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COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: THE DANISH PERSPECTIVE

mhtconsult
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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ARTWORK	3
1.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY IN THE DATA COLLECTION	4
2. DANISH INFORMANTS - EDUCATION AND WORKING FIELDS	7
3. ART AS A PERSONAL AND RELATIONAL FIELD OF LEARNING – PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AND REFLECTIONS	8
3.4 ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS A KEY TO RELATIONAL BRIDGING	11
3.7 ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS A KEY TO DECENTRATION AND NEW NARRATIVES	14
4. THE TRIANGLE BETWEEN ART, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK – A STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK FOR GOOD PRACTICE	16
4.2 TRIANGLE IN THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN A FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL LEARNING SPACE	16
4.3 POTENTIALS IN NON-FORMAL COLLABORATION	17
4.4 TRANSVERSAL COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE THE COMMON THIRD TO THE COMMON GOOD OF VULNERABLE CITIZENS	17

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ARTWORK

ARTWORK is a trans-European project co-financed by the European Commission within the Erasmus+ Program, including a special grant for promoting artists' job opportunities in education and social work, as offered in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. ARTWORK will be carried out in the years 2021-23 by a European partnership consisting of organizations from Finland, Germany, Estonia, Denmark and Austria, which is the overall coordinator for the project. Thus, the background for ARTWORK is the intention to provide special support for project initiatives that build a bridge between artistic, creative, educational and social efforts.

Against this background, ARTWORK basically aims to expand the field of work for artists. From this overall perspective, the aim is to offer artists and other individuals associated with creative industries a training which – *on the one hand* provides them with knowledge, skills and methodologies to enter into educational and social work fields, and – *on the other hand* - raise an increased awareness both among artists, educators and social workers on the possibilities of strengthening education and social initiatives through the use of artistic and creative methods. This especially applies to educational and social initiatives for vulnerable young people and adults. Thus, the idea is also to make visible how artistic and creative processes can contribute to strengthen self-awareness, self-esteem, sense of identity and active citizenship among vulnerable groups.

From these overall perspectives, ARTWORK is implemented on the basis of various objectives and activities, including:

- **A new interdisciplinary learning model, called CLM: The Collaborative Learning Model**, where artists, cultural workers, educators and social workers in group discussion exchange knowledge about artistic, creative, pedagogical and social methodologies. The learning model is based on the principle of *peer learning*, where the participants contribute to the joint learning from each of their artistic, pedagogical and social specialties. Artists and cultural workers learn about pedagogical teaching methods and learning processes, while they themselves share their knowledge with educators and social workers about artistic and creative methods and development processes. The common focus is the opportunities to combine art and education in pedagogical and social efforts towards particularly vulnerable young people and adults.
- **A specially designed training course for artists, cultural workers and others from the creative industries** who would like to use their artistic and creative experiences in social and

pedagogical efforts towards young people and adults. The training course will combine theoretical and practical knowledge in a crossroads between art strategies, aesthetics, social psychology, adult education, action research, etc. An important part of the training will be a practical test together with vulnerable young people or adults. This test can have the character of both a shorter or longer course.

- **Training in the method "Aesthetic diaries"**, where artists and educators are given the opportunity to be acquainted with the special methodology of aesthetic diaries and artistic techniques to document artistic processes and experiences, a.o. in the intersection between artistic, creative, pedagogical and social methodologies to strengthen empowerment, the sense of identity and active citizenship.
- **E-learning platform** collecting all learning materials from ARTWORK on an online platform that will be open and free of charge for all participants as well as for other actors and stakeholders.

1.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY IN THE DATA COLLECTION

The present report deals with the ARTWORK interdisciplinary collaborative learning model, CLM. The report provides a brief review and analysis of the views, reflections and experiences, as expressed through an interdisciplinary group discussion and supplementary individual interviews in the Danish context.

