Terhi Takanen ● Seija Petrow

The Power of Encountering

**A Story of
Co-Creative Process
Inquiry**

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Terhi Takanen • Seija Petrow

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A Story of Co-Creative Process Inquiry

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Contents

The future is co-created
through our ways
of relating with the
present.
What are we co-creating
at this moment?

A Space to Pause

The most important moment in reading is this empty page.

It gives you the opportunity to pause.

Your way of relating,

your orientation,

at the moment you begin to read this story

constructs what your experience will be like.

So pause to listen.

Listen to your breathing for a moment,

let it find its natural rhythm.

Let go of all thoughts, feelings and expectations for a while.

Let yourself open up to listening to yourself through this text.

Become aware of what is happening in the here and now.

What touches you?

What are you learning about your way of being

through this reading process?

Forward

Dear Reader,

bear with me please for a few sentences whilst I tell you a little about mySelf in relation to the story of this book. It could be helpful for you to know that, for many years, I have slowly articulated a very particular view of what it is to be human - one that inevitably says something about how we humans can 'live', 'be' or 'become' in relations with those 'persons and things' we regard as Other. In recent years, I have spoken of this always ongoing or unfolding view as 'relational constructionist'. It provides a stance from which I, and you too if you wish, can look at other views. Consider, as a key example, the now ubiquitous construction of self (e.g., as leader, manager, change agent, land owner...) and other (e.g., my employees, my department or organisation, my land...) as relatively bounded and stable, independent entities. When we 'entify' self and other, relating becomes understood as an individual act that might provide me (acting as subject) with knowledge about, and power over potentially 'serviceable' others (as objects). The 'power over' construction of relations is discussed later in this book. This way of being in the world, this way of relating to self and to others, can seem 'part of the (cultural) sea in which we swim'. It seems all too common, for example, in approaches to organisational development, to organisational change, to management and to leadership.

Happily, the relational constructionist view (described and illustrated later in this book) opens up other possible ways of being human, in other kinds of relation. As a result, it also opens up the possibility for a radically different approach to change work. The focus shifts from relatively stable things with characteristics (e.g., persons and organisations) to ongoing processes and becoming; the focus shifts from a focus on 'what' to a focus on 'how' self and other co-construct their realities and relations. New questions arise such

as, for example, how could we live our lives such that we are always chang-
ing with other? How can we 'do' being open to being a participant in change
(rather than subject or, object)? How may we 'be' or 'go on' - in the middle
of managing, organising, leading - in ways that recognise reality making as a
co-constructive process? And how may we participate in, for example, (re)
organising or organisation development in ways that are open to other and
otherness.

These questions and the relational premises from which they emerge,
are very challenging. Many have tried to work them out in words - and it is
not easy to think, speak, or write about these matters. Equally, many have
been and are working them out in their own areas of practice - education,
therapy, community and organisational development work, leadership and so
on. Here we come to the present book and the work that it tries to put into
words. Now I am able to say something of what strikes me as so very special
about both. This book provides a story of a long-term process of cultural
renewal in a Finnish national government department. The work unfolded
in relation to the view I am here calling relational constructionist. There was
an 'outside' consultant - Terhi Takanen - whom you will meet soon. But she
had no intention of acting as a change agent in the sense of bringing in and
trying to impose, 'outsider' knowledge and techniques. Instead, her focus or
orientation was, in a sense, to de-center herSelf and instead centre the process,
to centre 'how' whilst working with whatever came up, and to work in the
present, trusting to the process.

So far, so good... But I guess you might be getting increasingly curious
to read more about how they, this entire department, did this. I know that
when I introduce managers to the relational constructionist view and its re-
lated orientation to change, many seem to feel greatly attracted to it. But many
also doubt that it is doable - especially in the highly bureaucratic government
departments in which they work. Now I can say to them... read The Power
of Encountering! Terhi and Seija have given us a rich description of the pro-
cess - in a highly bureaucratic government department! They have also done
a marvelous job in communicating some very difficult ideas (about relational
constructionism) in very readable ways. They refer to this approach as Co-
Creative Process Inquiry... an approach that explicitly draws from relational
constructionist ideas and practices, participative action research, and other
approaches to transformative change work. Mindfulness practices are given a
central place as practices that help participants to be present in the middle of
action. You will read 'how' participants learned together the importance of
their feelings and values, how they learned to listen, to let go, to share stories...

to re-new themselves and their local-cultural practices. Last, you will get a sense of what it was like for participants to experience being able to relate to one another, to their clients, their work, their lives... - and here I use my own words - in ways that allowed them to be more human. If I may say so, this is a gift for us all if reading this book makes us more curious and more able to live our lives in ways that are open to otherness, to being the change, to being 'with' the other...

