

# Coaching psykologi

Volume 6, Edition 1, December 2017

ISSN 2244-9698

The Danish Journal of Coaching Psychology  
BFI-points awarded

Editorial team  
Coaching Psychology researchUnit, Dept. of Communication and Psychology, Aalborg University  
Coaching Psychology Unit, Dept. of Exercise and SportScience, University of Copenhagen

## Tidsskrift for Coaching Psykologi

Ansvarshavende redaktør Ole Michael Spaten

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Omslag: akila/ v. Kirsten Bach Larsen

Sats og layout: akila/ v. Kirsten Bach Larsen

ISSN: 2244-9698

Forlægger

Aalborg Universitetsforlag

Redaktionenes adresse:

Coaching Psykologiske forsknings Enhed

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coachingpsykologi.org

Tidsskriftet er udgivet med støtte fra Det Obelske Familiefond og Institut for Kommunikation og Psykologi, Aalborg Universitet.

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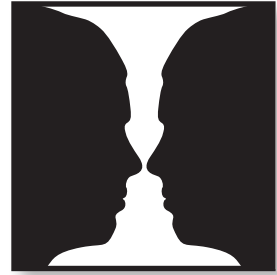
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## Contents

<b>Redaktørens ord</b>	5
<b>Integrativ Gestalt Praksis - IGP.</b> En ramme for forståelse af forholdet mellem terapi og coaching Mikael Sonne	7
Articles in English	
<b>Coaching a musical mindset</b> Line Fredens	17
<b>Problems and Values</b> Allan Holmgren	29

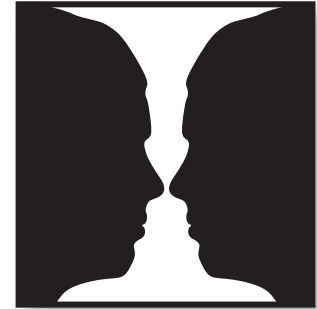
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# Coaching psykologi

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.5278/ojs.cp.v5i1.1692>



## Redaktørens ord

Af Ole Michael Spaten

Som tiden går bliver coachingpsykologien både mere udbredt og mere og mere en moden videnskab. Der rejses fortsat store filosofiske spørgsmål, som er fundamentet for en (humanistisk) psykologi, med rødder i flere hundrede års videnskabelige udvikling. Blandt meget andet skriver Allan Holmgren om hvordan det narrative og post-strukturalistiske perspektiv opfatter problemet som indgangen til forståelse af ethvert begreb og enhver(s) fortælling. Allans artikel hedder "Problems and values".

Dansk Tidsskrift for Coaching Psykologi har fra sin begyndelse haft som formål at viderebringe såvel teoretiske som praktiske og empirisk baserede artikler og dermed dække bredt feltet. Blandt meget andet bidrager Line Fredens i sin artikel med titlen "Coaching with a musical mindset" med beskrivel-

ser af musikkens improvisationer og at musikkens kreative proces kan minde om de samtaler som føres i coachingkonversationer.

Tidsskriftet følger løbende udviklingen af coachingpsykologise "skoledannelser" og spændingsfeltet mellem psykoterapi, coaching og coachingpsykologi. Blandt meget andet fremstiller Mikael Sonne i sin artikel: "Integrativ Gestalt Praksis" hvordan feltteori danner udgangspunkt for en fænomenologisk tilgang til arbejdet med klienter ud fra dagens integrative gestaltpraksis - samt netop en analyse af forholdet mellem psykoterapi og coaching.

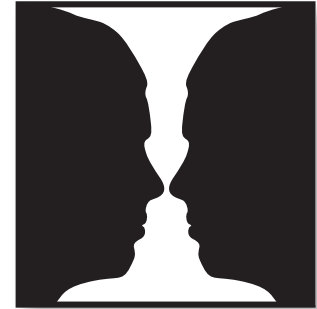
Tidsskriftet rummer dermed også denne gang forskellige inspirationskilder til bredden af nutidens coachingpsylogiske tanker og arbejde i klinikken.

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10.5278/ojs.cp.v6i1.2061



## Integrativ Gestalt Praksis - IGP En ramme for forståelse af forholdet mellem terapi og coaching

Af Mikael Sonne

### Abstract

*This article presents the new framework, Integrative Gestalt Practice (IGP), which is a framework for understanding and working with complexity and wholeness in people's lives. By combining basic principles from the gestalt approach with the integral model introduced by Ken Wilber IGP develops a framework for integrating different forms of theoretical, empirical and practical knowledge of human life-processes. As such IGP also introduces a framework for establishing dialogues across the many different schools of psychology and psychotherapy. The article also indicates how this framework can provide an understanding of the relationship between psychotherapy and coaching.*

**Keywords:** Gestalt, coaching, therapy, integral, integrative gestalt practice, IGP, integrative psychology, development, self-regulation, paradoxical theory of change, field theory.

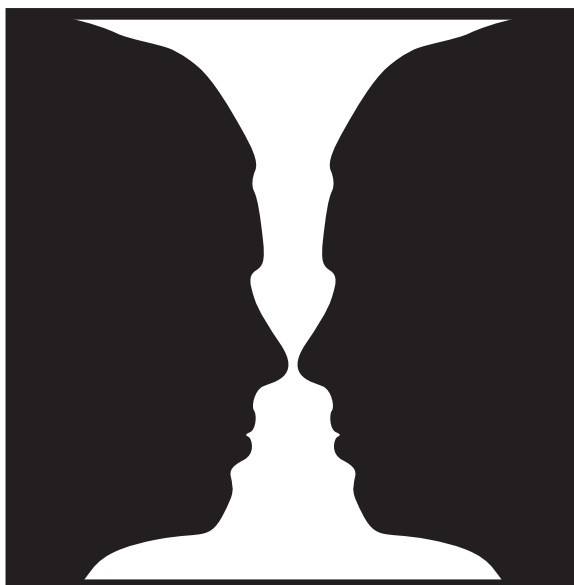
Gennem mit snart 40 årige virke som psykolog har jeg arbejdet med terapi, coaching, organisationsarbejde, lederudvikling og videreuddannelse af psykologer. I den forbindelse har jeg mødt nogle misforståelser af, hvad gestalt er. Det håber jeg, at jeg kan råde bod på her.

Måske kan jeg inspirere nogle til at læse mere om den opdatering og klargøring af gestalt tilgangens teori og praksis, som Professor Tønnesvang og jeg mere udførligt har beskrevet i bogen *Integrativ Gestalt Praksis*. (Sonne & Tønnesvang 2013; 2015). Vi kalder det integrativ, fordi vi mener, at gestalt-

tilgangen i sin grundstruktur repræsenterer en almen psykologisk forståelse, som naturligt inviterer andre psykoterapeutiske og interventionsmetodiske retninger ind. Og vi kalder det praksis, fordi tilgangen er egnet til at arbejde med mennesker i mange andre kontekster end blot den terapeutiske. Vi forkorter det til IGP.

Jeg vil kort beskrive grundbegreberne: *felt, organisme, selvregulering/gestaltning* samt redskaberne: *kontakt, awareness, eksperiment* og derefter komme ind på vores brug af den systematiserede felt-perspektivmodel, *kvadrantmodellen*.

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*Rubins vase*

Ordet gestalt kommer fra perceptionspsykologien. I og med at vi perciperer, tolker vi samtidigt. Vi gestalter mening.

Vi ser fra hver sit perspektiv, og vi ser og oplever ud fra de briller, vi ser med, bl.a. farvet af tidligere påvirkninger, oplevelser og opvækst.

Det var den danske psykologiprofessor Edgar Rubin, der fandt, at et organiserende princip for al oplevelse og perception er en vekslen mellem, hvad der danner baggrund, og hvad der danner forgrund for ens opmærksomhed. (jf. Rubins vase). For at noget træder i forgrund, må noget andet træde i baggrund. Man ser ikke samtidigt en vase og to ansigter. Mens der i Rubins vase kun er to komplementære gestaltningsmuligheder, er mulighederne for, hvordan vi hver især i dagligdagen og i det virkelige liv giver mening, til det vi perciperer, uendelig mangfoldige.

Der er, som det er kendt fra gestaltpsykologien, også andre gestaltningsprincipper: tendensen til at skabe helhed, f.eks. ses tre prikker uden for lang afstand imellem som en trekant (nærhedsprincippet). Der er lighedsprincippet, som vedrører det, at vi kategoriserer i henhold til oplevelsers lighed med hinanden. Og der er princippet om, at det ufærdige kalder på færdiggørelse (Zeigarnik-effekten), som Zeigarnik og Kurt Lewin fandt (Zeigarnik 1997).

Kurt Lewin er også den gestaltpsykolog, som står bag feltteorien (Lewin 1951; 1952).



*En feltmetafor*

## Feltet

Vi definerer feltet som den emergerende selvorganiserende totalitet. Feltet omfatter også feltets historie.

Når man ser dette landskab, er det muligvis åen, der træder frem som figur, men vi kan også se det som et felt af interagerende faktorer: vand, tyngdekraften, klippefremspring, forandringer i landskabet over tid osv.

Prøv at tænke på det som en metafor for det felt, som vi i vores psykolog praksis undersøger sammen med en person for at bringe fælles forståelse af dennes gestaltningsdynamik (måde at opleve på).

Hvis vi bliver ved metaforen her, og vi forestiller os at åens løb udgør et problem, så følger heraf at adgang til løsningen af 'problemet' eller adgang til forståelse af det, der opfattes som en dysfunktion, netop ligger i feltets egen organisering – inkluderede såvel åen som landskabet. Man kan tilsvarende sige, at ethvert problem, når det anskues fra en feltforståelse, i sig selv rummer et sæt af løsningsmuligheder, forstået på den måde, at problemet bl.a. har forbindelse til det perspektiv, som det anskues fra. Det, der fra et bestemt perspektiv anskues som et problem, vil i et feltperspektiv (der inkluderer multiple perspektiver) vise sig at rumme både en funktion og en mening i forhold til den måde, som feltet organiserer sig på. Ved at forstå den funktion og mening, vil det, der oprindeligt



# selvregulering



blev oplevet som et problem, få en ny betydning. (Sonne & Tønnesvang, 2013, p.21).

Det vil typisk være sådan, at når man forstår problemets feltsammenhæng, så får man derved adgang til løsning af problemet.

Når man arbejder med en person, er man som praktiker opmærksom på, hvordan denne person gestalter mening både i den aktuelle kontekst, kontakten mellem praktiker og klient, og også i personens felt i bredere forstand. Viser der sig f.eks. *typiske mønstre* i gestaltningsdynamikken?

Vi vil se lidt nærmere på de mikroprocesser, som er på spil i vores selvregulering og den deri indlejrede gestaltning. Det er processer, som involverer kognition, emotion, krop og den specifikke feltkontekst.

## Selvregulering

I enhver levende organisme foregår en organisme/omverden selvreguleringsproces. F.eks. vil sult opleves som en ubalance, som gør, at føde træder i forgrund som figur, og organismen vil opsøge føde for at udligne ubalancen. Når behovet er tilfredsstillet, kan en anden figur træde i forgrund. Det, som træder i forgrund, har en særlig interesse eller betydning i forhold til organismens behov. Processen starter med stimuli, indre eller ydre, som man registrerer og sanser (se figuren ovenfor). I en optimal selvregulering vil man så identificere (klarhed) de behov, følelser og tanker og også foretage de handlinger (energimobilisering, handling og kontakt), som er situationsrelevante i forhold til denne sansning.

Hvis fornemmelsen i maven ikke drejede sig om sult men om en reaktion på, at en ven havde såret

mig, så vil jeg måske tage *kontakt* med vedkommende for en afklarende dialog.

Hvis jeg derimod har en tilbøjelig til at undgå en konflikt, som muligvis ville blive tydelig ved at gøre dette, fejltolker jeg måske netop mavefønmelsen som værende sult og trøstespiser i stedet.

Det u-differentierede felt uddifferentieres hele tiden i disse cykliske figur-grund selvreguleringsprocesser.

Som det kan ses af figuren, opererer vi med en polaritet i selvreguleringsdynamikken, som vi kalder *for hæmmet* og *for uhæmmet*. Man kan f.eks. i første del af selvreguleringsprocessen være for 'tykthudet' til at registrere sin sansning, og man kan modsat være overdrevent sensitiv over for stimuli. På tilsvarende måde kan man også i de følgende trin være for hæmmet eller uhæmmet i sin selvregulering.

Den optimale selvregulering er balanceret og situationsadækvat, men mange faktorer bl.a. tidligere erfaringer fra ens *baggrund* interfererer ofte i ens selvregulering og gestaltningsdynamik.

Man vil ud fra et feltperspektiv kunne afdække mening og funktion i personens gestaltnings- og selvreguleringsdynamik, også selvom det måske objektivt set ikke er den mest situationsadækvate selvregulering.

Vi har altså disse grundforhold: feltet som ultimativt er altings sammenhæng og vores organismiske selvregulering med den deri indlejrede gestaltningsdynamik. Når vi taler om mennesket som en *organisme*, er det for at gå bag om den typiske psyke-soma dualisme og understrege den organismisk/kropslige dimension i vores selvregulering. Ethvert psykologisk problem rummer også

somatiske aspekter og ethvert somatisk symptom rummer også psykologiske aspekter.

## Redskaberne i IGP: kontakt, awareness og eksperiment

**Kontakt** handler om, hvorvidt den person, man arbejder med, oplever sig set, mødt og forstået, og en gensidig oplevelse af fælles forståelse. Betydningen af opmærksomhed på denne interpersonelle kontaktdimension er i tråd med andre psykoterapeutiske retninger, som har fokus på det relationelle og interpersonelle.

Men vi taler i IGP også om f.eks. den *kontakt*, man kan få med aspekter, som man ikke før havde kontakt med – f.eks. kontakt med en følelse, en erindring, viljen eller modet til en ny handling eller med nogle faktuelle realiteter og vilkår – herunder de fundamentale eksistentielle grundvilkår.

Kontakt begrebet hænger tæt sammen med **awareness** begrebet. Det er interessant for en gammel gestaltpraktiker, at mindfulness-begrebet i de senere år har fået så megen opmærksomhed, idet det nærmest er synonymt med gestaltterapiens awareness begreb.

Awareness er den ikke dømmende metakognitive opmærksomhed, på det der sker, mens det sker. Når man får kontakt med noget, implicerer det også awareness af dette noget.