Based on the general guidelines for this initial data collection, the Danish contributions included the following activities:

- Composition and recruitment of an interdisciplinary group of artists, teachers and social workers for informants group discussion, respectively individual interviews.
- Distribution of an information letter to all informants, giving an overall and specific insight into ARTWORK and the informant role prior to the interview activities.
- Preparation of a structured interview guide to be used in both group discussion and individual interviews.

Within the general guidelines, the Danish interview guide was structured according to three coherent analytical levels and associated questions:

- The personal level
- The relational level
- The structural level

The personal level mainly addresses the initial signalment and description of the informants' artistic, educational and social experience from education and work. Furthermore, this level focuses on the individual experience in terms of interdisciplinary collaboration as well as general reflections and considerations on this issue:

- Initial collection of background information from informants.
- From your personal experience and reflections: how can artists and cultural workers contribute with methods, methodological concepts and procedural approaches from the artistic and creative working field to the improvement of efforts towards vulnerable youth and adults within the educational and social field?
- From your personal experience and reflections: what methodologies, tools, competences and resources would artists and creative workers need to acquire / strengthen if they are to work in an educational and social field with vulnerable young people and adults?

The relational level mainly addresses the benefits and challenges in interdisciplinary collaboration and the combination of art, education and social work. Thus, the relational level raised questions such as:

- From your personal and common experience and reflections: what may artists, educators and social workers mutually learn from each other from a peer-to-peer perspective, in terms of approaches and methods to working with vulnerable youth and adults?
- From your personal and common experience and reflections: what benefits do you see in combining art, education and social work in efforts toward vulnerable groups?
- From your personal and common experience and reflections: what framework conditions are required in terms of personal and relational competences and resources for a fruitful and innovative interdisciplinary and intersectional collaboration?
- What opportunities and experience do you already have in terms of combining artistic, educational and social processes in your daily work?

Finally, **the structural level** mainly addresses both present and future potentials, needs and requirements in order to promote the intersection between artistic, educational and social methodologies and practices, raising questions such as:

- From your experience and reflections: what framework conditions are required in terms of both formal and informal structural and organizational resources for a innovative interdisciplinary and intersectional collaboration?
- From your experience and reflections: what does it take to disseminate experience and existing methods from this interdisciplinary and intersectional field, where artistic, pedagogical and social approaches are integrated?
- What could a formal and/or informal educational plan look like?

In the following chapters, the findings and results on the personal and relational level are especially introduced in chapter 2 and chapter 3, whereas the findings and results on the structural level are presented in chapter 4. Finally, chapter 5 summarizes conclusions and learning points from the initial Danish research.

2. DANISH INFORMANTS – EDUCATION AND WORKING FIELDS

2.1 SIGNALEMENT OF DANISH INFORMANTS

In the Danish context, the informant group included the following persons, of which 5 attended the discussion group and one took part in an individual interview, as described in the introduction:

- **H H:** Social pedagogue currently working within the special needs area of young people aged 18-25, such as developmentally disabled, cognitive challenged with different superstructure of diagnoses at a place of residence. Also functions as contact person for selected young people.
- **A N:** Is the founder and owner of Chapter 1 which works with youth at risk related to criminality. C1 is focused on finding the turning point of your life and start a new *chapter one* with the starting point from lived experience and combination of mental and physical training. Primarily gang-related youth and rocker groupings. Functions as mentor and teacher through boxing and acting.
- **L A:** Actress and artistic leader of The Art of Transformation, which takes one of its starting points in working with personal histories and lived experiences, for instance abuse. Collabs with other artists, doctors and psychologists etc. Main goal to create pathways out of the victim role and identify resources through the arts.
- **K M:** High school teacher, who teaches i.a. French and Latin, and mentor in the so called Århus-modellen which is an anti-radicalization effort developed in Jutland (west region of Denmark) with focus on youths at risk of being radicalized and worst case join organized gangs and gang related activity in environments connected to both right-winged and religious extremists.
- **L A:** Body SDS therapist and independent artist operating in the cross fields between art, socio-cultural health and philosophy exploring kinesthetic landscapes and human-specific interactivity, which is brought into play through performing and visual arts, contemporary dance, immersive installation, workshops, consultancy, writings and music. The Passion is co-creating integral experiences that challenge the mundane gaze e.g., by exploring politics of *being* and *human* dialectics.
- **S C:** Professional ceramicist, painter and art therapist. Primary target group is young adults at risk. Is working competence-oriented with art therapy combining conversations and artistic crafts, such as dance and ceramics, with the aim to support the target group through artistic processes in accepting and sensing the necessity of presence, focus, reflection and contemplation. Has an increased focus on the danger of manualizing methodical approaches to working with young adults.

