatic Instrument* that invites two or more participants into a conversation. The Braid consists of a cord that is looped into a trefoil shape, strung with three double-sided round markers. Also included are thirty small, 'loose labels' that may be attached to the cord with removable book rings if and as needed, and dry erase pens to write on those. They can be wiped and reused. (Please only use dry erase pens.) To start, players are asked to unfurl the cord into the trefoil shape as indicated in the included setup sketch, and position themselves around the Braid to begin their conversation.

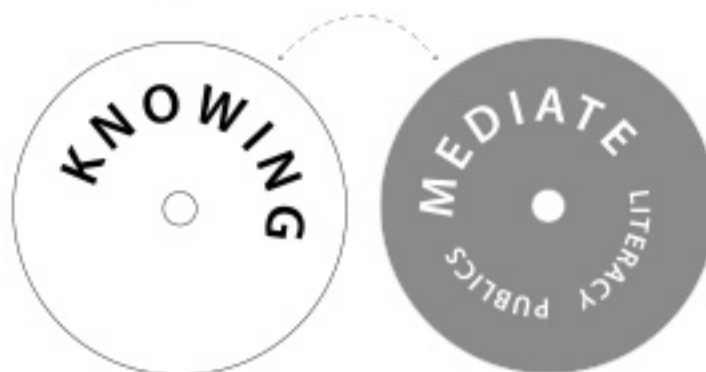
The initial conversation prompt is: "How do you work?" It is best considered in relation to the terms on both sides of each of the round labels that can serve to anchor the conversation. Start anywhere. As you proceed, use the tablets to add notes, shifting the Braid cord to accommodate your thoughts, perceptions and observations. Tangles may develop and resolve, or not. Everything may go flying in the air and land differently. Following are notes about the text on the markers.

DOING: consider how our bodies and minds engage with the world, and as part of the world, and how we attune to and hone our perceptions and engagements with self, material and others.



MAKE: as a creative practitioner, how do you attend to your own attention? What do you ponder? How do your constraints evolve? Where does your work begin?

KNOWING: think how we can or cannot be certain about our relations with and within the world, and how we challenge and justify our certainties, or even the need for certainties.



MEDIATE: as a creative practitioner, how do you narrate your story? What is your connection to disciplinary discourse? How do you interact with publics?

BEING: consider how we believe the world to be organized, and how we organize the world in keeping with such beliefs, also as those evolve. This can refer to the realms of nature, cultural, social and political life.



MANAGE: as a creative practitioner, how do you find or create opportunities? Why in this way and not differently? How do you organize your practice? Do you participate in your discipline's governance?

Together, ways of doing, knowing and being constitute paradigms of sense making that express and enable value systems. Paradigms play out in everyday and professional life, often invisibly or taken for granted, but also seen and debated. When they shift, revolutionary change takes place*.

The Braid is a visualization of doing, knowing, and being as topologically related. In a topological system, relations can be stretched or squeezed, but not cut. The Braid emerged from conversations with many artists and cultural practitioners, noticeably speaking about all aspects of their work as interrelated, and describing how those relations matter. Alliterations helped grasp the Braid conversations. Before doing, knowing, and being came managing, mediating and making; leverage, literacy, love; or power, publics and poesis. **

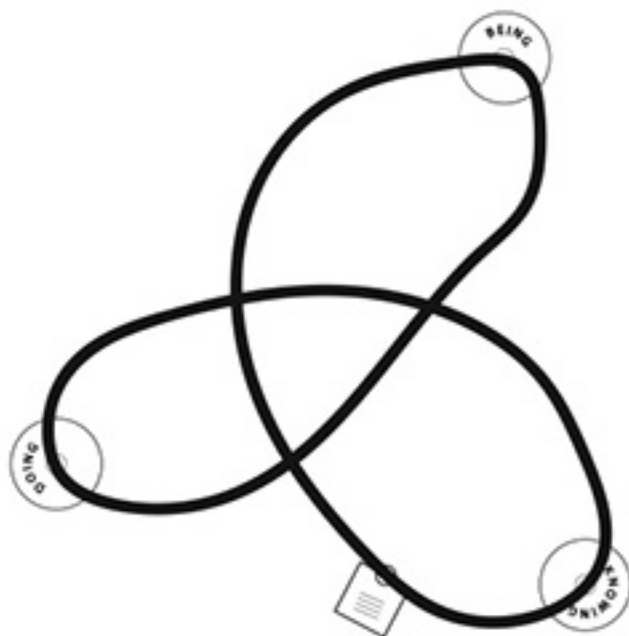
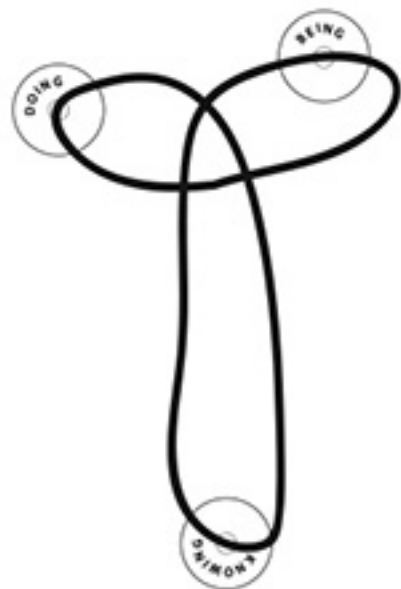
The Braid is an alternative to engaging in pedagogies of critique. Critique comes from the word 'to cut'. The *Braid Instrument* supports a better understanding how any practitioner makes meaning, not by cutting, but braiding the specifics of their experiences and relationships into a topological whole. You can use the Braid instrument to draw on embodied knowing in conversation, while inscribing it with thoughts, ideas, and observations. Diagram artist and philosopher Félix Guattari might call this a *metamodeling adventure*. ***