I mindfulness træning er essensen, at man defuserer fra de tanker, emotioner, bindinger, som dukker op i en, altså det man får kontakt med og dermed bliver aware om.

I IGP har vi den antagelse, at når personen bliver aware om og altså får kontakt med fx et bestemt reaktivt handlemønster eller en emotion, så rummer denne kontakt ofte i sig selv et udviklings potentiale. Vi taler om det paradoks (Beisser 1970), at forandring ofte sker, via kontakt med det der er, snarere end ved at man *vil* forandringen. Hvis man fx ikke vil anerkende den lidelse, som er, så opretholder man ofte, i sin undgåelse, status quo. Hvorimod når man accepterer den, som den er, så giver det adgang til den naturlige forandring og bevægelse. Dette er i øvrigt parallelt til, hvordan man nu taler om accept og forandring i 3. generations kognitiv terapi, f.eks. ACT (Hayes et al., 2003; Wilson 2011).

Dette bringer os ind på, hvordan vi kan beskrive, hvad **udvikling** egentlig er.

Når man får kontakt med sit uhensigtsmæssige mønster, altså *identificerer* det, i stedet for ubevidst

at være *identisk* med det, åbnes muligheden for, at man kan af *disidentificere* sig fra det.

Vi har i IGP en udviklingsforståelse, der med inspiration fra Kegan (1982; 1994) lyder således: *Det som var subjekt på ét niveau bliver objekt for subjektet på det næste niveau*. Fra at være identisk med, fx være styret af sin automatreaktion, identificerer man denne for at kunne dis-identificere sig fra den og dermed transcenderer den.

**Eksperimentet:** Perls kalder det ”The contextual method of argument” (Perls et al. 1973/1951), den kontekstuelle lærings metode. Hvis jeg i min praksis snakker med en person om hans vanskelige forhold til fx en kollega (eller chef, nabo, far), så kan jeg folde hans fænomenologi mere ud ved - i stedet for blot at *snakke om* ham selv og den anden – at bede ham forestille sig personen i den tomme stol og tale direkte til vedkommende. Konteksten/feltet bringes tilstede i nuet. Jeg beder ham skifte plads og foretage en dialog med den anden. Gennem processen vil han blive mere afklaret, bl.a. ved at opleve den andens position og perspektiv indefra. Processen vil give ham mulighed for at trække nogle af sine egne projektioner tilbage. Han udvider sit perspektiv på feltet, som også involverer hans egne subtile selvregulerings- og gestaltningsprocesser, og på den måde får han kontakt med og bliver opmærksom på disse. Eksperimentet involverer krop, sansning, emotion, kognition og den specifikke kontekst.

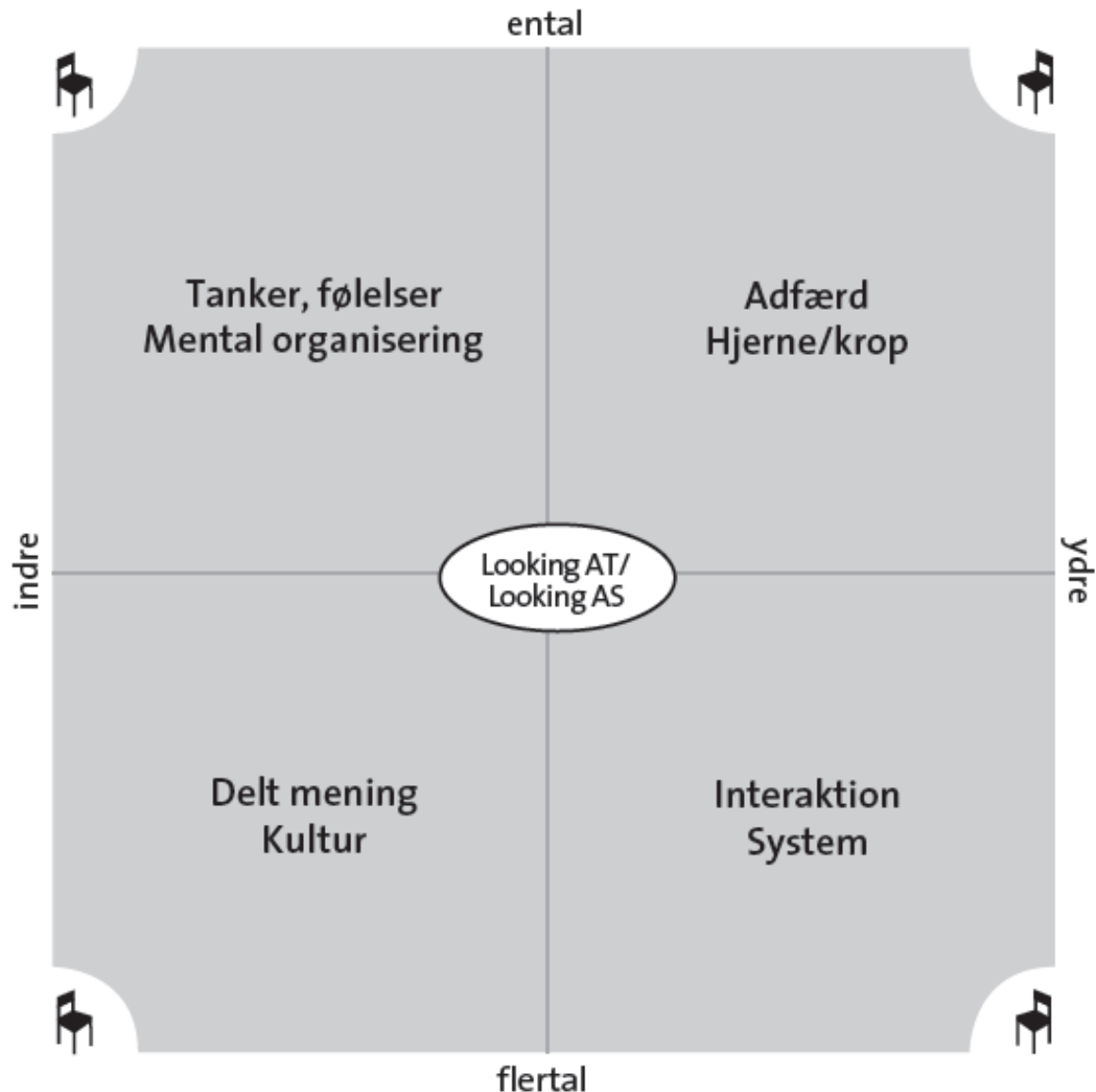
## IGP Kvadrantmodellen

I det følgende vil jeg præsentere den feltsystematik vi arbejder med i IGP, den såkaldte kvadrantmodel (se figuren på næste side), inspireret af Ken Wilber (1995; 2000; 2006).

Forestil dig, at have disse fire perspektiver for øje, når du arbejder med en person. Man kan f.eks. forestille sig kvadranten som et vindue, hvor man kigger gennem fire forskellige ruder.

De øvre kvadranter vedrører det enkelte individ, adfærd og krop til højre, personens oplevelse, tanker og følelser til venstre. Det til højre er det, som kan observeres. Det gælder også hjerneprocesser, som kan observeres, hvis man har det rette udstyr. Vi kalder det øvre højre perspektiv *ydre ental*. Det i øvre venstre kvadrant, *indre ental*, kan ikke observeres.

På samme måde er der en flertalsdimension. Individet eksisterer altid i en kontekst. Den ydre



observerbare i nedre højre, f.eks. systemsammenhænge og de observerbare interaktioner.

I nedre venstre har vi så det indre af den ydre flertalsdimension, meningen med det der kan observeres. Mens et videokamera kan optage mennesker, der render rundt efter en bold på en græsplæne (ydre flertal) og også optage de nedskrevne regelsæt (ydre flertal), der rammesætter deres adfærd, så er det i indre flertals perspektivet, at vi har en fælles forståelse af, at det er en fodboldkamp. Indre flertal vedrører meningen med det, der kan observeres i ydre flertal.

Udover de fire kvadrantperspektiver differentierer vi i IGP mellem Looking AT og Looking AS.

I sit psykologarbejde oplever man umiddelbart den anden i et Looking AT perspektiv (ser ham udefra) og sig selv ud fra et Looking AS perspektiv. Men man vil samtidig tilstræbe at forstå den anden indefra (Looking AS) og have opmærksomhed på sig selv i et Looking AT perspektiv. Dette er i øvrigt essensen i, hvad *mentalisering* handler om (jf. Bateman & Fonagy 2006): At se sig selv udefra og den anden indefra.

Når vi udforsker personens gestaltningsdynamik, kan vi se på forholdet mellem perspektiverne, og derved tilvejebringe flere af feltets perspektiver:

*Eksempel: "Du fortæller, hvor vred (indre ental) du er, og jeg lægger mærke til, at (ydre ental) du samtidig smiler. Er du selv opmærksom på det? Har du nogen ide om hvordan det kan være?"*

*Eksempel: "Du fortæller, at din kollega afviser (oplevelse i indre ental) dig, hvad er det helt præcis vedkommende gør (ydre flertal), som giver dig den oplevelse?"*

Når vi dykker lidt mere ind i kvadrantmodellen, kan vi også skelne mellem et proces aspekt og et struktur aspekt.

Når vi kigger på øvre venstre, så er der de hele tiden foranderlige følelser og tanker og de kontinuerlige gestaltningsprocesser. Det er det processuelle aspekt. Og så er der strukturaspektet, som vedrører ens tilbøjelighed eller parathed til at gestalte på den ene eller anden måde. Man kan betegne struktur aspektet som ens personlighed, som det ubevidste, som skemata/leveregler, som ens livsnarrativer. Der findes i psykologien adskillige betegnelser for det.

Det, vi i IGP specielt er interesserede i, er at bringe opmærksomhed til forholdet mellem strukturaspektet og procesaspektet. Med reference til hukommelsesforskningen kalder vi i IGP strukturaspektet for den *procedurale gestaltningsparathed*, idet den ofte vil være indlejret i den procedurale hukommelse (jf. Tulving 1985), vores implicite udførehukommelse, som ofte er mere kropslig og prærefleksiv end egentlig reflekteret.

Det er praktisk, at der er mange ting, vi gør uden at tænke over hvordan vi gør det, f.eks. når vi snører vores snørebånd eller låser cyklen op. Men der er også gestaltningsparatheder, som gav mening en gang, og som vi bliver ved med at operere på baggrund af, også selv om deres funktion ikke længere er hensigtsmæssig.

Lad os se på dannelsen af den procedurale gestaltningsparathed ved at se på feltets historicitet.

*Eksempel: I Lenes opvækst familie var der (ydre flertals perspektiv) en far, der drak og slog mor. Mor lukkede øjnene for og fornægtede faderens drikkeri. Dette gav en bestemt atmosfære (indre flertal), hvor Lene lærte*

*sig at klare tingene selv, når det brændte på, fordi der alligevel ikke var nogen hjælp at hente. Samtidig tilpassede hun sig moderens fornægtelse, bl.a. ved ofte at rydde de tomme flasker af vejen før mor kom hjem. Denne kultur (indre flertal) har lagret sig som en parathed i Lene (strukturaspektet i indre ental) til også i voksenlivet at bide tænderne sammen, tænke at jeg må klare tingene selv og handle på egen hånd (ydre ental), når tingene brænder på på arbejdet (ydre flertal) og samtidig en laden som om alt er i orden, også når det ikke er.*

*Et andet eksempel: Poul er en leder, som søger coaching. Endnu et arbejdsområde er lagt ind under ham, og han vil gerne have nogle redskaber til at blive bedre til at delegere.*

*Vi har sammen udforsket de faktuelle forhold i systemkvadranten, arbejdsforhold, arbejds-mængde, deadlines, ansvarsområder osv. Både vedr. ham selv, hans chef og de afdelingsledere, som refererer til ham. Vi har snakket om situationsbestemt ledelse, versatil ledelse og faser i delegeringsprocesser.*

*I det her tilfælde bruger vi kvadranten eksplicit og tegner og skriver på den på en flipover, og vi sidder sammen og kigger på det (Looking AT).*

*M: Det lyder, som om du tager hånd om tingene, fordi du forventer, at andre alligevel ikke tager deres ansvar?*

*P: Ja det er nok sådan det er.*

*(Vi sidder lidt i tavshed og kigger på kvadranten)*

*M: Hvad er du lige nu opmærksom på?*

*P: Det får mig til at tænke på den overansvarlighed, jeg altid har haft.*

*M: Mener du altid'?*

*P: Nej måske er det egentlig mest siden min mors og fars skilsmisse.*

*M: Fortæl mere. hvor gammel var du?*

*P: 12 år. Jeg tror det var der, jeg faktisk bestemte mig for at måtte klare tingene selv. Jeg kunne alligevel ikke regne med dem mere. (bliver berørt). Jeg har aldrig rigtig snakket med nogen om, hvordan det var for mig.*

*M: se den 12 årige for dig eller for dit indre. (Eksperimentet: Jeg inviterer til, at Poul går i dialog med den 12 årige, hvorved der skabes yderligere kontakt med det aspekt, som*

*har været centralt i Pouls procedurale gestaltningsparathed og automatik ”jeg skal klare tingene selv” og samtidig skabes kontakt med de følelser af sorg, vrede og svigt, som den 12 årige oplevede).*

Samtaleforløbet ligger nogle år tilbage. Jeg har siden haft kontakt med ham via nogle kurser. Han bruger stadig i pressede situationer at tænke ’Poul 12 år’, og bruger dette til at bryde sit mønster og sin reaktive automatik og i stedet åbne øjnene for, hvem der kan hjælpe. Ved at arbejde med den ufærdige gestalt, er der frisat energi til en mere situationsrelevant selvregulering, hvor han går i dialog med sin chef, og hvor han også delegerer og dermed får den relevante hjælp til sine opgaver.

Hans problem, som udgjorde den aktuelle figur, skiftede via awareness og feltopmærksomhed til, at noget i hans baggrund, som kaldte på færdiggørelse, blev figur. Via eksperimentet, hvor han gik i en indre dialog, fik han kontakt med og identificerede et reaktivt mønster, som han ubevidst var identisk med, således at han kunne disidentificere sig fra, at det skulle være styrende for hans selvregulering.