Dian Marie Hosking
Professor of Relational Processes
Utrecht School of Governance,
University of Utrecht

www.relational-constructionism.org

Dian Marie:
I am a psychologist with a background in social and organisational psychology, management and organisation development. At present I am Professor of Relational Processes in the Utrecht University School of Governance in the Netherlands.

Terhi and Seija:
She is one of the pioneers of relational change work and relational leadership. We met her when she worked as the honored opponent in Terhi Takanen's Phd Thesis which concerns renewing process in the OGE. We invited her to write forward because of her refreshing and radical views on leadership and change.

Preface

Dear Reader,

we have been a part of the journey that the Office for the Government as Employer in the Finnish Ministry of Finance have taken towards a developing work community and a different kind of a leadership culture. The encounters we have had on this journey are still living in us and each in itself is as valuable as the other. We have all wanted to encounter each other as people with appreciation, without judgement.

For each of us, this journey has meant different things, the traces and undertones being different for everyone. It might be that many of us start to see the joys and strains of the journey only now – years later. When the first Finnish-language edition of the book was published, with the help of Sitra, in 2010, many of its readers became our co-travellers. From our readers, we received feedback that lives in our hearts. We noticed that this was a story worth telling. Furthermore, the feedback helped us to renew our book. We want to send our gratitude to all co-experiencers, co-travellers, and those who told the story forward and helped to reshape the story.

You are now holding a radically re-edited version of Finnish book: the first part has been translated and re-edited, and the second part is almost totally new. We wrote the new part because Co-Creative Process Inquiry as a developmental approach has taken a remarkable shift in recent years. This is partly due to Terhi Takanen's scientific work: a published Phd. thesis about this way of developing. We also wanted to share how you can independently start practicing this particular orientation, which we call 'being present in action'. We hope that these living practices invite you to experiment by yourself.

It has been a huge honour that professor Dian Marie Hosking, a pioneer of relational constructionism, has written such inviting prewords. Her work has opened new possibilities for seeing change work as relational processes.

This view centers on how we are making realities in the here and now, and it offers possibilities for experimenting on how we can relate differently towards ourselves and others.

During the whole process, the book and the story were intended to be shared with people who speak other languages than Finnish. This renewed edition will be available for readers in Europe, and hopefully spread even farther. Our intention was to convey our story in the language in the middle of which we all live today. Inevitably, this meant changes in the content and the narrative, although the foundation is still the same. The value of stopping, the art of asking questions and being present has not been lost. In printing, Edita and its professionals took into consideration the changes needed due to the distribution and the electronic usage. Hopefully, the English edition speaks to the reader and is as approachable to the reader as the Finnish story, which is what we, the writers, wish for.

Although we as writers have actually made two journeys using two different languages, these journeys took us in the same direction and made us strive towards creating space and giving ourselves the chance to stop in the middle of our everyday lives, both together and separately. When space is created, it gives us the option to let go and let the space fill up with something unexpected and surprising. Stopping does not actually stop anything, but rather leads to something or somewhere we would not have found otherwise.

We warm-heartedly thank all our co-workers in the Ministry of Finance and everyone involved in creating this story for the unique chance to be a part of this shared journey! And we invite all new readers to start the practice of being present at work with us!

With love,
Seija and Terhi
May 2013

Part I

The Story of Organisational Renewal as a Co-Creative Process Inquiry

Intro: The Agony of Disappointment and the Miracle of Growth

Flowers have their own natural rhythm. Many years ago, I planted flowers and waited for them to appear from the ground. They kept me waiting. In the third year, I gave up hope. I went to buy the same flowers again from the same florist. I was told that those particular flowers only naturalise in their third year. I planted new ones, and in the same year the long anticipated ones appeared from the ground. I have learned that flowers, just like us, grow in their own natural rhythm. It cannot be speeded up. It is important not to give up, or you lose those sprouts that have not yet emerged on the surface. (Seija)

This is the story of how the organisational culture was renewed at the expert organisation, the Office for the Government as Employer (later the OGE),

which has a long history. The function of the OGE is to serve and secure the future in co-operation with its clients. This co-operation ensures that state employers are competitive and can offer their present and future personnel a good place to work. The Office for the Government as Employer...