Facilitators of group- and individual interview: Margit Helle Thomsen and Nana Lind (mhtconsult)

3. ART AS A PERSONAL AND RELATIONAL FIELD OF LEARNING – PRACTICAL EXPERI- ENCE AND REFLECTIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As it appears from the initial review of the Danish informants, several of the participating artists already had several experiences of working in a pedagogical and/or social professional field. Thus, they were already familiar with the thoughts and perspectives associated with the basic idea in the ART-WORK project of “merging” both conceptual and practical collaborative approaches and methodologies across the artistic, creative, pedagogical and social areas of professions. This is especially true in relation to the work with vulnerable target groups of young people and adults.

Similarly, the informants with an educational, pedagogical and social pedagogical background could also refer to previous experiences of involving artistic and creative methods in their professional work, concerning different target groups of young people.

In practice, this indicated that the informants in the group discussion already shared a common language in terms of conceptualizing prerequisites, needs and special challenges among different target groups of young people - and furthermore, an insight into general pedagogical and social approaches to working with particularly vulnerable youth.

From this common perspective, change, development and empowerment were common key concepts across the working fields of artistic, pedagogical and social practices in the group.

3.2 THE FIRST IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS CHANGE AND EMPOWERMENT – APPROACHING A CRUCIAL POINT

“Stepping out of the role of victim and dare to step forward and share your story is key for stepping into healing and personal development. Doing that also makes you a mirror and a potential inspiration for others to do the same. It’s about breaking your usual patterns...”

The informants point to some of the most important personal steps for the target group (young adult at risk) to take towards personal healing, growth, new perspectives on themselves and finally a new way of being in the world with a stronger sense of self, self-worth and identity. The steps interrelate and compliments each other; (i) breaking patterns, (ii) stepping out of the victim role, (iii) and embrace your story in order to create a new and healthier narrative about yourself. In the majority of cases, a

crucial point is related to coming in contact with a person to whom they can relate on an equal level and feel safe to open up to.

“You always have your own story with you, it will never not be there. But you can embrace it instead of trying to escape it. Become one with your story, become friends with it”

As mentioned, the majority of the informants themselves have “lived experience” both through professional and personal experience. From the personal perspective, most went through personal development processes and/or went through the above-mentioned steps using the arts, sports, body work etc. as tools in the process. A common trade for informants is that they combine or see the potential in combining mental and physical training to raise personal awareness, although in different ways, professional settings and group of citizens. Another key point being highlighted by the informants would be the common experience that there will always be different ways to go through this process due to the differences in the individual experience – sometimes a traumatizing event - cultural factors, environment, religion etc. However, the direction and the aim is the same. Thus, we can still mirror ourselves in each other and experience a community through the sharing of our stories.

In relation to breaking patterns, the informants point to **commonalities for the pattern breakers**. One crucial point is that at some point they gained contact with a person who was able to recognize their personality beyond their current behavior patterns, and who would be able to support them through the process of changing their “bad habits” into beneficial ones. A key word in this process is to be seen and thus to be able to see oneself in a new perspective, thereby opening new perspectives and making new potentials, possibilities of (re)actions, activities, contacts and relations available – in summary starting an empowerment process.