Man kan også med kvadrantmodellen se, hvordan **forskellige videnskabelige traditioner** har forskelligt udgangspunkt og perspektiv, fx lægevidenskaben (ydre ental), psykologien (indre ental), samfundsvidenskab (ydre flertal), antropologien (indre flertal). På samme måde kan vi se, hvordan forskellige psykologiske og psykoterapeutiske teorier og tilgange har forskelligt fokus. Adfærdsterapi (ydre ental), kognitiv/emotionsfokuseret/narrativ/psykodynamisk terapi (indre ental), systemisk terapi (indre flertal), kroporienteret terapi (ydre/indre ental) osv. Selvom det bliver lidt forenklet, giver det et billede af, hvordan enhver retning kan ses som overvejende beskæftigende sig med delaspekter af det samlede felt. Enhver tilgang og teori udsiger fra sit perspektiv noget relevant om virkeligheden.

Som Wilber siger: *No brain is smart enough to produce a 100 percent error.*

Det er i den henseende, at kvadrantperspektivismen tilbyder en model, som kan samtænke de forskellige psykoterapeutiske skoler og retninger, og kan danne ramme for integrativ psykologi og psykologisk intervention. Også indenfor gestaltterapi og gestalt coaching eksisterer der forskellige retninger. Nogle har mere fokus på det relationelle (indre flertal), nogle på det eksperimenterende, nogle på det fænomenologisk/kognitive (indre en-

tal), og nogle på det kropsfænomenologiske (Kepner 2001) a la Somatic Experience (Levine 2005).

Som komplementaritet til og supplement til beskrivelsen af IGP og kvadrantlogikken, følger her et eksempel på en **kontemplativ brug af kvadrantmodellen**; en slags mindfulness lignende fordybelsesøvelse, som giver mulighed for at få den lidt mere ind under huden. Audioguidning af øvelsen findes på [www.mikaelsonne.dk/kvadrant-mentaliserings](http://www.mikaelsonne.dk/kvadrant-mentaliserings).

*Luk øjnene .....forestil dig, at kvadranten er så stor, at du kan stå i centrum af den. Prøv at gå ud i indre entalskvadranten.... vær opmærksom på dine følelser og tanker nu og i dit liv for tiden..... gå over i ydre entalskvadrant.... din krop og handlinger..... gå nu ud i ydre flertalskvadrant..... de forskellige systemsammenhænge du indgår i og de forskellige sammenhænge, som du indgår i med andre mennesker... arbejdsmæssigt og privat..... og indre flertal.... Hvordan er stemningen, atmosfæren forskellig i de forskellige sammenhænge du indgår i?.....*

*Gå nu ind i midten... tag en elevator ned til en etage længere nede.... måske i din barndom... gå ud der og undersøg de forskellige kvadrantperspektiver dengang..... dine følelser og tanker... din krop og adfærd.... konteksten....de forskellige personer på det tidspunkt fra et ydre flertalsperspektiv som et videokamera kunne filme det..... og fra et indre flertalsperspektiv, stemning, atmosfære..... gå nu ind i midten igen ....tag elevatoren op til det vi kalder her og nu.... og fortsæt videre op i et helikopter perspektiv..... bare se det hele lidt fra oven, og se hvad der dukker op.....nogle mønstre..... måske noget der kalder på et næste skridt.... efter et par minutter, vend tilbage og åbn øjnene.*

## Om forholdet mellem terapi og coaching

Grundbegreberne felt, selvregulering og gestaltning, samt redskaberne kontakt, awareness og eksperiment, er lige relevante i gestalt terapi og i gestalt coaching. Kvadrantmodellen vil ofte være en del af terapeutens implicite feltopmærksomhed, når det drejer sig om terapi, mens modellen, når det drejer sig om coaching, ofte med fordel kan anvendes eksplicit, som et fælles tredje. Tilsvarende anvender vi IGP også modeller som et fælles tredje

til at klargøre, hvordan selvreguleringsdynamikken vitaliseres i forhold til personens psykologiske grundbehov og tilværelseskompetence (jf. Tønnesvang & Schou 2017).

Når vi taler om forholdet mellem terapi og coaching, ser jeg det som et kontinuum. Det er den professionelle ansvar at vurdere, hvordan og hvornår man som coach evt. bevæger sig ind på det mere terapeutiske område. Og selvom der er en grænse mellem terapi og coaching, er det samtidig svært specifikt at give regler for, hvilke grænser det er, coachingsamtaler ikke må overskride.

Generelt kan man, med reference til kvadrantmodellen, sige at terapi bevæger sig *ind* i den indre entals dimension og *ned* i personens procedurale gestaltningsparathed, mens coaching mere bevæger sig *op* og *ud* i praktisk handlen (ydre ental og flertal) ofte i personens arbejdsmæssige kontekst.

Der er et kontinuum fra terapi til coaching. Netop fordi grænserne ikke er helt skarpe, og fordi de er meget kontekst afhængige, er det en særlig vigtig kvalitet at være uddannet psykolog med kendskab til og erfaring med terapi, også når man arbejder med coaching. Det er nemmest at kende grænsen, når man også ved, hvad der er på den anden side af den.

En skelnen mellem terapi og coaching kan også være, at mens man som psykoterapeut ofte specifikt går ind og arbejder med de procedurale mønstre, traumer, automat-tanker og følelser mm, så berøres disse muligvis også i coaching, men ofte blot ved at der anerkendes en sammenhæng mellem de udfordringer personen aktuelt oplever og de mentale organiseringsmønstre, som personen kender til eller opdager i samtalen, mens en eventuel videre bearbejdning af disse henvises til egentlig terapi. Imidlertid er den gestaltterapeutiske grundforståelse og metode i vidt omfang også direkte anvendelig i coaching (jf. Dyrkorn 2014; Dyrkorn & Dyrkorn 2010; Sonne & Tønnesvang 2015). Grundforståelsen gør sig endvidere gældende i al almindelighed ved det, at alle og enhver i dagligdagen kan skærpe sin opmærksomhed på egne gestaltdannelsesprocesser og derved få adgang til at bryde sine utidssvarende procedurale mønstre (jf. Hostrup 2015).

I eksemplet 'Povl' ovenfor, er der tale om coaching, bl.a. fordi det i et nedre højre (ydre flertal) systemkvadrant perspektiv, drejer sig om en leder, der, betalt af sin arbejdsgiver, søger coaching mhp.

et specifikt arbejdsrelateret mål. Indholdet i samtaleforløbet kunne imidlertid have lignet meget, hvis han havde været en privatperson med stress symptomer, der havde søgt psykoterapi.

Forskellen på coaching og terapi er således til dels defineret af forhold i systemkvadranten.

Kvadrantmodellen giver en ramme til at klargøre, i hvilket omfang ens interventioner er af primært terapeutisk eller coachende karakter, alt efter hvilke kvadrantperspektiver der vægtes og på hvilken måde de vægtes. Den giver også et billede, som i dette eksempel, på at vores skelnen mellem terapi og coaching delvis kan relateres til systemiske forhold (ydre flertal).

Kvadrantoptikken kan bruges implicit eller eksplicit, både i terapi og i coaching, som i eksemplet ovenfor. Den kan også anvendes i arbejdet med f.eks. samarbejdskonflikter og organisationsudvikling. Her følger afslutningsvis et eksempel på, hvordan jeg har brugt den eksplicit i forhold til en samarbejdssituation i en organisation:

*Eksempel: To afdelingsledere i samme kommune skal samarbejde vedr. de samme borgere. Den ene er læge og leder en sundhedsfaglig enhed, den anden er socialrådgiver og leder en socialfaglig enhed. Der er flere gange tidligere opstået konflikter mellem de to, men nu er det kørt helt fast. Jeg er blevet bedt om at lave en seance med de to, og jeg har inviteret deres respektive chefer med. Vi bruger kvadrantmodellen eksplicit ved at tegne og skrive på en flipover. Når jeg bringer opmærksomhed til, at det i et ydre flertals perspektiv er den samme virkelighed, de skal samarbejde om, med det overordnede samme mål for øje, nemlig at hjælpe borgeren, og at de samtidig repræsenterer komplekse perspektiver, både qua deres forskellige faglighed, forskellige arbejdsfunktioner, som er at varetage to ret forskellige delopgaver, samt (med reference til indre ental) til deres forskellige personligheder, lykkes det at transformere en fastlåst konflikt til anerkendelse af den meningsfulde uenighed. De går begge derfra med en lille seddel, hvorpå de selv spontant har noteret ordene "Meningsfuld uenighed". Som reminder til at forebygge eskalering i kommende konfliktsituationer.*

I organisations sammenhæng er kvadrantmodellen brugbar til fx til at klargøre, hvordan organi-

sationsforandringer, som kan ske ved en streg på papiret (ydre flertal), i de øvrige kvadranter fordrer en helt anden forandrings hastighed, ikke mindst i kulturkvadranten (indre flertal). Når to virksomheder skal fusionere, er modellen anvendelig som et fælles tredje, til at vise at selv om fusionen faktisk har fundet sted (ydre flertal), så følger store omstillinger i kulturen (indre flertal) og hos den enkelte medarbejder (indre ental). Nogle ledere anvender kvadrantoptikken som et fælles tredje i forbindelse med medarbejdersamtaler. Nogle praktiserende læger bruger den i forbindelse med anamneseoptagelse. Mulighederne er mange, også udover coaching og terapi.

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Mikael Sonne (f.1951) er psykolog, specialist i psykoterapi og supervisor på videreuddannelsesniveau. Han er leder af Center for Integrativ Gestalt Praksis og formand for styrelsen for Dansk Psykologforenings Netværk for Integrativ Gestalt Praksis. Han er leder af tre årig videreuddannelse i integrativ gestaltterapi, som vedrører specialisteruddannelse i psykoterapi for psykologer og forestår uddannelsesprogrammet 'Lederens Personlige Udvikling' for ledere fra privat og offentligt regi. Mikael arbejder i sin psykologpraksis med terapi, coaching, supervision og organisationsudvikling. Han er gæstelærer på Psykologisk institut, Aarhus Universitet. Mikael Sonne har en baggrund som psykolog inden for psykiatrien, er videreuddannet ved Gestalt Training Center; San Diego hos Erving og Miriam Polster, samt i Danmark hos Natasha Mann m.fl. Han er endvidere uddannet i meditation og energiarbejde hos Bob Moore. Mikael Sonne er medforfatter til bøgerne *Integrativ Gestalt Praksis – kompleksitet og helhed i arbejdet med mennesker* (Hans Reitzels forlag 2013) og *Integrative Gestalt Practice – transforming our ways of working with people* (Karnac Books 2015).

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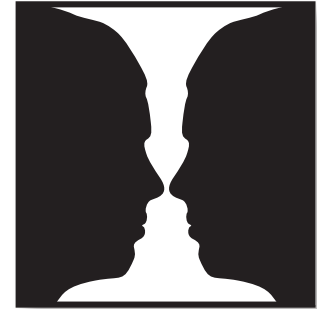
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# Coaching psykologi

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10.5278/ojs.cp.v6i1.2062



## Coaching a musical mindset

by Line Fredens

### Abstract

*This article describes and analyzes the improvisational and innovative process that takes place among professional musicians during the extraordinary concert. The aim is to draw parallels to the professional coaching conversation in order to examine what new angles this analogy can contribute in proportion to coaching as a practice. In other words, how can an analysis of the musician's communication during a successful concert shed light on what is happening in a successful professional dialogue.*

*The article contains both empirical data and theory. The empirical data comes to results from a qualitative study undertaken in connection with my thesis within the Master of Learning Processes Specializing in Organizational Coaching at Aalborg University, and is based on interviews with five professional orchestra musicians from the Royal Danish Orchestra, the Copenhagen Phil and the Danish National Symphony Orchestra*

**Keywords:** Coaching, conducting, co-development, musicality, improvisation, cognition, and attention.

We all know it. The magic moments where we forget ourselves and get so absorbed by a conversation that it is no longer us who shape the words but the common dialogue that forms us. Here the result of the conversation is not known in advance but is being created along the way, and new ideas are emerging.

But it's not always easy. "People do not listen, they reload" writes Isaacs in his book on dialogue (Isaacs, 1999:19). We often talk with the eyes. When we see our conversation partner gasping for air, we open our mouths and can finally say what we were thinking of while the other spoke. But a

dialogue is something we do together in contrast to the monologue, and on this basis the quality of the conversation is depending of the interaction between two or more individuals.

At my work as a violinist in Malmö Symphony Orchestra I experience another form of communication. Here are no words but an expression created jointly. When successful, the experience is unique. A work as a musician concerns events. There is no book or a painting as a product when a musician has finished his job. The focal point is the creative element that takes place here and now, where the unique about the event occurs in the meeting be-

tween the people involved. Therefore, the music is also frequently used as an image of the improvisational interaction. But what is really present when the interaction succeeds; When the fragments play together in such a way that the whole can be termed successively? And what mindset characterizes classical professional musicians who daily deal with and master the special challenge of the moment, where 97 musicians during a concert create something new together.

## From notes to music, expression and meaning making

As a young student at the Royal Danish Academy of Music, my violin teacher told me about a magic door: *"It is just absolutely amazing on the other side of the door, just go there and open it."* It was the next stage of my development as a musician he talked about.

Later in life, I found myself in Budapest with my piano trio. We were lucky to spend three months in the hands of a famous but also notorious teacher. Here there were no compromises but everything was possible as long as it made sense in a context. It became an intense study that involved make us understandable about the music while we played. How could we make the three of us, merge into a common expression that not only made sense for our self but also for our listeners? Our Hungarian mentor shook his head a lot during that period. But there was smile on his lip and glint in the eye every time he expressed not to understand what he heard when we played. He had fun when we asked about the exact length and other details of the notes and responded cryptically; *"The notes does not know they are short and what's short?"* With great patience, he continued to tell us what he experienced by listening to our playing. It took some time, but at last we began to open our ears instead of searching for the right answer. At first we could not hear what he meant, but slowly our understanding increased, and we learned how to open the magic door that I had heard of years before. The time in Budapest became the year 0 in my life as a musician.

This story concerns my own journey to the art of interaction, which is about creating a common expression that makes sense. My first teacher had the experience himself but no explanation. In Budapest we met our own experience, helped by

a teacher's question mark of what he experienced when he heard us playing. Where the first teacher gave me an impression of something that I was going to open, the other teacher brought our attention towards the expression we created and here the door opened itself.

The performative was something we should learn: The improvisation, cooperation and communication in the actual situation.