- ...represents government ministries and agencies as employers,
- ...encourages employees through reward schemes,
- ...offers management support,
- ...offers support for government policy,
- ...supports the creation of jobs,
- ...offers support during organisational changes,
- ...prepares legislation and legal counselling,
- ...offers tool and method support,
- ...and creates networks.

This story is neither a success story nor a failure story. It more closely resembles a bumpy ride filled with learning experiences and a diverse range of feelings and emotions. During our journey, we experience both delightful and jarring moments; the beauty of incompleteness; bright moments of insight; failures; different voices such as:

> *I don't see this development work as having any productivity-enhancing or culture-improving effects. We have improved our culture in many ways, but it has been done through hands-on work and not through this development process. (A participant)*

Without this voice, our story would not be credible. In every organisation, there are those who do not see the value of renewing. Nevertheless, these voices have shifted over these years. It is fine not to open up to renewal. Such voices are also inside us all at times, and sometimes they take over, sometimes not. You can listen to the voice and wonder about it, but where does it come from? Perhaps from fears, disappointments, what else? Working with this inner voice by listening is a valuable thing. You do not need to change it into something positive. We can simply stop to observe and listen to it, to connect to feelings from which it emerges. In the best case, this can help us recognise our own disappointments and fears and re-channel our energy. This is what we have been doing, just accepting and listening. Maybe that is why these voices have become rare. We have experienced the same journey with our own criticality and cynicism. At the same time, we have learned how to be open to the things we encounter in everyday life, at this very moment.

We have participated in the organisational renewal process of the OGE for three years. Our understanding and experiences of what organisational renewal work could become, has expanded tremendously. Our initial intuition was that it is not enough to simply develop the operational processes. We needed a more multifaceted approach which starts within the organisation. This intuition has been proven to be very fruitful. It has produced an increasing number of new insights and shed light on the contradictions of everyday work life.

The purpose of this story is to touch especially those struggling with the challenges of organisational renewals. This story can encourage its readers to search for new ways of encountering change. We point out that renewal can only start from *"within"*. The entire work community can carry it out together. Our message is that co-creative renewal creates possibilities for more mindful participation in the process of co-creating realities. People learn by doing.

The unusual part of this story is that an organisation with a strong history lets go of its need to know the result and experiments with a process that is not planned in advance. There is no guarantee of the result. There is only the promise of the facilitator: *"The process will certainly be significant and we will learn a lot – but what, that I do not know."* Such venturing demands great trust and courage. It demands awareness of the experience that many previous models of thinking and acting have led to a dead end. We started the renewal process in such a way that the phases had not been planned in advance. The process started to emerge in various group encounterings. The starting point was neither with the management nor the personnel but with both. It was created simultaneously in relation to the working environment. One participant pointed out that this story *"seems to aim to instil a new type of development process into the work community"*.

The spirit of the process is mirrored in the thoughts of the Director General in some of our first meetings when he asked something like: could we have more good questions than answers in the future? This question included many dimensions that became visible during the process. How to move from an all-knowing role towards a co-operational role in customer relations? How to move from the drawbacks of an expert culture towards a more collective way of working? How to learn to be more open? How to suspend the ways of thinking and acting of the past and create new ways of working?

To be able to work in a field full of continuous changes, we need to find new ways of knowing and working. Changes cannot be controlled, but you can live with them, and they also bring opportunities to make a difference. The so-called logical-rational way of perceiving the world has run its course.

Instead, one can see an intensification of those approaches where at the centre of change there are people as human beings who act, experience and feel. The"rational" approach can be expanded and broadened so that there is space for experiential, emotional and intuitive knowing as well. By letting go of an efficiency mindset and one-way truths, you can open up to listen to the polyphony of everyday life.

The need for true change

Many of us have grown a shell of pessimism around ourselves, criticality and cynicism towards development projects and changes in our work life. We have been disappointed many times; there has been the experience that *"there is no true change"*. Usually there is an underlying assumption that someone else should do something. The responsibility is always somewhere else. Still, change never occurs outside of us – we have to take the responsibility for change. Often we try to do change by such ways that do not by themselves allow a more on-going renewal. We often ignore the feelings and needs of other people and do not take notice of the possible need for unlearning or letting go in our ways of thinking and working.