Another trait would for many young and adult pattern breakers be the feeling of being “different” from the group/environment they were a part of. By breaking patterns and stepping forward sharing their story, they stop being a victim and start becoming a “hero” both to the outside world and the groups they were a part of. They might still feel different, but now they can act as inspiration for others (the hero aspect) and no longer feel bad about feeling different – it becomes a strength because the sense of self is empowered through the lived experiences and the courage to step into new “rooms” that offers possibilities of new self-perspective.

3.3 ART AS A KEY TO LEARNING TO FEEL AND IDENTIFY FEELINGS

“Many have never been in contact with their feelings and have a great need to feel them and talk about them. E.g., they don’t know why they’re angry and must learn to identify and understand their feelings... But it can be difficult for them since they never learned, and it often has to happen indirectly through other activities. Same goes for identifying their own needs...”

The informants point to two key challenges for the target group of vulnerable youth and adults: identifying feelings and identifying needs. A **safe space** has to be created around the target group, where they gradually dare to be in contact with their feelings and furthermore, dare to be trustful in a sharing process. Common conversations, sharing and feedback can take place over some time and has to be followed up regularly and taken seriously through a variety of expressions exceeding professional areas: written key words on a blackboard, the making of posters, collages and drawings, movement, dance, bodily expressions, poetry, dramatization etc. Seeing or hearing one's own reflections, feelings and needs being taken seriously, motivates to continue digging deeper into oneself and promotes the feeling of being part of a community. One that differs from what they are used to.

In addition, the informants paid a special attention to the experience of **anxiety** taking up a lot of space in the lives of the target group, including the outspread experience of how **strong social taboos** are surrounding pain and fear. According to the informants, the focus on dealing with anxiety and pain on both a personal and relational level is an area where the involvement of artistic processes can be particularly effective from the very approach that art in general is open-minded and willing to address crooked perspectives on society:

“Art is non-judgmental; it seeks out the crookedness that is outside the norm and legitimizes it by paying homage to it. And by showing this through art, we create the crucial mirrors. Art is a liberating space that abolishes norms...”

Again, combining artistic, pedagogical and social methodologies from this perspective, demands a safe space – where anxiety, insecurity, pain and fear are not considered weaknesses or being judged when exposed to others, but, on the contrary, are accepted as legitime and embraced with gentleness and attention. A huge part of the vulnerable target groups do not know where to place their pain and fears and also lack words to communicate them. Working with this through the body and making it a bodily experience is a way to externalize and explicit them in a creative space e.g., through dance, movement, role playing/acting, sound/singing, creative writing etc., where there is no judgement or assessment of right or wrong. This externalization becomes a great force in the process of seeing explicit their “hidden inner worlds” due to the outcome of the creative processes, and thus creates a space in the outer world to realize, reflect, share and communicate the pain, fears etc. in a language based on one's own artistic and/or bodily experience. This again can lead to an increased self-understanding and motivation to expand, reinvent oneself and build up a more beneficial narrative.

“We must create a language for the wordless and a space for the imagination, and in this space we must be able to talk about the pain and what hurts, without cultivating it and without staying in the role of victim. We must dare to be in these spaces together, without trying to fix the ‘sore spot’, but just be with it. Since the arts works from and with imagination, it's a perfect tool for creating this space and language...”

CONCLUSION

Working with target groups of both young people and adults generally calls for a safe space in terms of both mutual trust, credibility, empathy, equality and discretion across learners and facilitators. The combination of pedagogical, social and artistic methodologies can help to promote a safe space by working at several different mental, learning and practical levels, offering different forms of expressions. On a concrete level, it is also an advantage to literally get out of one's usual

space and experience new spaces. In these new spaces it is possible to reinvent oneself since the rules and culture that can dictate one's usual spaces, and thus behavior, are not in play. When these new spaces are combined with working with the arts and the body, the possibilities for creating and strengthening the new narrative are significantly increased. These new narratives can be brought back to the usual spaces and realities and provide other opportunities for action, being and seeing.

3.4 ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS A KEY TO RELATIONAL BRIDGING

"The testimonial approach: what I have also noticed about the young vulnerable citizens is that they are challenged on collaboration and challenged on seeing and realizing the value of interaction with each other. Conflicts arise. There is often conflict escalation in the situation..."