The above example is about music. But performing in a context is something that concerns us all. The interaction between a person and his situation has interested philosophers and researchers for decades. Today, our educations focus on subjects such as entrepreneurship that will train people to lead creativity. Organizations and institutions must innovate in a rapidly changing world. All of this requires active encounters between individuals and contexts where the outcome is more than the individual elements could create alone. In a physical surrounding we create our own situation and it creates us in a way that emotion and perception create and is influenced by contextual factors. Brain, body and the outside world creates a complementary relationship (Lieberman, 2013), which naturally leads to the consequence that when a dimension is highlighted, the others will form the context.

Let's transfer this premise to a coaching session. A coachee wants help to be able to act more appropriately in relation to a future desire. Often the coachee is very deliberate of a certain problem, but vague about his dream behind that problem. The coaching session will often shed light on that dream which then can act as a compass for future actions. But these future actions cannot all be planned in advance, because they must be created on behalf of the interaction with the outside world. Instead, the coachee must find his "magic door" in order to navigate most appropriately in relation to the unexpected and surprising that the reality often offers. The question now becomes how a coach best can help a coachee to find this "magic door" and this question will be the plot of this article.

I will now include my five interviews with classical professional orchestra musicians to dive deeper into the issue of the extraordinary and creative musical performance, while at the same time to approach the difference between this and the bad concert.

## Musical communication and communicative musicality

*"There are conductors who speaks everything to death. I just cannot concentrate on all these informations,"* uttered a musician from the Danish National Symphony Orchestra.

The conductor leads the orchestra and coordinates the interaction between the musicians. And all the interviewed musicians express that the good conductor does not speak to much. Musical communication, which we find in the interaction between the individual, groups and conductor, is of a different type than the verbal communication as we know it from meetings and academic lectures at the university.

The researchers Davidson & Good (2002) have shown that there are two major sources of cohesion in a music ensemble. One is the common connection to the music, the other is the social interaction. The first is about musical communication and the last deals with communicative musicality (Malloch and Trevarthen, 2009). Musical communication is about the music that is communicated (content), and communicative musicality highlights the way it is done (form).

A common pattern for the interviewed musicians was that several things were difficult to articulate linguistically. In my interviews, I ask a violinist from Copenhagen Phil how she as a 2nd violin player interacts with the 1st violins, and her respond shows that that is not something she previously has been aware of. *"It's hard to say how to do it, really,"* she answers on a question concerning something she masters at a very high level. The expertise she has acquired is implicit, which her subsequent comment further supports: *"That's because you know the music and the other musicians so well that you can feel when the 1<sup>st</sup> violins do like that, then they might want this."* The violinist refer to the non-verbal side of the communication when she express how she "feel" the interaction. The communicative musicality is by all the interviewed musicians highlighted as the area in which the extraordinary is created during a performance. It is music that is communicated, but the musical communication is mentioned only with few words – and of course it is a matter of course for the interviewed musicians that this side of the performance is present and stable. Let's take a closer look at what participation in the communicative musicality requires of its par-

ticipants before we look at how the experiences of communicative musicality can contribute to a greater insight into what characterizes the good coaching session.

## Inner and outer attention

One can distinguish between inner and outer attention (Baluch & Itti, 2011). Our thinking is based on our inner attention while outer attention is directed at the outside world. When we make plans, the inner attention focus on details and consider for and against. It is an abstract process at the expense of the external context. It is the outer attention that join the outside world often effortless. A musician from the Danish National Symphony Orchestra describes the attention shift as follows: *"Fixed agreements are like traffic rules. Once you've learned to drive, you do not think about the rules, but drive after the conditions."* This comment illustrates the difference between an effortfull inner attention (Baluch & Itti, 2011) and an outer effortless attention (Bruya, 2010).

Inner attention (top down) thoughts and memories  
Outer attention (bottom up) sensation and perception

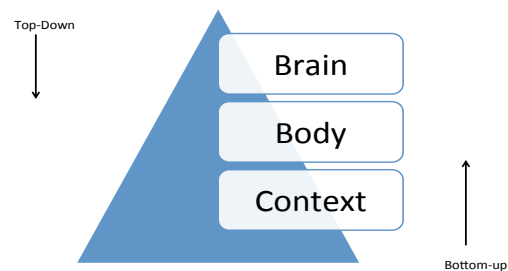


Figure 1.

As an analogy to the coaching conversation, a newly trained coach with his or her learned theories and models will have difficulty fully listening to the coachee, because theory driven attention is an inner attention that stands in the way for the outer attention addressing the coachee. With experience, the theories and models will step in the background for the benefit of the dialogue between the coachee and the coach. The coach's outer attention will take over and in a bottom-up sensation let the situation speak to him. Inner and outer attention, are two different ways of orientation. Attention is a prerequisite for cognitive processes, and here

the dual-process theory distinguishes between two different thinking systems, one fast and one slow (Kahneman, 2011).

### Dual-process theory – fast and slow thinking

The basis for the dual-process theory probably comes from psychologist William James, who thought there were two forms of thinking: an associative and implicit, as well as a conclusive and explicit. This dual process theory has since been described in different ways and has been given a modern expression with Kahneman (2011), who talks about two complementary systems: a slow explicit and a fast implicit. The slow system contains our conscious thinking and our verbal language. It is linear and therefore moves one step at a time opposite to the fast system, which has many simultaneous parallel branches. It is the slow system that underpins academic learning with abstract thinking, logical strategies, analyzes and evaluations as well as technical rationality where you can set measurable goals. It is an energy-intensive mental process that requires concentration, perseverance and focused (inner) attention.

Technical strategies are crucial in situations where you need security and control and know the results in advance; Both the musician and the coach must possess technical skills to be able to do their craft, but when it comes the artistic process, a completely different strategy must be used: the adaptive. An adaptive strategy does not have a measurable goal, but an idea or vision of direction. It is therefore a strategy that develops while you walk the way, learning from your mistakes and correcting the direction depending on the situation. The adaptive strategy is crucial to the fast system, which is the thinking system that involves the context.

The complementarity becomes clear: The slow system's abstraction abilities are at the expense of the fast system's sensitivity to the specific context. In addition, if we talk about the relationship between part and whole, the slow system focus on the parts, while it's the fast system that can capture the whole.

In a coaching session, it is the coach's slow thinking system that captures the spoken words, but it will be the fast thinking system that captures the implicit expressions and thereby can help the coachee uncover implicit knowledge (Hattie & Yates, 2014). Often the coachee have analyzed a problem without any or little results and therefore

feel deadlocked. The solution will often lie in the non-verbal, in the positive exceptions or in the not yet spoken narratives, because it is in this implicit landscape that the coachee becomes explorers heading for new horizons. In order to catch this interaction, the coach's fast thinking system must be in play in the outer attention.

The fast thinking system, has unlike the slow, a big capacity, and is the system that is on the pitch when we experience a world without thinking in a bottom-up sensation. A violinist from Copenhagen Phil also tells how she, under the good performance, *"is not guided by her brain and can play freely"*. She describes how she can be disturbed by thoughts (linearly) and *"tries to push them out and focus and get into it"*. The musician from the Danish National Symphony Orchestra tells how he thinks back and forth in time during a bad concert, while the sense of time disappears during the good concert where he is more present in the present, *"here is the mind present in another way"*. The trombone group talks about a feeling during the good concert: *"You do not think about technical problems (...) it all just flows"*. The contradiction is described as academic, *"and it cannot be used for anything (...) it becomes square and stupid music, and when we speak feeling, it completely disappears."*

The quotes above shows how the musicians oppose being in the slow thinking system during a performance. The conscious thought will always be at the expense of the whole from which the good concert emerges. On the other hand, the conscious thought can subsequently focus on selected details from the whole. Both experience, idea and situation are ambiguous and complex whole and cannot therefore being contained in our verbal communication alone. The language will always narrow a whole (Schön, 1991), and therefore our verbal expression must be in dialogue with our body expression of feelings and intuition. Against this background, a perspective change in a coaching conversation could help the coachee to discover new opportunities based on the same context.

We are thinking with the slow system, while the fast system thinks for us, claims Kahneman (2011). In this way, there are similarities between the fast system and the aesthetic perception, which gives an immediate experience based on the senses of the body and its perceptual processes independently of conceptual symbols.

## Two sides of the same coin

### Inner attention

- Top down
- Slow thinking system
- Explicit
- Language
- Technical strategy
- Musical communication

### Outer attention

- Bottom up
- Fast thinking system
- Implicit
- Imagination
- Adaptive strategy
- Communicative musicality

Figure 2.

The phenomenologists call it a pre-reflexive experience where the body becomes meaningful with the senses as an inseparable part of this process (Gallese & Lakoff, 2005; Noë, 2009).

These two ways of thinking are two sides of the same coin and can be summed up as follows:

### Summary of the results from my qualitative survey

Communicative musicality is essential for the optimal of the concert experience for the musicians as well as in any coaching sessions. The prerequisites however are, that the technical skills are mastered to such an extent that they have been automated. The fast thinking system gives the musicians an experience of “*not to think*” but an intuitively interacting with the context, which makes it possible to “*create an idea together*”, as the violinist from Copenhagen Phil tells during the interview.

In a coaching session, it is also about creating ideas together. But not only in the dialogue between the coach and the coachee. Initially, it is also about the dialogue that the coachee have with himself, between his implicit and explicit experience. The language will always only account for a part of a whole, since another story can always be told. In this light, the current story from the coachee will negate other possible stories, and therefore it may be difficult in an inner dialogue with oneself to shed light on all the other possible narratives. But through dialogue, the coachee can be aware of the implicit aspects of a previous experience and hereby find new opportunities. Bateson has expressed this by stating that “*once I have said what I think, I*

*can think of what I have said. Then I can hear what I have said and thus become an observer on the situation from another level*” (Lystbæk, 2008 p. 214). For the coach, this requires a listening approach to the process of the collaborative conversation, where there is no fixed goal in advance, but only a common direction for the conversation, which becomes improvisational. Therefore, let's look at the improvisation. First from a musical perspective, to then illuminate the coaching conversation.

### Improvisation

It's a fairly common but erroneous view that classical musicians just reproduce the score that stand in front of them. By contrast the interviewed musicians describe the classical symphony as improvisational. There emerges new ideas “*totally spontaneous (...) or if there is someone who just played extra delicious, then you respond in a slightly different way than usual.*” What happens during the good concert cannot be taught in advance, it is something “*one cannot learn by reading*”, but something that needs to be learned in the situation itself. It's about “*experiencing the music as something that occurs here and now*”.

The improvisational lies not only in the tones, as much as in the timing, in the actual interaction between those involved on the stage. Even though the notes are written down, each performance becomes a new experience, and the new occurs in the relationships between the musicians and the relationship between the notes. This is where the music becomes creative. Musical communication and communicative musicality should be regarded

as a complementary relationship in the same way as the relationship between content and form in music. Designing the content is a creative process.

In analogy to coaching, the coachee contains a “content” for instruction and practice, that the coach can encourage the coachee to develop. How the coachee interacts with this potential however, can be made visible and verbalized through the coach’s questions. When the implicit patterns of action are verbalized, the coach and coachee will be able to look at these patterns and thereby optimize these in relation to a given desire for direction in the future. In other words, how can the coach help the coachee improve his improvisation, just like the musicians who do not just reproduce notes but recreate them in a co-development. At the same time, the coach himself must master the art of improvisation in the interaction with the coachee. A coach should be able to be mentally moved by the interaction, and to let this movement be the background from where the questions arise, even though the head is full of methods.

When the music plays, the orchestra can be described as a complex adaptive system. The conductor may well give signs to the individual musician or group, but basically, he lies the leadership out in the sense that he interacts with the interaction between the groups while they play. The creative process is in a network of relationships that connects the musicians together.

In a complex system, the creative process is not controlled by a single person. It occurs, according to complexity theories (Goldstein et al. 2010) as a result of many interacting events.

In such an interaction, the perfect performance will emerge. This emergence cannot be planned in advance, but occurs as “*the unexpected*” or as another interviewed musician expressed it: “*it’s just something that happens*”.

### Between safety and freedom

Complexity is, according to the Danish physicist Per Bak (1996), a special state that we find in the tension between order and chaos, which arises from the interaction between the different parts of a system. A system in balance can be predicted and managed with goals and plans. The conductor who requires that the musicians in a one-way communication should only follow him and his plan, shuts down the interaction between all the elements in the orchestra system, which my interviewed musi-

cians expresses opposition against when they say, “*The bad conductors run their own race, they do not look or get inspiration from others because they think they are the best ones themselves.*” The good conductor, on the other hand, is described as one who manages to create a network of interdisciplinary relationships in the interaction with what “occurs”. It is on this edge we find the complexity between order and chaos (Bak, 1996) or as a musician from the Danish National Symphony Orchestra expresses it: “*Being in the right relationship between safety and freedom*”. He later elucidates these concepts as each other’s prerequisites. “*I feel safe and I know what’s going to happen. If something else happens, it’s also okay (..) but if I don’t feel safe, it’s like a straitjacket, and I get the feeling that I have to be careful.*” All the interviewed musicians agree that the good conductor should be able to lead an orchestra so nobody is in doubt about his intentions. “*One must be confident that he (the conductor) shows what is needed,*” says the violinist from Copenhagen Phil.

When the conductor manages to create a collective frame of reference, it will give the musicians a common space within which can be improvised. The common framework gives the musicians the confidence that is a prerequisite for the improvisation, as improvisation is based on the fast thinking system. The fast thinking system comes into play when we relax, whereas the slow system is active and offers more explicit technical strategies when deliberate concentration is needed (Hattie and Yates, 2014).

In a coaching session, the coach as a gamemaster can create the framework for improvisation. When the coach moves from a content level to a process level, the frame of the conversation can be elucidated and thereby constitute the prerequisite for the improvisation.

When a coachee seeks answers to a problem, it often binds to a desire for more order in an unmanageable situation. But if the goal of the conversation is to send the focus person out into the world with the ability to handle the unexpected, then a clear answer will block the interaction with the unforeseen and prevent the emergence that the complexity can offer.

Open questions on the other hand, can set the course for upcoming answers, and thereby create the framework for an improvisation. Questions will direct the coachee’s attention towards a given direction, and let the coachee improvise in any

situation. A good question will guide the attention of the coachee towards the opportunities that the context offers. The future is created by our daily interactions and if the coachee's question is a dead end, he must be capable to create a new one in order to make "good music." If the purpose of coaching is to make the coachee self-regulative, and ultimately independent of the coach, it is not enough for the coach to ask good questions. The coachee must learn how to ask the questions himself.