A pre-planned development process is not always required. Instead, we need space and freedom. Making changes in structures, processes or practices is not enough. These changes could remain superficial, if no renewal occurs in everyone's orientation, feelings, will, thoughts and actions. Nobody can enforce this kind of renewal in others; coercing or even motivating will not help. Instead, it is possible to enable renewal. This is a story about empowering from within. As a participant said: *The journey is just the beginning; we are being encouraged to examine our inner actions – the practices and models that have been enforced for decades, which could, if seen through new eyes, enable a more productive way of working that would also be more rewarding for the worker.*

Throughout this process, we have been inspired by the thought of what the role of public, particularly governmental, institutions could be in this challenging local and global situation. The OGE, the department for Government Personnel Management of the Ministry of Finance in Finland, plays a key role in the changes prescribed by the central government and directs personnel management. SITRA, the Finnish Innovation Fund, has presented a strong, alternative vision where the mission statement of public organisations should be completely reanalysed. The real task of the institutions is to empower people. In this story, empowering means enabling someone to be empowered by herself/himself. You cannot empower another person. The question is how

we could set people, not institutions, at the centre of this task. Moreover, the question is how we as human beings take responsibility for our renewal and, more broadly, for reforming our society and institutions. This is what we call co-creating. We ourselves have lived through a process like this, and it still continues. It has enabled us to understand in a new way that we cannot only develop organisational operations or structures, but we have to renew ourselves as well.

The different and intertwining voices of the authors

We writers share here our experiences, being aware that the experiences of each participant have been different in enriching ways. We are able to describe the shifts with our own voices, and, in addition, we can tell stories that the other participants have shared with us. Both of us noticed that talking about our experiences only as individual voices did not feel natural for us. The co-creative nature of this process may have shaped our experiences into co-created experiences. A reader can observe how our experiences have included both personal ones and those that transcend a single person, and "I" becomes "we".

In this renewal process, the relationship between an external facilitator and the organisation is somewhat different from the usual relationship between an expert organisation and a development consultant. The Co-Creative Process facilitator relates with others as equals and supports growing together. The facilitator supports renewal of participants and the organisation using an approach where the people gradually take on a larger responsibility for their own renewal process. The special nature of our collaboration can be seen in our story. We shared a similar kind of desire to renew the public sector, and also ourselves as a part of it, in a sustainable way that focuses on starting from *"within" organisation*.

Seija Petrow works as a supervisor and Director of Collective Agreements at the OGE. In the OGE's process, she had the central responsibility for the renewal process together with the support group. She participated in several groups during the process: the support group, the Happy Customer microcosm that perceived encountering customers through a new approach, and the Tasotu microcosm that reformed employer and agreement operations. In this writing process, her role has been to describe the change as a director and a participant. Terhi Takanen works as a Co-Creative Process facilitator and an action researcher who threw herself into the communal growth process. For a

time, she became one of us; she was both inside and outside. In this text, the facilitator talks in both her own voice and our voice. When she talks in our voice, becoming a part of the shared experiences, she conveys something that transcends her own person but at the same time is typical of her own experience. Terhi has previously performed several jobs in the public sector, and she has a passion for renewal as a process emerging from the people themselves. Pilvi Pellikka has supported us remarkably during the writing process as an in-house developer. Here the entire department has been a part of the birth process of this story, sharing their experiences during collective days and giving ideas for the name and cover of the story. All participants have shared their experiences and described why this journey has been significant for them. These experiences are visible as quotes, and they interweave into the fabric of this story as threads of different colours. Some of the participants wanted to use their own names, others are anonymous.