The informants from the pedagogical and social professions increasingly uses the concept of **"testimony"** to describe the process of appreciation, where you as a professional show that you recognize the young people from a holistic perspective and confirm their existence and uniqueness through this confirming and appreciative relation. If teachers, educators and social workers do not have basic respect for the target group they are involved with, feel rejected by the student or otherwise distance themselves from the student, in principle it will be impossible to build a positive relationship. Mutual recognition is therefore also a key word for the relationship that teachers, educators and social workers must establish to informants at hand.

"There are no 'non-educational' students who are strangers to the practice of education. No, but there are 'non-educational' teachers who do not know what it means to listen to and recognize the students. If you do not get to know the students and connect with them, then you cannot teach them. It is not the educational subject in itself that hinders the learning process. It is the lack of personal contact and relationship. The formation of the personal contact and relationship is the very basis of learning..."

Thus, building safe relations in the pedagogical and social context is basically the establishing of a relationship with the individual person. This makes it possible to provide professional support in accordance with the person's actual needs as well as competences and resources. These needs, competences and resources are not necessarily obvious, and without the ability and competence to practice genuine recognition, respect, listening and curiosity they generally fail to penetrate the actual issues and support needs. At the same time, it means that empathy and authenticity are integrated into the facilitator's profile.

"You have to be aware of your own position. You must always be at eye level, and you must dare to expose yourself and be prepared for change in this meeting..."

In this context, most of the informants have emphasized the strong importance of being able to meet young people in an **equal position**. Both artists and professionals from the pedagogical and social field are aware of the ability to act with equality – also in relationships with students and young people, who are not equivalent with teachers, educators and social workers, but actually equal.

"Know your target group – and never let facilitating these processes become routine!"

To create this kind of mutual relationship is a question of the ability to establish trust and handle a possible initiate mistrust among the participants in informants. Concrete ways to establish this, is to get to know informants by having an authentic interest and ask questions, get to know their names, make eye-contact and understand the diversity and how each one learns best.

“To be brave, exceed you own ego and be ready to undertake this responsibility means that we as facilitators also have to go through a personal development process with the group. Most likely our personal limits will also be tested and exceeded, so part of being ready for this responsibility, is also to know yourself enough to not have a negative reaction when this happens, and also set your own limits and say yes and no accordingly...”

CONCLUSION

Apart from the safe and confident room, the building of stable and mutually appreciative relationships between target groups and facilitators requires an approach from facilitators of being relatable, open, receptive, change-ready and dare to be honest about who they are as private persons and not just as distant teachers, social workers etc. In order to be able to really listen and sense another person on both an emotional, mental and bodily level, it is necessary to remove own filters and be aware of own patterns of reactions when being met with reactions due to activated trigger-points. In this regard, the informants underline that it is not possible to know the state of mind precisely of each individual in a given group. Consequently, it is evident to be as present as possible and create a **room for dialogue** instead of one-way communication. In short, there has to be a focus on **shared interaction** and *not the one-way solo show* of either the artists, educators, social workers or other facilitator roles.

3.5 ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS A KEY TO MINDFUL AND BODILY TRAINING EMPOWERMENT

This approach is part of a **mental training process**. However, as underlined by the informants, it is essential that this is combined with a **physical and bodily process**, since this approach is an effective tool to get in touch with the unfamiliar and unconscious levels in order to make them familiar, conscious and not dangerous.

The appropriate activities for the specific target group at hand will vary, as people get in touch with their emotions in different manners. Even so, the informants points to the **empowering effects** of the arts, sports and movement in general. These are simply efficient ways for people to gain awareness of their emotions and needs – and furthermore, acquire a language for them without blocking the process due to hurt, anger, fear etc. This **combination** of mental and physical training will in many cases be an important step in the right direction of a successful empowerment process for various groups characterized by vulnerability.