### To master the art of making questions

Bloom's taxonomy from 1956 (Bloom and Krathwohl) was revised in 2001 (Anderson and Krathwohl). The taxonomy shows a progressive development of learning, where creativity is the highest form. From a lower - to a higher form of thinking, you move from qualifications to competences and to creativity. Qualifications are about facts, knowledge and information, or "knowledge about". The competence level concerns the "how," and is about being able to apply and analyze the knowledge. At the level of creativity, evaluate and create is in the center.

A good question directs the attention towards those learning processes that can bridge the gap between what we already know, and toward where we want to be, and the more the coachee understands *"the nature of success (...), then the greater the probability of learning happening"* (Hattie and Yates, 2014:xii). The single most influential factor in

learning is what the learner already knows (Hattie and Yates, 2014). Our experiences are proactive, and in this light a good question can activate the coachee's experiences from previous successfully similar task, and help to analyze these underlying knowledge schemas for future actions.

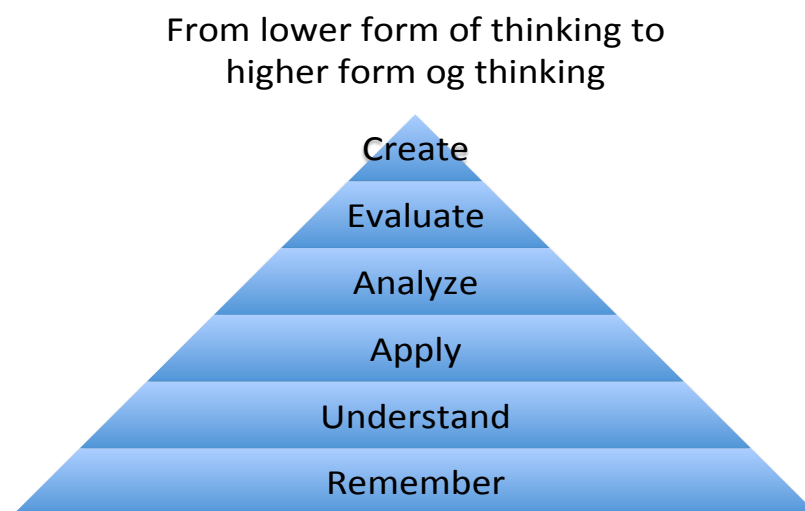
To master the art of making questions concerns knowledge about learning and knowledge about the effect of the different types of questions inspired by Blooms Taxonomy.

This knowledge should be understood, applied, analyzed, evaluated, and only here the coachee will be able to master the art of making questions with the improvisational skills that characterizes creativity. In this light, the coach will have to balance between giving the coachee the relevant knowledge in these areas while also pave the way for the dialogue between the coachee's explicit and implicit knowledge.

You must master the craft before you become an artist, which Bloom's taxonomy also points out. This is as well supported by the following comments from the interviewed musicians:

*"A high professional level is Alpha Omega", "If you have the technical skills, you can be in line with the situation, feel confident and brave. It is also important to feel that you contribute, and not just sit like "uhh" I hope I survive this."*

As mentioned earlier, a performance is a creative process where something unexpected and unique may occur. It's not a material product, because when



Figur 3.

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the concert is over, only the experience is left. It is the improvisational element of the performance that makes the difference. Everything is possible but only within a given frame. The conductor in the orchestra plays here an important role, similar to the role of the coach in the collaborative process happening during a coaching session.

The difference between the bad and the good conductor

*“Many conductors seem like they do not trust whether the musician can play the music himself. They start fiddling with strange things instead of just playing the orchestra”*, expresses a trombone player from the Royal Danish Orchestra. The bad conductor will control the orchestra with a hard hand and requires the musicians to follow his baton. Here, *“we have to look very exact if we want to be together”* and the eyes therefore become the dominant sense just as it sometimes happens in a conversation when we observe the other panting for air, in order to be heard. Here the music is produced *“at the expense of the musicians’ skills,”* as the trombone player expresses it. In contrast, the musicians want to *“be allowed to play as it should be”*. The trombone player expresses a natural sense of *“how it should be”*, which is disturbed by the conductor’s one-way strategy, which at worst transforms the musicians into marionette puppets, which, like Pinocchio, inevitably get trapped in constricting strings without opportunity to dance with each other. If the conductor wants to control everything, the dialogue will mainly be between him and the individual musician. It becomes music without ears when the conductor wants to control and rules the orchestra in a predetermined direction - it just becomes *“too academic”*, pronounces one of the trombone players. What the bad conductor is missing is something that you can’t learn *“by reading”*, as it is something that is happening in the moment, during the performance, if the participants are able to listen and react to what happens. That is this interaction that characterizes the good performance.

The music takes the lead. That feels *“like in a frenzy of enthusiasm”*, and the music *“flows naturally”* because the process is supported by all of those involved when the situation itself becomes the leading context.

Let’s now take a look at the good conductor. He/she is more flexible in his meeting with the orchestra. He does not talk so much, but just starts

conducting, *“and then you feel it works (...) because it’s so relaxing and makes it much easier to devote yourself to the music.”* He does not control the orchestra too strict, but invites the musicians to also bid for interpretation when playing. He inspires more than he dictates and shows confidence in the ability of the musicians to act in common. The conductor is a coordinator, not a dictator. When the good conductor gives the orchestra more rope, he does not conduct *“beats, but forms,”* which illustrates a shift from musical musicality to communicative musicality, thus making the orchestra listen more to each other. There is therefore evidence of a mindsetting of the fast thinking system. It is more inspiring if he trusts the capability of the orchestra and in stead uses his resources to color the music. As a musician mentioned *“it’s really cool when you find that he (the conductor) also is listening and act on behalf of what he hears, and not on behalf of something he have prepared in advance.”*

The skilled conductor thus meets his orchestra with an appreciative approach, starting from what the situation brings. When we meet each other in an appreciative way, it’s a meeting without prejudices. An appreciative interaction does not require consensus, but is about assign each other validity. The appreciative approach has roots in the German philosophical tradition, as we meet it with Hegel, where appreciation is seen as a prerequisite for developing self-awareness as an individual (Dahl and Juhl, 2009). To meet each other with an appreciative approach is a prerequisite for the good relationship and thus also for the dialogue in the coaching session. And since the relationship comes first, as Bateson expresses, the appreciative approach to a coachee will also be an important feature of a coach. It is almost an aesthetic communication or an aesthetic dimension in the dialogue as I have earlier emphasized the aesthetic perception taking precedence in the process of experience.

The ability to listen is the prerequisite for an appreciative interaction with another person. Not only listen to what is being said, but also how it is communicated: The body language, facial expressions and the prosody of the language, which all are about musical elements such as the pitch, the pace, the dynamics and timbre. The notes become music and the words make sense in a holistic perspective. Being able to navigate in a holistic way requires outer attention that senses and experiences with the aesthetic perception. Here, the techniques



and theories are put in brackets and the improvisation leads the meeting with the emerging and unique whole that is the condition of practice.

When listening to another person, listening becomes an art in the way that you are not in advance aware of where you are headed. This is the essence of the term active listening, which is the term for both listening digitally and analogously (Hermansen et al, 2009). This form of listening is the condition for being able to capture implicit expressions and thereby to give the helpful questions to the coachee. Here the coach becomes like the good conductor.

The skilled conductor or coach does not use force, but invites things to arise. The conductor allows the musicians to relax and listen to each other, and creates thereby both a confidence and a belief that the unexpected can take over the control. It is this mentally relaxed state that creates creativity. Right and wrong are replaced by the countless of possibilities that occur when the musicians change from inner to outer attention. A predetermined plan will build on an idea of a whole that we imagine will soon take place, but when the situation asks to dance, the musicians describe how they let themselves lead in the dance like a woman in a tango. It is one of the key elements that's highlighted during the good concert, to be able to "*experience the music as something that occurs in the situation*", where the musician describe the situation as a co-development. As an analogy with the dialogue, Gadamer has pointed out that we "*do not lead but are led in a proper dialogue*" (Lystbæk, 2008: 216). If that is the case, the dialogue, as the good performance, have potential for synergy, by giving up the control and allowing the situation to speak.

Let's play with the idea that the purpose of coaching ultimately is to help the coachee to be able to navigate in his life in the best possible way. The questions from the coach will help the coachee with awareness of the means he already has (content) and at the same time being able to use these means in interaction with the context, previously illustrated as a communicative musicality (form). In my empirical material, the musicians refer to a bad colleague as a person "*who wants to be right*". One who wants to be right will meet the context with an already established answer with his instrument, which will shut down for other opportunities that might arise in the situation itself. In contrast it's about, helping the coachee to open up for

the good interaction. An adaptive behavior, that manages to interact and improvise with upcoming situations. Answers shuts down for possibilities, while questions open up. But good questions will always be shaped based on past experiences (answers), and in this light, answers and questions are complementary. We find answers in the afterthought, whereas questions will guide our actions when we meet our surroundings with the qualities that characterize the art of interaction. When we meet each other in the space behind "the magic door", we should not meet each other with answers on the lip, but with good questions, with an appreciative approach.

## Conclusion

I have highlighted the distinction between musical communication and communicative musicality: Where the musical communication stands for the explicit content, the communicative musicality concerns how this content is conveyed (the form). During a performance in a symphony orchestra, the content is the written notes (the musical communication). When the notes become music, it is by means of communicative musicality among the musicians. The latter are expressions of qualities in their nonverbal communication and thus implicitly. The communicative musicality of the music will always be adaptive in that sense it is based on human interaction. Communicative musicality is thus emphasized as the particular element that characterizes a successful performance among musicians, provided that the musical communication is mastered.

My methodological approach is based on interviews with five professional classical musicians and thus in individual statements. The interviewed musicians have all emphasized how collective consciousness is a crucial prerequisite for the good performance and thus the communicative musicality. The descriptions from the musicians have also shown that the achievement of this collective consciousness requires a special effort from the individual, indicating an implicit cohesion during the good concert where the description of the individual experience of "thinking" is highlighted as inappropriate. It is therefore crucial that technical explicit strategies do not take precedence over the implicit adaptive strategies, which is at the heart of all creative activity. New thoughts and opportunities do not emerge through technical strategies but

through an adaptive, and that is a strategy that is being developed along the way.

Similar to the professional musical conversation, the overall purpose of a coaching conversation in my view will be to foster those of the experiences of coachee, which also can promote an adaptive behavior. Coaching is not just about finding the best answers, it also concerns how coachee can get better at handling their everyday lives, and here coachee's questions can act as a compass for navigation.

Awareness of the complementarity between the fast and slow thinking system, can contribute to an interaction between analysis and experience in a coaching session. The musicians in my empirical research, does not need to "think" during a performance, they prefer to listen. A coach can't avoid "thinking" in the same way. Unlike music a coaching session need words, and it is the slow thinking system that is involved in the spoken language. But coaching is much more than listening to the words that are being said. As new recognitions have not yet been pronounced, the coach must also meet the coachee through the fast thinking in order to sense his tacit knowledge.

This article has questioned the assumption that the coach should help the coachee finding the best answers within himself. According to recent research, cognition can be described as an interaction between brain, body and the outside world. Answers and not least questions emerge when the professional conversation is brought into a social context. A creation of a co-development between coachee and his context just like tones become music and the music colors the tones.

Coaching a musical mindset is something that emerges from the interaction, no manuals can describe in advance. Manuals are important because they inform us, but they should step in the background in the process of coaching leaving room for spontaneity and the invention where the participants are open to a surprise – and questions of how to create something new together with others.

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Line Fredens has as a professional violinist extensive experience in the artistic practice. Besides, she holds a coach certificate, a PD in the supervision and guidance from UCC and a Master in learning processes with specialization in organizational coaching at Aalborg University. She researches new perspectives on musical learning, self-regulation and deliberate practice. She teaches theoretical didactics and performance psychology at the Royal Danish Academy of Music, Copenhagen, and as a coach she has an extensive practice aimed at classical musicians learning and performance. Line Fredens is 1. Solo Player for the second violin group in Malmö Symphony Orchestra and as a violinist in Jalina Trio she has toured in Europe, Asia and the States and has won top prizes at several international competitions.

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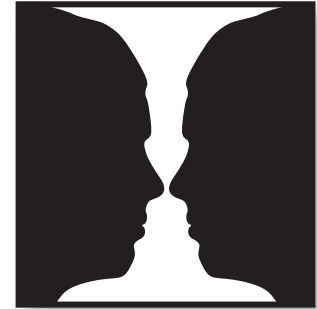
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10.5278/ojs.cp.v6i1.2152



## Problems and Values

by Allan Holmgren

### Abstract

*This article highlights coaching from a narrative and poststructuralist perspective. The article argues that problems are the starting point for any concept and every story – that each term starts with a problem. Issues and events must be named and inserted into a story to make meaning before they can be handled. The article argues that in coaching and leadership conversation about hopes, dreams and visions out of the blue sky without a foundation in the living experiences of life and in the problems and their effects one wishes to fight or to handle is meaningless and “hot air”.*

*Problems are something that the protagonist in a narrative meets on his way and bumps with. Problems arise when something unexpected or unforeseen happens. When a problem arises, a breach will occur. This is fundamental in narrative theory. But whenever there is a problem there is also a value, something preferred. In narrative coaching, the protagonist comes closer to his values and skills through stories of preferred experiences.*

*The person's joy and empowerment are strengthened by sealing the contact with preferred experiences, values and skills. This minimizes the power of the problem over the person.*

*It is the coach's task in cooperation with the coached to let the preferred experiences and values guide the coaching. It does not make sense to talk about “solutions” in narrative coaching before “thicker” stories about the preferred life are told. The concept and the metaphor of solution itself is problematic as it relates to mathematics and correct answers. Planning and “solutions” require a very high degree of conceptualization and sophisticated narrative. There are no solutions - only experiments when we are dealing with social relations. It makes sense to talk about solutions in the production, in the technical world, not in the never finished social world, where every action initiates a new beginning. The article contains some anonymous examples and vignettes that illustrate some of the theoretical and methodological points.*

**Keywords** *Problems, Conceptualization, Confirmation, Affirmation, Consciousness, Outsider Witness, Poetry, Movement, Conflictual Languages, Modern Power, Intensity, and Narrative.*

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Coaching, supervision and guidance should always take point of departure in a problem. Concept formation always takes point of departure in a problem, the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze writes (2006; Deleuze & Guattari, 1996). Life is filled with difficulties but only a few of them turn into problems. I define a problem as a difficulty which has been mis-treated or mis-handled. This implies that a difficulty where the actions which have been taken to overcome this difficulty did not work or help. They have in a sense missed the target, the difficulty, the goal or the challenge, the plan did not work out as we had thought or hoped – and then we have a problem, so to speak. The action or the actions taken did not get rid of the difficulty – and then we were faced with a problem. The route taken did not take you to where you had hoped for. The difficulty has become a problem and is still alive as such.