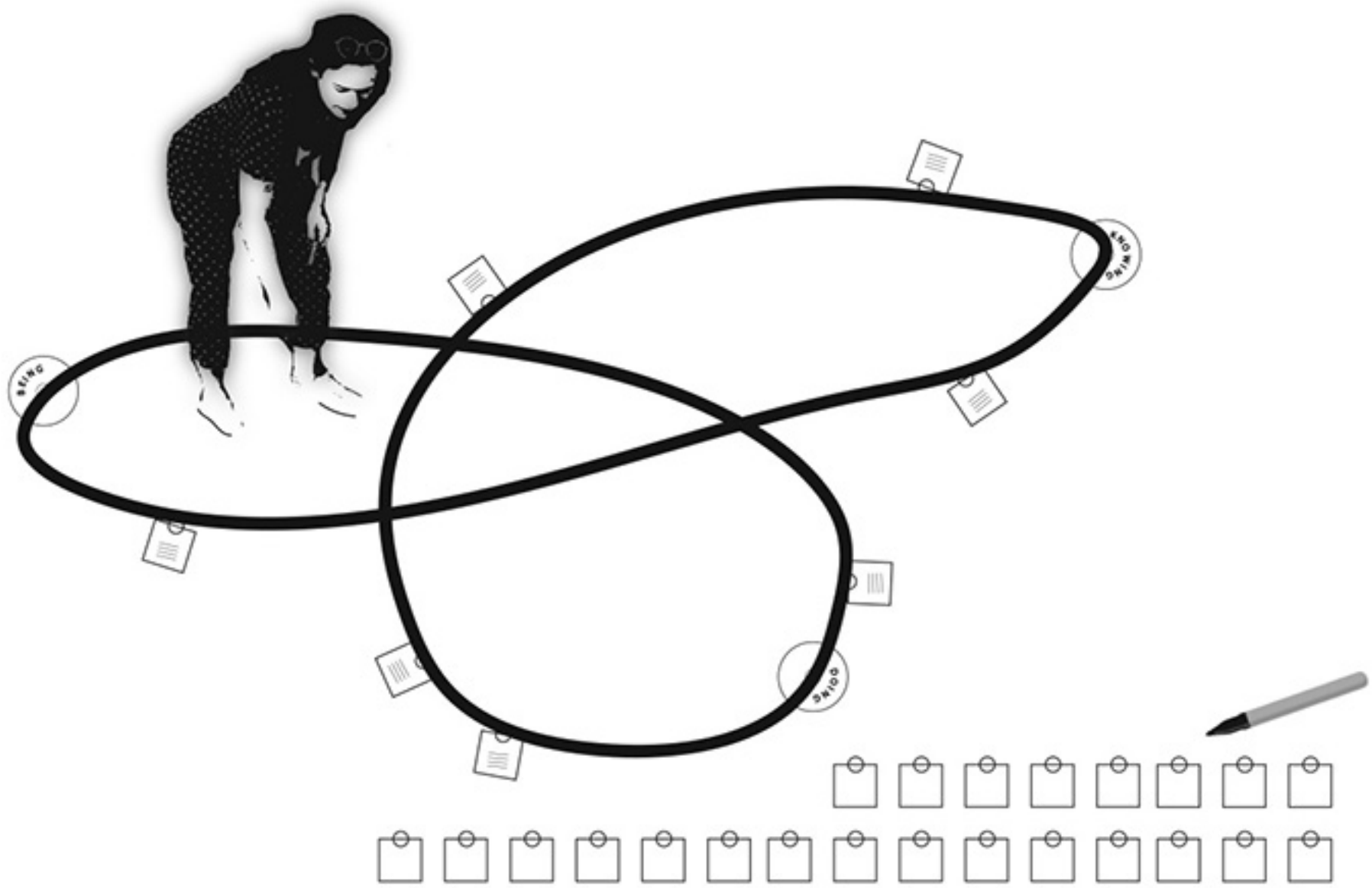
Adelheid Mers 2021

* Long established through academic, philosophical traditions, being is known as ontology, knowing as epistemology, doing as methodology, and the related valuing as axiology. Since the late 1960s, relationships among these terms have been discussed as research paradigms. Kuhn, Thomas S. (1970) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

** Similarly, Performance Studies theorist Dwight Conquergood spoke about activism, analysis and artistry, or citizenship, critique and creativity. Conquergood, Dwight (2013). 'Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research'. in: *Cultural Struggles. Performance, Ethnography, Praxis*. Edited by E. Patrick Johnson. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

*** Guattari, Félix (2000). *The Three Ecologies*. London: The Athlone Press.







LITERACY

LOVE

Balance
Diversity
Knowing

your story
your story

the DISTRIBUTION
OF YOUR STORY
and the BENEFIT
to your AUDIENCE

Release
your
demons

IF YOU DON'T MEE,
UP, YOU DIDN'T
PUSH ENOUGH.

FINE
EATING
LETTER

the (red)
not is an
alle. when y.
start to enjoy
stop.

GOOD
FUN
PL

LE
ERAGE