“The more concrete the artistic craft is, eg dance, the greater the opportunity for the aesthetic loss of control, which the young people through art learn to be in and accept... to learn to sense the need to be present and focused, as a way to immersion...”

The notion of **aesthetic loss** the concept of aesthetic loss is precisely an expression of the process by which especially people with very strong needs to be in control - can open up and gain a better contact

with non-controlling and authentic emotions through bodily expressions. Several artistic expressions can play a crucial role in this process, which may often be more difficult to achieve through purely verbal processes.

“My hope is that they use the sculptural approach to get a greater acceptance of the fact that they are a body. In cases of anorexia, for example, you cannot talk about it. But it is more accessible to work with sculptures...”

In addition, the informants declared that in terms of target groups characterized by mental or physical disabilities, a very concrete and non-abstract approach is required, when the individuals in the actual target group have a hard time thinking abstractly. Another point to raise awareness is that individuals in such groups, based on social pedagogical experiences, often show a strong need to **“be normal”**. To obtain this goal, they mirror and imitate the outside world in order to both achieve social acceptance and be an equal part of it. However, in this process, they are at risk of losing themselves, since the goal is dictated by factors outside themselves. This often leads to a sense of defeat.

“Our young participants are challenged in thinking abstractly and they want to be like others. But you also lose yourself a little by imitating others - imitating the "normal". You will not always be recognized, and then you will again have a personal and social defeat...”

The informants point to the importance of being aware of this possibly dynamic when working with this type of target group. This group can also be body-frightened and have a poor perception of their body in general. Hence, it does make sense to work more methodically with artistic expressions that especially support the body awareness and embodiment in the sense of being able to feel one’s bodily characteristics and boundaries.

CONCLUSION

In summary, working with competences to promote and improve empowerment, courage and independence and identity through embodied exercises represents a focus point, where transversal activities across the pedagogical, social and artistic professional fields seem to have a high relevance and priority.

Also in this respect, the informants highlight the importance of relational skills, and how these skills are just as important to be obtained by the facilitators as it is for the target group. These skills are also value based and should come before any more concrete methods and exercises. Again, the arts as tools are emphasized as efficient tools, since collaboration, attentiveness to group dynamics, sensorially based listening and action/re-action to impulses are essential competences for a successful artistic process – especially this comes into play in some areas of the arts e.g., dance, music and performing arts.

3.6 ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS A KEY TO MENTALISATION

In continuation of the questions around relationships and artistic methodologies, several informants point to the concept of **mentalization** and its significance in young people's ability – or inability – to mentalize in their contact with each other as well as their contact with other people in general:

“Mentalization can also be part of an artistic and creative approach. Vulnerable young people as well as vulnerable adults may have difficulty in mentalizing: How do we do, and what does it mean? Words and concepts can be expressed in many creative ways beyond the linguistic approach...”

The ability to mentalize is often described as a prerequisite for establishing lasting and meaningful relationships, also indicating the ability to maintain a stable self-esteem. By mentalizing, you are able to see other people's perspectives, and at the same time you are able to maintain your own perspective and your own experience of identity and boundaries. Through mentalization, you get to know your own feelings and thoughts and their influence on your own behavior and reaction patterns toward other people. Thus, mentalization is also closely connected to self-awareness and the ability to regulate emotions. By mentalizing, people understand the personal mental state and the mental states of others, which all together are basic positions for our relationships and coping with relations.

As one informant describes in the previous quote, many vulnerable young people have difficulty mentalizing - and thus difficulty in understanding and responding adequately to other people's reactions. The lack of tools to mentalize thus has in many cases negative consequences for their relationship formation with others. If you do not understand the reactions and signals of others, you may react completely out of step with the expectations of others. This is especially true when you do not understand your own impulses.

In general, the narrative approach and methodology can be a great support to strengthen the ability to mentalize both among children, adolescents and adults. In addition, artistic and creative methods have proven to be a good entry point for working with narratives that can help strengthen the individual's ability to mentalize and form relationships.