The first thing to do is to give the experienced events and the problem that has come out of it a name. When the problem is baptized with a name it gets an identity. Problems become fenced in through the process of the naming of them. The word “name” comes from the ancient Greek word “nomos”, which can mean “something you assign to”, but it can also mean district or law. Naming and concept formation are alpha and omega in the specification of the nature and character of a problem – it can be “bad consciousness”, “sadness”, “stress”, “confusion”, “anger” “doubt” etc. The secret of a problem seems to be the name we give to it. The name must be an experience-near name – not a generalized name like stress, for instance. We must know what kind of stress we are talking about. Most often problems are related to what might be called negative feelings, irritation, unease, feelings of resentment, you don’t know what to do, you have experienced this or something similar before or it might be a new experience. Often you do not have the full overview of the landscape and the forces operating in the event or the situation, or what kind of game you suddenly become a part of and you might feel you lose yourself in the situation and gets speechless. And if you do not know the play or the norms and expectations involved, you do not know your role and you cannot be quite sure of what to do in this unknown “game”. If there is no story, no narrative explaining the events and the rules of the events you don’t know what to say or what to do to continue the story and the game,

which most often is a power struggle. If you have been thrown into a situation and are in the middle of it, you do not have the best and full overview of the events and the problem or the unease it has produced.

The last 15-20 years there have been a wave of self-help-literature and coaching especially inspired by tendencies in the USA. Private and public institutions offer a whole range of education- and training programs within a humanistic, systemic, solution focused or appreciative inquiry tradition, where it seems to be “no go” to talk about problems (Dalsgaard et al., 2002, Gergen 2011). In these new traditions it seems that you are only allowed to “look at the positive and say yes to life”. Within these “positive” trends you should only talk about hopes and dreams and “what works” (Espedal et al., 2008). Problems are neglected and placed under the carpet. The idea in social constructionism is for instance that what you talk about seems to grow and get bigger through the attention it gets. Another metaphor in appreciative inquiry is that all living creatures seems to be drawn towards lights – yes this is through to some extent, but look at a bee in a bottle, it dies because of its attraction towards the light whereas a fly finds its way out of the bottle through experimenting with flying in many directions.

When there is a rejection of talking about problems and when you are only allowed to talk about hopes and dreams and solutions, this can be rooted in the fact that these trends do not have a concept and a theory about problems – and about power and intentionality. They become a kind of new romantic regime, a romantic totalization where problem-talk is prohibited. Unfortunately there seems to be a “theory-poverty” in these lines of thought and schools. As in religions these schools seem to have an idea of salvation in the hopes and dreams or through the hopes and dreams in some better world beyond and not in the worldly life filled with problems. Through this idea and the practice related to the idea of only looking at hopes and dreams people implies not looking at what we are in the middle of. People seeking this kind of coaching are encouraged to dream about some other place: “Things will get better in the future.” I will not hesitate to call this tendency for a kind of new religion, if you *believe* in it. Even the well-known idea of formulating values and strategies seems in this light as a poor way of dealing with

actual problems when you do not understand the power, norms and the culture you are dealing with and a part of. As Peter Drucker once should have said: *Culture eats up strategies for breakfast*. This approach to leadership, coaching and consultancy create even more confusion for people than they had before this new discursive regime of “thinking positive, in hopes, dreams, destinies and solutions”. As the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze writes about the philosopher from the 17th century, Baruch Spinoza, who was one of the first real radical philosophers who dared to denounce God, theology and the religious illusions and who fought for a real liberal democracy with freedom for thinking and speaking: “Spinoza did not believe in hope, not even in courage; he only believed in joy, and in vision” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 14). Where religion and smart consultants wants people to look away from their real problems and have them to look into the hereafter and come up with smart recipes, schemes and “solutions” to everything, ordinary people experience real problems on their journey in life and the landscapes where they live, that blocks their freedom. This aspect shows itself everywhere in the literature – both in the serious and in the more colored.

“Great stories are invitations to find problems, not a teaching in problem-solving,” as the grand old man of American psychology Jerome Bruner (2004, p. 28) writes. Because “life is problematic and cannot be linked into conventional genres (ibid, p. 91). We therefore necessarily must relate to the stories people tell about the problems they have met and meet on their way in life – especially in coaching and guidance. We must take point of departure in these stories and the problems they reveal – just as we do when the read about *Ulysses*, *Pelle the Conquerer*, *Moby Dick*, *War and Peace*, *Punishment and Crime*, *the Icelandic Sagas* or other great literature. If you do not take the language, stories and experiences of ordinary people serious, you contribute to that these problems will get even more power over the persons who experience these problems. You contribute to the opposite of empowering the persons who experience problems if you do not have a framework, a theory and a method for talking about problems and through this kind of conversation get to the important values and principles of life of the persons you are trying to help. In this way you might contribute to disempowering. The more you speak about hopes and

dreams, the more frustration and despair you risk creating for these persons because they might get even more far away from the life they are situated in. And the “recipe” might be even more coaching or consultancy – like in the Freudian tradition where therapy never ends (because of the Freudian paradox of the unconscious – you can never get in touch with it or get to know it; you are always one down, and the analysis have to continue as a never ending story). I am hereby not saying that there is anything wrong with talking about hopes and dreams and visions. On the contrary. But I put my finger at the problem of getting too fast to talk about future actions and what to do before a careful examination of the present and the past and the stories about which values which might be harassed in the events leading up to the problems. You must practice *double listening*. This is the key concept. Whenever people talk about a problem there is a value at stake, something precious. I have talked to many people who have talked to coaches who too quick turned to talk about hopes and the future and what to do, and these persons have through this practice felt even more frustrated than before the coaching took place.

When people fall into a river, you try to do your best to take them onto the river bank. You try to create a safe or secure place from which they can tell about what has happened. This safe and secure place can be virtual in the sense that it is the spirit with which you meet people that creates this river bank of feeling secure. You must listen with sympathy to the person. You do not ask them about how it felt to be in the river. This would be to ask like an idiot. You asked them about what happened. And you must not in any way ask critical or condemnatory questions or in any way possess a critical tone. You try to help people to get in touch with their sense of self. Only when people have become in touch with their sense of self (Meares, 2000) they are capable or moving forward in the journey in life sufficiently empowered. The sense of self is sensed when a person is able to have a kind inner conversational play, as Meares phrases it, and the feeling of inner peace and at ease is related to this sense of self. Then they can do what feels right for them to do when they are able to act in harmony with their own values and not what the coach feels might be good for them. As the Danish philosopher, Ole Fogh Kirkeby writes: “The most important thing is to be in deep contact with your values and to

be able to act in full integrity with them” (Kirkeby 2009, p. 136). I am arguing for a decentered approach. The coach must always take a decentered position and keep the client in a centered position. Both the coach and the leader must start with a listening attitude. The Danish leadership philosopher Kirkeby (1998, p. 251) writes: “To lead is nothing less than to listen.” Kirkeby stresses that both the coach and leader both must listen to the voices of the others - and to the voices of herself. And this can be a hard balance to maintain. Kirkeby is of the opinion that in the core of the self there is a will “to go through a “no” beyond all costs” (ibid.). You got to have the will, the power and “the courage to maintain the break; to resist the demand of reconciliation. You have to reject the strategic temptation of the grand healing” (ibid. p. 252). You only get this strength when you come to think of and really get in touch with in a spontaneous and immediate sense (to speak in Kierkegaard’s terms) what is worth living and dying for.

The task of the coach is therefore to make people think. Not about all the norms and the “oughts”, but about what is important in life. People must know their values. We live for such a short while and we are dead for so long. But we have no direct access to our values. They are in a sense taken for given because they are such a close part of our life – they are the glasses through which we watch and evaluate the world, they are our toes which we use to keep our balance, and when someone step on your toes you do not experience your toes, but the pain. Values are therefore most often recognized by the pain we experience. So the main task of the coach is therefore to help people think about and name their values in the midst of the experienced problems:

*“Only the thinker has a potent life, free for guilt and hatred; and only life explains the thinker,”* Deleuze writes about the philosophy of Spinoza (Deleuze 1988, p. 14) ... *The true city offers its citizens love to freedom in stead of the hope for rewards or even the security of owing things”* (ibid. p. 26)

Think about the city as the organization and the citizens as the employees. Deleuze quotes Spinoza for saying that “it is slaves, not free men, you give rewards for virtues” (Ibid.).

## A little about the story of coaching psychology

The interest in coaching and the coaching-wave in general seems to come along with the emergence of business psychology instead of organizational psychology as it was called until about 20 years ago. Especially psychologist who wants to get into the business world and earn much money from this field has used this as an identity. They have taken up the metaphor of the coach used primarily in the sports world in stead of the name supervision which are mostly used in the helping professions. Coaching seems to be more related to goals, fighting, strategy and victory than the notion supervision is (see Holmgren 2006). For years there has been a tradition at the universities for work- and organizational psychology. There has not yet come an institute for business psychology – at least to my knowledge – although there are societies for business psychology. The term business psychology has a touch of neoliberalism over it and a smell of business, money and profit. It implies that “business” is something different than “organization”. Perhaps “business psychologist” feels more related to economy, to create profit and to the employers than to the employees. There is nothing wrong with focusing on money and profit – but this should not be the focus for coaches nor for psychologists. The focus should be on freedom and values for whoever you are coaching. The focus should be on actions, on relationships, not on production – in Arendt’s terms (1998). This is the normative approach argued for in this paper. Every action in our human world is normative and has ethical implications. Coaching has to be in favor of the coexisting multiplicities of the many different narratives (Deleuze and Parnett 2006, p. 11).

Some of the coaching mentioned both in the literature and in the media, preaches that you should focus on tools, goals and the future. There seems to be a hysteric demand for solutions (Espedal et al., 2008; Willert og Stegeager, 2012). As if life was an equation with a beautiful result. It rarely has. Life always starts with new beginnings, as the philosopher Hannah Arendt (1998) says, it is never finish. It has no end. It is not easy to say what life is about, but perhaps we should use the wisdom of the philosophers Nietzsche and Foucault and think of life as a struggle of will, of volition, of power. Or a game of who should decide, dramas, discords, ac-



cidents, disappointments and power fields which have to be overcome. And all of it has to be conventionalized by stories as Bruner says (2004) so that all can make some kind of sense for us: "Oh, it is just because he..." and then life can go on, because we have a story, a and a theme, a genre which can encapsulate the (scary) events. If you follow the thoughts of the French philosopher Deleuze we can use the metaphors nomad, deserts, landscapes, waves, winds and rhizomes as concepts for the complexity of life. Life as journeys, as movements with passages and dangers en route - like the story *Lord of The Ring*. If you with Deleuze think of life as a multiplicity of coexisting diversities (2006, p. 11), you can also think of life as many folds folded in one another, and the task for coach is therefore the never-ending unfolding of the folds. There are so many folds in our lives, so many events, trajectories, experiences and stories to unfold in our language and in our narratives. Kirkeby says (1998, 2009) that we might be led by illusions of autonomy. But we are always part of something, of relationships with power although the independent individual seems to be an ideal in our neoliberalist world and its focus on *The Economic Man* (May 2012).

There is no culture which has not identified itself through stories, myths, rites, illusions and rituals. You cannot imagine human life without stories - the old Greeks myths, the Nordic stories about Odin, Thor, Valhalla etc. There are the different Christian myths and stories. There are the more modern stories about coaching and leadership and all the promises connected to them related to salvation and happiness. But I regard them as dangerous illusions. Their function seems to be to create a kind of sense and stability.

It is through stories that we define ourselves and each other. But stories are not innocent. They are always normative. They are like an axe we use to cut through the events on our journeys. They are like punctuations in a line of words. They are always conjunctive and gives us a hint about how to live and what a good life means. And the strange thing is that the stories guide the teller of them more than the teller drives the implications of the stories. You are seldom aware of the implications of the story that guides you and that you believe in. We are always home-blind. Language, words, concepts, norms and moral exists as threads woven into the carpet we produce with our stories and

are central elements in this carpet. Or as Kirkeby writes: "Man is subordinated his own communication because he is subordinated language" (1998, p. 199). And language is *always* ruled by language games, as the Austrian-English philosopher Wittgenstein has coined the term, and it is his metaphor for how language works. Michel Foucault uses this metaphor too when he describes the way the discourses and the language work. But the actual task of the language is to create meaning and coordination. As the Chilean biologist and philosopher Humberto Maturana said: Language is actions of coordination of actions. Kirkeby continues:

*"The language game we play presupposes meaning which implies that we are played by this game ... The subject itself is the creation of these games. Our autonomy and presumable powerfulness concerning thinking, reflection, reasoning and decision-making is an illusion"* (Ibid., p. 193-194).

Human beings might perhaps at best be described through their stories about affects, will, passions and actions - both about their inner invisible phenomenological world, as William James highlights, and about their outer visible world. Deleuze writes that there seems to be a reversed relationship between force of action and the receptiveness for other feelings (1998, p. 27), and that there is a big variation in this. Joy, he writes, is the most important affect strengthening the force of action: "Ethical joy relates to the thoughtful affirmation" (Ibid., p. 29). The phrase "ethical joy" might be of central importance and in coaching practice. Ethical joy is about not letting your life be infected by hatred, sorrow, competition, envy, shame, guilt, bad consciousness, pity, self-criticism, viciousness, indignation, regrets - "the emotions of slaves" (Ibid., p. 26). The radical understanding of the importance of language and stories that both Kirkeby, Bruner, Wittgenstein, Foucault and Deleuze share, must be shockingly for persons and theories, which subscribe to a rational and modernistic theory about life with their focus on goals, strategies, solutions and the ideas about "the inner true human" - Foucault calls this the naturalistic and humanistic illusion. Life cannot be controlled and regulated, as Arendt (1998) writes. With every action there is a possible new beginning.