In continuation of working with and through the body, the informants also point to **“body scans”** as a tool. Learning how to register what is going on in the body, identify tensions and how what you register makes you feel is a useful tool for increased self-awareness and self-acceptance. Being able to register, saying it out loud and be okay with it is an attention to and acceptance of one's body without judging it, helps to break down blockages, which might also help with an increased access to feeling emotions.

3.7 ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS A KEY TO DECENTRATION AND NEW NARRATIVES

“We can externalize what we are inside through art, body and performance. We mirror and mutually reflect each other here in space. Showing oneself gives people the opportunity to mirror themselves...”

The process of **externalization** in the narrative methodology is - in short - a way to get people to tell their story in a way where they differ from the problems by turning the problems into **objects** rather than perceiving the problems **as part of their own subjectivity**. In doing so, they simultaneously change the premises of the history and their own solutions. Within the narrative professional language, you talk about changing the **dominant or thin narrative**, which maintains the individual in a certain self-perception that closes the view of their own resources and action perspectives. Part of the process is to change the very **use of language** in history – or to **perform and play it in a new manner**, thus to make a reorientation take place.

"Instead of asking a young person: what's wrong with you - then ask: what has happened to you..."

Thus, externalization and decentralization processes often become particularly effective through the use of artistic and creative methods in that externalization is precisely a central methodology in many artistic fields, where visualization – in terms of both paintings, images, performance, dance etc constitutes a basic element.

"It is about bringing the young people into a new space, where they have the opportunity to re-tell themselves. A new story that they can bring back into their 'old' narrative..."

Narratives are a kind of storytelling, and the term represents the stories that each of us conveys about ourselves and our lives to other people. The narrative methodology focuses on young people or other target groups to tell their stories – and hereby events that formed the basis for feelings of loss, triumph, isolation, inferiority – from a new perspective:

To tell the story

1. What did you observe (description of the experienced course of events)
2. What did you say to yourself at that time (the story)
3. What does it tell you about your self-perception (identity)
4. What did you do (behavior)
5. What happened in the end (outcome / effect)

To rewind the story and retell it to achieve a different effect

1. What effect would you like to achieve (outcome / effect)
2. What could you have done differently (behavior)
3. What should you change in your self-perception (identity)
4. What could you say to yourself the next time you are in a similar situation (the story)
5. What would you observe if these changes had taken place (experience)

CONCLUSION

Not rarely, people will tend to identify with the problems they are experiencing. They can also identify other people or incidents as causes of problems. The narrative methodology is basically about emphasizing that people can never be identified by their problems. The idea is that the problem is a size in itself, and therefore it is important to externalize the problems that people have identified with in their narratives and in their plans to solve the problems through dropouts. The transformation process – the retelling and reframing of a personal story - can be done on the basis of an inquiry and dialogical verbal process. However, artistic and performative methodologies have also proven to be suitable for guiding and initiating narrative development processes by, among other things, dramatizing a number of questions associated to a certain situation.

4. THE TRIANGLE BETWEEN ART, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK – A STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK FOR GOOD PRACTICE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

“When power comes into play, the relational contact between the parties disappears. Because then equality disappears and is replaced with control”

In the group discussion, the informants were asked to consider how to create a structural framework for an effort that seeks to integrate artistic, creative, pedagogical and social methodologies - and furthermore, systematically aims to promote collaboration between artists, pedagogical and social staff in social efforts towards vulnerable target groups. As a general consideration, the informants pointed to the nature of relation between *trainer* and *trainee* and the necessity of an equal relation. Furthermore, this consideration was spread out as a perspective on Society at large which would also include the relation between politicians and citizens. A general conclusion among the informants was that projects and efforts like ARTWORK has an important role to play in looking at current structures and the spaces they exist in.

4.2 TRIANGLE IN THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN A FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL LEARNING SPACE

The general answer was that it is necessary to build new educational curriculums and plans within the various professions. It must be curricula and educational plans that systematically integrate artistic and creative methods in the professional educations and through specific learning objectives and teaching guides provide concrete examples of how artistic/creative approaches and methodologies can be incorporated into the professional learning processes, for instance for future teachers, educators and social workers.

One of the informants actually provided an example of new curricula, which integrates performance arts tools into the professional education for nurses with a special weight on performative methods in professional somatic work.

At the same time, however, the informants argued that a development process, which systematically incorporates artistic and creative methodologies into professional curricula in the pedagogical and social fields, is not realistic without a clear political interest and support, not the least from relevant trade unions and business organizations. In a country like Denmark, there are many stakeholders who must be taken into oath, when the goal is to adapt within the formal education system:

“Perhaps it may be possible to establish workshops in social pedagogical methodologies within the established Performing Arts Educations. Among other things, this will imply that new actors and performers are being aware of the situation that they, as artists, must be prepared to give up their traditional positioning and one-way communication in this intersection between artistic, pedagogical and social types of work. You need to get out of your comfort zone if you want to work dialogically in an equal and mutual position with other groups...”

However, there are clear indications that there are already innovative experiments and perspectives in the pipeline. In connection with revisions of the formal artistic educations within especially Performing Arts in recent years, methodological approaches have been included, which to a greater extent than previously point in the direction of broader pedagogical and social areas of working potentials.

4.3 POTENTIALS IN NON-FORMAL COLLABORATION

When it comes to pointing out the non-formal possibilities for professional bridge-building across the artistic, pedagogical and social fields - many more possibilities and potentials are available, according to the informants:

“I provided installations at various schools. The students were generally very open to this renewal. The teachers, on the other hand, were more reserved: Where is our agency! In fact, they helped complicate the process. My experience is that it is usually the established institutional framework that is the challenge...”

4.4 TRANSVERSAL COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE THE COMMON THIRD TO THE COMMON GOOD OF VULNERABLE CITIZENS

At the same time, the informants, across their professional affiliations, agreed that it requires an awareness process among artists as well as among teachers, educators and social workers:

“It is also about distance between the different professional groups. It is about being able to convey to the colleagues in my social pedagogical world why it is important to use art and collaborate with artists who, on a deeper level, can strengthen our young citizens' relationships with themselves and the outside world, plus their mutual responsibility in a sustainable community. It is important to cope with this central argumentation...”

Another informant ended the discussion with the statement:

“There must be an intermediary between users on one hand – the young people – and the artists on the other hand. This would be the social pedagogical professionals. Therefore, we need to develop and implement transversal development workshops for artists, educators and social workers, where they jointly develop further combinations of professional approaches and methodologies to strengthen the relational learning process among young citizens, thus to create a third common together ...”

A social pedagogical informant has subsequently argued that the joint meeting must be carefully planned, and it is important that all employees have an understanding of and a positive expectation

that the cross-cutting collaboration between artists and educators will strengthen the efforts and results for the target group. Beautiful statements of intent are not enough. The visible benefits and results weigh heavily for employees who have a busy day. Therefore, it is important that user-friendly manuals are prepared, which manage to describe concretely and differentiate between the necessary skills and the good tools in an equal collaboration. The considerations for the success of ARTWORK as an effort in the social area providing better living conditions for the target group is rounded up with the input:

“As educators and social workers, we need more than a ‘theoretical hug’. We also need a manual. In many cases, the experience is that the best intentions drown in a busy working life, if you do not know how to follow up on these efforts...”

CONCLUSION

The overall conclusion is, however, that there do exist a growing number of experiences and opportunities to practice artistic work in pedagogical and social fields. One informant mentioned, as another example that festivals and performing arts seems to be a new concept, for example used in relation to environmental activities and the design of sustainable products. Through artistic performances and other artistic expressions, it becomes clear that art is a sustainable way to create awareness around the meaning of relations. This applies to both the relationships between people and the relationship between people, nature and the climate. In this way, art in all its expressions represents in practice an alternative pedagogical path to raising awareness of vital societal issues, both on a personal, social and societal level.