## Organizational games

In the Danish municipality of Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark, there are seven levels of management on the area of children's welfare before you reach the political level. And at each level they only talk about economy, structure and strategy, the leaders I have talked to from this municipality have told me. The language game and the stories told in such organizations can only be centered around the struggle for money – and about power: who is in charge? Who can decide? And there might develop a competition, a power struggle about finances and funding, between the different levels and departments involved. The strong power-games and strategic narratives in such organizations are dominating become the dominating language games and discourses. But these discourses are seldom spoken openly, they are hidden in discourses with key words as trust, respect and loyalty.

In the municipality of Elsinore and in almost any municipality in Denmark each school has lost its own principal and a bunch of schools have now the same principal or director. The distance between employees and their leader has become bigger. Even if there is a majority against such decisions and even if there is neither convincing economic calculations nor pedagogic reasons for doing this, a majority at the political level decides this based on a rhetoric saying, “we want to secure the flexibility for the future because of decreasing number of children.” Wittgenstein was the first one to say that language bewitches. If you work in such an organization, you are “out” if you go against this kind of discourse – because “no one can be against the future”. But, as Christie (2012) writes, we seem to produce a society with more and more distance between its members.

We need a total new concept for welfare leadership that does not transform discourses from production lines working with cars and electrical components to the democracy and the good life where concepts like solidarity, kindness, caring, education, equality and the good life is central. Kirkeby (2011) writes in line the ideas presented here about the necessity “that welfare leadership becomes normative, experimenting and innovative” (p. 237). He refers to professor Niels Aakerstrøm Andersen, CBS Copenhagen, and his colleague's groundbreaking research. The tendency to centralizing and big units are harming as a general

principle creating despair, insolence and alienation from one's own values. As an alternative, Kirkeby writes: “The state must ensure that the new decentralized entities have optimal opportunities to be independent of the classic forms of financing” (ibid., P. 246). Such practice could enable self-esteem: “Committing to the values of his life is a source of self-respect” and “to work with love, especially without expectations of retribution, is the way to the good” (ibid., p.156).

Narrative coaching wants people to get closer to what is important to them, their values. I think there is a need for completely different, more radical, simple methods than problem solving, hopes and dreams. There is a need for the ordinary listening of what the people involved have to tell about the common problems of ordinary life which get in the way of solving their professional tasks so that they can be confirmed in their experiences. The important and central concept and practice that it implies are just confirmation, affirmation - not recognition (see, for example, Kirkeby 2008, p. 27). The basic concept of all life is *confirmation*, writes Nietzsche and with him Deleuze (1996, 2006).

The major problem in most organizations is that the managers do not listen. This has catastrophic consequences. And if they listen, they only do so because of strategic reasons because “one should listen”. While everything is planned in advance. They think they must inform, so they speak. Information is usually nothing more than camouflaged power. But it is only the speaker who becomes wiser. You cannot rely on “informing”, one can basically only invite to opinion formation. The creation of meaning and opinion usually occurs afterwards when the employees talk in the corners, away from the management.

We are all subject to the narratives and cultural categories that lie embedded in the power of culture narratives. A story is not a neutral story. It always has a morale and a built-in expectation of how life should be. Stories are at the same time interpretations and evaluations. Stories are thus the most powerful tools of culture and are filled with injunctions and expectations hidden in the truisms of alleged naturalness. This modern discursive power that Foucault (see, for example, Heede, 2004, especially chapters 1, 4 and 9, and Jensen, 2005) has written so carefully about has no center and cannot be specifically identified. It is everywhere as expectations and morals - just look at the

literature about coaching and all its recipes. Just see the wave of self-help literature. You can only see the effects of power on humans and on what they suffer from; the norms and truisms flow through us in relation to how life should be lived, in relation to what you are allowed to. You can see the influence of modern power on the number of mental disorders and the amount of people, between 20 and 39 years taking antidepressant medicine in 2010 compared to 1995 in Denmark. There are over 100,000 more people in this age group fifteen years later – in 2010. People, I think, have become tired of living and therefore the depression appears as the modern mental disorder, as the French sociologist Alain Ehrenberg has documented (2010). Mental disorders change from culture to culture and from one historical period to the next. Even the psychiatrists' diagnosis manuals change from edition to edition, according to what a group of American psychiatrists can agree on - read, for example the informative article on the history and interchangeability of psychiatric diagnoses in *Weekendavisen* Friday, September 17, 2011.

The concept of translocutionality, a neologism formed by Kirkeby (1998) shows that meaning is formed through the act of telling. Meaning is not hidden somewhere in the brain but is established through the cultural concepts we use like tools when we tell stories about what has happened. Narratives are so important in human life, because the world, so to speak, comes to light, makes sense and lives through tales. Kirkeby writes that "the concept of translocutionarity motivated narrativity as the only possible valid relationship between theory and empiricism, based on terms of our use of the language and for the relationship between language and thought" (1998, p. 205). Translocutionarity is Kirkeby's ingenious concept of how meaning arises. "Trans" means through and "locutio" is the Latin expression of the act of speaking. The term translocutionarity implies that the sentence is produced through the act of speaking or writing, that is, by formulating with the words through which the narrative unfolds. The meaning is not existing in advance, before the words and language have conceived it. There is only sensation and sense before the creation of meaning. In a sense, consciousness is always an effect, an effect that you cannot be conscious about. Translocutionarity is basically based on a plain and simple thought: the words are the building blocks with

which the house of meaning is raised. As Heidegger says, language is the house we live in. But not only the speech contains meaning - the act itself contains meaning. For example, the child can point to the milk before it can say the word milk and ask for it. Or as Kirkeby wrote somewhere else: The Egyptians could build the pyramids long before they had a theory of geometry, a story and a conceptualization of the geometry needed to build the pyramids.

Our theories, meaning and understanding emerge as a conceptualization of practice. We do not understand anything out there - we understand our own understanding because it establishes meaning for us. Understanding is a practical matter and must always be based on the action, on the understanding that something happens, and something is done. It is through the formation of concepts, through the naming of the practice, of the thing that is to be named that meaning is created. The word creates what it mentions, as the old Danish psalm writer Grundtvig says in one of his hymns. When we make sense through the naming and through the story, we bring the actions and events into part of a plot. It is the plot in a narrative, the necessity and likelihood of the actions taking place, that drives the story forward. The theme in the plot does not become obvious until the end of a story. The theme is like the motive and takes place at the landscape of consciousness, but the plot takes place on the landscape of actions (Bruner 1986). When what happens becomes too unlikely, too incomprehensible, the formation of meaning stops. A good coaching should be able to put light on the themes involved in a plot.

### Case 1

A department manager in a coaching session where the audience were other leaders, could not understand why her staff, nurses at a hospice, could not say to a colleague when he or she had not performed the routines that had been agreed. She knew that in the daily work they could say everything to the dying and their relatives without getting red marks on their throat, so why could they not just transfer these skills and use them with their colleagues? She had talked to them, and they had been practicing through the situation with her, but little did it help. It was a riddle for her.

She was asked what she would call the thing (the conceptualization, the naming) that she her-

self could do and that she thought her employees should be able to do as well. She replied that she had always been able to do what had to be done. She was asked what the story was about this skill and about this morality, this truism. She was now talking about a math teacher, Pete Hansen, who had a great light in her 8-9th grade who taught mathematics, and she had always been easy at mathematics. He had even given her the task of teaching students in other classes who had problems in their lives. There had also been a manager, Steen, at a children's center where she had worked after the high school, who had told her that either working with the problems, that is, doing the best while working and giving the children a good experience, even if you know that the kids are having a hard time at home - or you find another job. These two experiences had really strengthened her, and had become a value, a guiding principle, she had been following ever since. She smiled when she told these stories because she suddenly could see that she believed the same principles also applied to her employees and that she centered herself and her own standards instead of listening to the complexity and the problems her employees experienced applying her principle.

It is a key element in narrative coaching that, as far as possible, there should be an aware audience, someone who listen to the conversation (see White 2008, chapter 4 on definitional ceremonies and Myerhoff 1986). The task of the witnesses is not to give applause, advice or evaluation, but to talk about their own experiences related to story they just have heard and witnessed. One of the witnesses of the above story told of his son, who did not spend much time with his friends at the moment, even though he was really good at social contact. She also talked about her own and the father's concern that the 14-year-old was playing too much computer and not seeing his friends as much as they thought he should. She also mentioned the metaphor about the intermediate situation in relation to her nurses, that some tennis players can beat the blows for training but cannot transfer and use the same kind of strokes in a real tennis match. After she had listened to the witness, the department manager suddenly thought of how difficult it was for her to help her own son with mathematics: "Are my standards in the way of his learning?" she asked. And she continued: "Am I not spacious enough in relation to my employees?

Do not I have an eye on how precious their relationships with their colleagues are, and that it is a completely different relationship than they have to patients and relatives?

When the coaching session was over, most of her own words were read to her - I have named this "poetizing" the practice of poetry - one makes the epic, the narrative, into poetry. You take a few of the words and sentences the coached has used. Here is an extract of this poetry, which was written and read out loud by one of the other witnesses:

*The nurses.*

*Constructive criticism.*

*Caring suffocate.*

*I am trying to understand the difficulty of saying it; why can you not be critical.*

*It's so hard to transfer a professional relationship to a collegial relationship.*

*Steen. He taught me to meet people. Either stop being sad - or stop being here.*

*I cannot understand that they can face patients and relatives, why not colleagues.*

*What's the worst thing that can happen?*

*Precious in another way.*

*It could be a way to understand it.*

*A lot at stake for them.*

*Their fears are filling them.*

*Fear of destroying their relationships with colleagues.*

*My son, mathematics.*

*I stand in the way of his learning.*

*I'm in the way: "They must be able to do it!"*

*Pull yourself together.*

*Some of the hard things I've met: "I'll have to do."*

*A school teacher, Pete could create a trustworthy relationship.*

*One should attend his classes and be skilled.*

*I was better able to talk to people than my brother.*

*Embrace them.*

*Maybe I do not meet them as I should.*

*Ask some other questions.*

*Serious questions.*

*It is always nice to be heard.*

*The feeling that I can be alone.*

*It means a lot that others feel the same way.*

*I may not simplify it too much.*

*Maybe they will feel more understood.*

*My leader.*

*We feel the same way.*

*An oppressive bothering judge: "Some banal nonsense."*

*"Shut up that voice!" I say to myself.*

The department manager, the person at the center of this definitional ceremony as it might be understood according to Myerhoff (1986), shed a tear, as the words, only some of her own words, was read out loud. Moved in the double meaning of the word. First, more pathos had come over her, more feeling, more sense of herself. Something usually happens when people talk about something that is precious to them – "I found myself, crying" as one of my English supervisors Murray Cox once quoted from one of his patients at a psychiatric hospital. On the other hand, through the new narrative, which contained a more complex understanding of nurses' relationships, she had moved to somewhere else from which she could see something else, something more. Bruner describes this so beautifully: "To bring the doubtful reassurance of the well-known to harmonize with the temptations of the possible" (2004, p. 21). Or as Ludwig Wittgenstein once has phrased this: Always take a flight to where there is a free view. It requires art, he writes.

### Coaching as jazz

The metaphor relevant to coaching might be improvisation and experimentation. It takes both courage and self-control to improvise and experiment; courage to leave the score or the already available manuscript when leaving the well-known doubtful reassurance. In jazz it is the task of improvising over a theme, a figure. You must agree on three things when playing jazz: what melody you play, the tone and the beat. But you cannot just start improvising; that is known by any jazz musician. When practicing improvisation, practice scales, you play the same scale over and over, again and again. One must be one with his instrument, treat it with humility and respect, really care for it. You can experiment with music and life, but first when you are able control and understand the rules, the game and the scales, otherwise you will behave like a fool in Blake's poem that breaks in to where the angels fear to tread. Coaching is (like life) a craft to be learned; It is a way of dealing with people and their problems, which are guided by some ethical principles learned through practice.

There are three conditions for creating a skilled practitioner: Being willing to talk about the problems you encounter in your life; that you have an appropriate critical theory and methods so that you can make sense of the field in question and as the third condition that you can connect the theory and your methods with the problems and your practice in general. Therefore, theory and methods are so important. The theory gives you the concepts to see with. Critical theory allows us to think everything differently.

### Externalization and Reflexive Distance

The task of coaching is first and foremost to ensure that the person who receives coaching can tell about the issues and considerations the person is dealing with in relation to the problems that have occurred in the protagonist's life. The task is to create reflexive distance to the stories, the powerful strings, the coachee as another Pinocchio, is tied up with and ruled by. The purpose of coaching, from the perspective of this author, is therefore through the naming to externalize the internalized narratives, for example, guilt or sadness so that the coachee can assess whether they will continue to let the problems and their effects and the associated stories be dominant in their lives, or whether they would prefer to let their lives turn and become led by the power and the perspectives of other narratives.

### Case 2

I feel so much guilt, a leader said. "What's the story?" I asked. The leader had grown up in a small interior environment, where the strict Pietist morality had ruled. But the leader could also tell the following story as response to the question if there any places where the pietist morality did not rule: He told a long story about how he had rebelled. "What inspired you to do this?" I asked. There had been a new school director who introduced completely different values to the young people in the village. There had also been a story when he grew up about a couple that had been divorced. It had been completely unthinkable in the village to become divorced, and it split the entire village into fractions. Through this story there was room for not only the story of guilt but also a tale of rebellion and standing on your ground, which spontaneously allowed the leader to tell a story from the previous week in which he had stood before a group of

employees. His life was now ruled not only by the narrative of a negative sad resentment filled with guilt, but also by stories of joy. Narrative coaching wishes to expand the number of available stories a person can tell about his life. It was the Russian psychologist Vygotsky who spoke of “internalization to describe how we take over and imitate established ways of speaking and telling stories and then making them our own” (Bruner, 2004, p. 114). We learn, without actually knowing or being conscious of “self-evident” ways of speaking and telling that make sense in the way we live: “We create our self-defining stories to respond to the situations, we will continue to live in. We become family members with family stories, “as Bruner writes (ibid., p. 115). Or with Kirkeby’s words: “We are tangled in to the world because we as a trader are always already wrapped up in the way the body and consciousness are already wrapped up in the way the body and consciousness collide with each other” (2008, p. 21) “In other words, we are already part of the event before, but also while we are aware of it.” (Ibid., P. 22) It may sound so simple when writing about problems and stories as Bruner and Kirkeby do; but it is not always easy in practice. You realize that nothing is so simple and straightforward in the practice of living the world as you think it might be. But it is always possible to tell more, as Deleuze often writes.

Where this reckoning leads Kirkeby to the exercises of protreptics, where, as a discipline, one should relate to concepts realizing their roots (often proto-indo-european) as in the Greek academy, where state leaders should relate to key concepts such as freedom, justice, etc., the *narrative* response to this acknowledgment is that one must firstly relate to the concrete practice and to the events and stories that unfold in this practice. You must necessarily go from what you know to what is possible known. You must always start with practice – to follow Vygotsky. One must scaffold the story, as Vygotsky called it (White 2008, chapter 6), ie. build concepts related to other concepts, values, principles and a dedication that creates a foundation for acting without or with a minimum fear.

### Case 3

Stories are like boats we sail around - a slight crack let in the water of life can mean that the boat begins to sink. Stories are fragile productions that have real effects. I was called by a desperate man, I felt,

who asked me for a coaching session because he felt his life was crumbling and dissolving: he was fifty years old and had a boy on five with his forty-five-year-old wife who “accidentally,” as he expressed it, had become pregnant. He had told her before this happened that he did not want more children. He had a daughter of fifteen years from a former marriage. He began to cry on the phone when he talked about his older daughter. The story seemed to contain a vein of trauma and pain. Should he now leave his wife and spend even less time with their five-year-old son, or should he stay with her and see his dreams and wishes, his hopes and expectations for his life crumble, he asked me. He said he imagined himself attend his not yet born child’s student party with a walker. And he did not want this to happen. Not only did he have problems related to his wife and her pregnancy. He said that his company had been bankrupt six months ago because of a financial crisis and that he was not member of the unemployment security system. He and the family lived by his wife’s salary.

What is a problem other than a particular way of dealing with the world? And when the world does not want what you want - yes, it’s unsettling. The task of the coach is to ask people to relate to their lives and to the “problems”, to the norms and the expectations that limit and control their lives. Life is right now and now, as the poet Jørgen Leth writes I one of his poems from 2011. Coaching is about making people think and getting rid of the often-foolish ideas and expectations from certain cultural norms that have taken on power over the protagonist’s life.

He spoke on the phone as if he had fallen into a river of events and tears and could not reach the shore by his own help. He had been hit in the solar plexus by several hard-hitting events, which he had no narrative parades to restrain. This man suddenly came too far from his favorite values and his tales about what the good life is about. He no longer seemed to have a narrative or an ethically pleasing reservoir of values or experiences to draw on which could help him to conventionalize the events he was a part of - that is, make them fending and manageable.

### The Self Happens in Events

The collapse and desperation of the man in Case 3, is associated with a collapse in the dominant story he has about his life. He does not have enough

“narrative resources,” as Bruner calls it, not enough historically-lived experiences that enable him to conventionalize the unexpected, his wife’s pregnancy, his unemployment that had occurred in his life. The events were not in the original manuscript of his life so to speak. There had in some way come too much distance in his life, between the events that took place in the landscape of the actions and in the landscape of consciousness (Bruner, 2004, p. 34), where his thoughts and feelings unfold. Life did not unfold as he wanted it to at the landscape of actions. The events had run ahead of him and challenged his landscape of consciousness, which is always at the intersection of past stories and expectations for the future. “The Self Happens,” as Kirkeby (2008) writes. “The Self moves through events whose meaning is not fixed but is itself dependent on the course of this process.” (P. 12) And “the movement of the self is bound inseparably into a dynamic surface area formed by a polyphonic texture that only in certain constellations produce harmonic effects.” (p. 12) We cannot expect harmony in our lives. There are no innocent places, as Foucault has expressed. We always live as part of events we necessarily do not have and will never get the full understanding of. Because the event of getting to understanding, is in itself an event. The Self is therefore always a process, always becoming. We are not beings, but *becomings*, as it sounds pompous and poetry-slam-like in English with a Deleuze plagiarized wording. “The event becomes the real subject. We happen because we are forgotten in the process of happening.” (Kirkeby, 2008, p. 26). The task of the narrative is this: Bruner teaches us to make the exotic, strange and unexpected homely: “Stories make the unexpected less surprising, less creepy: they domesticate the unexpectedly, give it a glow of the ordinary. Domestication is an important way of maintaining a culture’s context,” (Bruner, 1999, p. 104). It’s with people like cultures: Without stories that can create a “oh, it’s just that,” man remains directional and meaningful. Without a response that can make sense and without a response that can create confirmation, a life remains shaking and without coherence. Not getting feedback is the worst thing that can happen in a person’s life, writes Russian language theorist Bakhtin (1986, p. 127). Stories are the glue of meaning that hold us together. The meaning of the narrative is what literary theory calls the narrative’s plot. We can define a story as consisting of and es-

tablished through events over time, linked together, by a plot, meaning, which most often comes *after* the events have taken place. Something has happened in a life. Eg. in life of the man that called me in case number 3. But he has no story that can contain the events of his life. Kirkeby writes that “the narrative, the narrative figure, shows us that something is anticipated and that something is completed. The narrative indicates a presence everywhere by someone who still reveals this presence gradually, moment by moment.” (Kirkeby 1998, p. 201). When there is nothing to anticipate because there is no meaningful story, you are hanging in midair in a wonder of what is going on and therefore you cannot anticipate what to do. When there is no story like a compass to show the way, you walk around in the mist. What we need to do, and when we must do it, remains then mysterious, unclear and unpredictable: “The right moment does not belong to us, it belongs to the story we are engaged in and which we can never go beyond and overcome” (ibid, p. 202). If the story you are entangled in, woven in to, contains threads, power lines that pull in different directions, there will not be a right moment. Then you get lost, thrown out into the open sea without rudder and without control of your life. The French philosopher Gilles Deleuze quotes the pictures the philosopher Leibnitz to say, “You might think you are in a safe harbor, but then suddenly you discover that you have been thrown out in the open sea.” If one’s narrative resources, if the stories one has available, cannot embrace and domesticate the events that take place, life remains more or less meaningless and unresolved. “The experience is linguistic in its essence. As is often mentioned, the child first experiences the subject as known when it has its name, the name is the essence of the object, and it lives in it in the same way as it takes color and form” (ibid., P. 193). It is through the naming of the event that it gets its meaning. It is through the naming of the experience, through the concepts used about what has happened and happens that sense is created.

### Conceptualization and intensity

The central aspect of coaching is conceptualization. It is through the concepts used that the coaching process gets its intensity, pathos, and the feeling of what has happened. Through the process of conceptualization, through meaning making the protagonist who wants coaching is given a normative

grip on the world. It is through the actual naming that the meaning-producing process takes place so that which has not yet made sense but is a diffuse “it” or “something” can become part of a meaningful story structured through events over time. This happens through the wonder of the language: “The language has built in a secret. It implies both that the form of the said and the content of what is said hides from us. Therefore, there is no data, no solid information, because even the most precise quantitative detail is open to the infinity of meaning of the principle of translocutionality” (Kirkeby 1998, P. 203). Where the story is going to make the unexpected, the exotic, to something homely, the coaching must do the opposite. Coaching must exoticize the well-known, or as it is called by Bourdieu, in smoldering and beautiful English: To exoticize the domestic. (Quoted in White 2004, p. Vi).

We must never believe that we have fully understood what the protagonist says. A problem is only a problem because something is important. But the protagonist usually has no direct access to what is important in her life. Problems always cast a shadow over what’s important. They tend to blind you. And especially if the problem is referred to as an unnamed and foggy “IT” without a real identity. We might ask some of these simple externalizing question:

*What is the story of the problem?*

*What could be a significant experience-near name to the problem, a name that expresses how the problem is felt for you?*

*What are some of the effects of the problem – on yourself, your thoughts about yourself and about your relationships?*

*How has it got its influence over your life and relationships? What are some of the tactics of the problem?*

*Do you have areas in your life that is not dominated by the problem, and where you perhaps can live in a more sort of harmony with your values and what you appreciate in life?*

*Do you in all this have a sense of what matters and is of importance to you?*

*What is the story of what you appreciate and value in life? How and where have you been recruited into this club of values?*

*What does it mean to you to know that these are your values? Where does it take you to in your life?*

The concept at its best brings together the sensation, the feeling, the intensities of life. This is captured by the question: *What would you call the problem that is facing you, what has happened, with an experience-related word or concept?* The secret of any event lies in its name, as Kirkeby writes (1998). This question is the central narrative question that can start a story that creates a reflexive distance to the problem and its influence over the life of the person, it can start the journey of taking the person to another and more preferred place in life.

#### Case 4

“It was a breach of trust,” said an employee of a company that had been without a department manager for a while. Some of his colleagues had assembled behind closed doors, as he expressed it, and afterwards they had whispered something in the ear of the general manager. When in such a small narrative the term *breach of trust* is used, it must be because trust is important to this person. The concept of breach of trust therefore must have inherent in it, the concept of trust. I name this phenomenon “conflictuality” (Holmgren, 2006). The concept conflictuality expresses that each concept is related not to its opposite but to the other side of the coin, so to speak. Each concept exists only in relation to other concepts. There is therefore no dichotomy, no contrast, but an association; not a contradiction but a compassion: There cannot be a breach of trust in a narrative without a hidden narrative about the value of trust. The adjacent narrative question might therefore be:

*What is the story of you and the importance of trust? How has it become important in your life?*

The man in this case told about a twenty-year collaboration with artists in a squad of 4-5 people, each of which was based on trust and that one can always talk about what’s happening after the events, after the show. There had never been dis-



harmony in the group. The effect of bringing him closer to the experiences of his lived life and of talking about the history of trust as almost a truism for him, took him away from the well-known doubtful reassurance (Bruner) and closer to where he currently put his trust in his workplace. He could now tell him that he actually believes there is trust in several relationships at the workplace, and that it is only in relation to two colleagues where he does not find the trust that as he wishes. He had not thought of this before.

It is probably by now clear that my point in view presented in this paper is that the task of coaching to make people think in ways they had not thought of before related to their preferred experiences. It is probably one of the most important things to upgrade the experiences of people, as Christie (2013, p.56) says. There must be a blockage in the stream of consciousness in order for an event to occur as a problem. It is the old American psychologist William James who has compared the consciousness with a stream (see Meares, 2000). When we can think freely, when our thoughts are not going in circles, when we do not keep seeing the same images over and over, as you know from people who have experienced something traumatic - ranging from the little quarrel in the morning to violent traumatic events with violence, death and mutilation - in other words, when you have a good sense of what you can and should do in a given situation, the stream of consciousness flows freely. The task of the coach is to find cracks in the narrative, which can give access to other and more preferred stories of life that can open up to more preferred experiences and stories, so that the problematic story based on certain events is no longer blocked. Or as Michael White expressed it with a metaphor from Irving Goffman: Going from the thin conclusions about identity to the thicker stories about life (2008). Narrative coaching therefore maintains respect for the potentially unifying force of the escape routes and pathways that lie in any narrative about a problem. Or as Kirkeby puts it: "With Chairos, the right moment, the narrative becomes the key to the truthfulness between language and reality. For the story, the moment of speech, the occurrence of something can be said to relate to the occurrence of the event" (1998, p. 204). Or as he writes elsewhere, "we are co-creators of its 'reality'" (2008, p. 32). The heartbreaking thing is to realize that what is difficult in life is only difficult

because it is told from a certain place and with a certain normativity. That is, we are all guided by voices in stories that speak, carries over, judges etc.

### Modern power

Coaching aware of what Foucault called modern power is about helping the people you coach out of the jail, out of the limitations, one given story's dominant voice, its "shoulds", contain. It is Foucault who has demonstrated the effects of the modern power, depicting people and what they are supposed to be. In every story there are culturally produced norms and expectations at stake. They can always be different. You can always go against them. Every action is a new beginning. If you do not have a good sense of what you want and can, you can swiftly be overwhelmed by the expectations of the event if you only have the conventions and dreams to draw on. Conventions are the main enemy, as Deleuze writes (2006). Where the traditional power is visible and can gather the masses, modern power is invisible and splits the masses off into individualization that accompanies neoliberalism - not with the liberal attitude. The modern power has no center but operates invisibly with eg, even the young children must take responsibility for their own learning, employees must take responsibility for their own development and learning, and employees and managers in general must do it all by themselves. This creates stress.

Stress is linked to the experience of loneliness, and with the modern power's promise that if you just cling on, do more of the same, yes, everything will be better. But where there is power there is freedom. Freedom is inherent in the concept of power. It is its conflictuality. Power (the moral expectations of how to live what one "should be") works only, as opposed to force, where the citizens themselves contribute to this power. "Freedom consists ... not in the ability to determine actions according to rules that everyone must rationally follow but rather refuse to adapt and accept the rules through which we understand and govern ourselves and others" (Heede, 2004, p. 142).

Modern power is a system of actions of discourses that influence actions, writes Foucault (1982, p. 220) in a small but important writing. The task of coaching is therefore always to focus on the cultural truisms that influences on human actions which actually make them slaves. Heede refers to Foucault who speaks of "reflexive power" that

opposes social power, which is to create the basis for an “existential creativity” (ibid., P. 137), where “freedom consists ... in our ability to change the techniques by which we form ourselves as moral subjects “(ibid., p. 142) so that we can “give new content to the undefined project of freedom” (Foucault in Heede, ibid., p. 143). It is important that “there are no universal models for true, beautiful lifestyles, because the self should be an extremely individual project” (ibid., P. 148). It may be a comfort to know that it takes a lifetime to learn to live, as the philosopher Derrida said in an interview in the newspaper Information three weeks before he died in 2004.

### Concluding remarks

I have in this paper argued that problems is primary in coaching practice. But the good and promising this is that problems are inextricably linked to something which is important in human life, with values that you don't often see clearly in your daily life. Not until you feel distressed or hurt. You first recognize your values when they have been stepped upon. It is crucial to have enough time for the protagonist in the coaching process to tell his story so that he can come into (bodily) contact with healing tales about his values. The preferred healing narratives work as ballast in the boat on the journey of life. If there is a problem on one side of the coin, there must be something else, namely the preferred values and their stories on the other to outweigh the weight and the influence of the problems.

It is very helpful that the coaching does not take place individually in the lumbar space of privacy and individualization, but that there are witnesses, an audience as an attentive and affirmative audience to witness the protagonist's tale so that he can get out of his loneliness. Loneliness is the biggest problem for man in our time. It is loneliness that creates stress; a loneliness that dictates that humans must cope with problems alone. Narrative coaching can act as a counterweight, as a response to modern power.

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