The Locations in This Story

Scene: Mariankatu 9

Date: 11/2006 – 12/2009

Main Entrance

Reception, Control Room

OGE, Main Meeting Room

OGE, 4th Floor
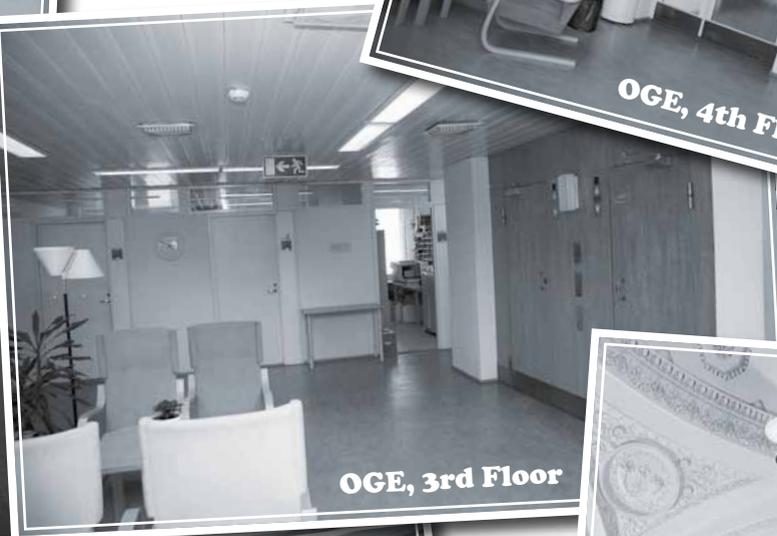
OGE, 3rd Floor
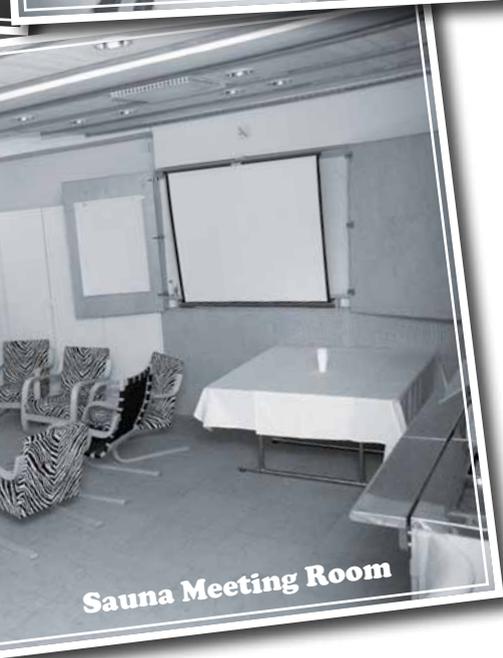
Sauna Meeting Room

Starring the People at the OGE

At the Starting Point

We are sitting in the inspiring atmosphere of the SoL Conference, listening to Marcial Losada in late 2006. Sitting around the table are the managers of the organisation, the Director General and me, the facilitator. We would probably not be sitting here if the Director General had not, by chance, participated in a Co-Creative Process at the same place. I was there, facilitating each participant in contemplating their own questions, which were processed together in a shared silence – and the changes in each person's questions brought along insights in a short period of time. The purpose was not to answer the questions but to let new perspectives emerge. We also probably would not be here if the in-house developer at the OGE, Pilvi, had not participated in a workshop where she acquainted herself with the approach of Co-Creative Process. On that day, Pilvi felt intuitively that *"this is our path"* – with this we would be able to create a real change in the workplace. A week later, the management team felt that this approach was something new and interesting. This approach might enable the organisational renewal that the OGE was facing. As one experienced civil servant described at our starting point, *"We've constantly been preparing for fewer and fewer people and maybe a bit less work too, but the number of people will be reduced more than work, so we need to learn how to work in a better way."*

Now we are sitting together at a round table in a conference. Losada very simply points out the makings of a functional team; how important the quality of dialogue is. We are all inspired by how essential it is to learn how to ask and to stop instead of knowing all the answers. Sitting at the round table are the members of the management team, and in between cups of coffee and tea I attempt, as a facilitator, to describe how our upcoming process would be anything but a learning process that can be managed beforehand. As a facilitator it is my responsibility to ensure that, while throwing themselves excitedly into a renewal

process, my clients understand that we all have to give our energy to it fully and that I cannot promise any certain outcome. I am inspired by the thought that we can persistently try out a new approach towards change work and grow together as people and as a community. All of us are also fascinated with the idea that the development project may become a process of co-inquiring as well. Can we find something that could have a wider significance for the renewal of organisations?

Challenges of a pioneer and environmental pressures

Many people at the OGE feel like pioneers who want to develop their own actions and impact society through their work. Their operational environment consists of office customers, trade organisations and decision-makers. When pausing in their everyday work, they feel that some ways of working need to be renewed. They also feel that the public administration's image as an employer is essential, since it should attract professionals in the future as well. The current productivity programme and personnel cuts also call for totally new ways of thinking and acting – but how and what?

In the course of history, the OGE has seen all kinds of internal development processes. They have done a lot of developmental work with enormous patience. Sometimes the management and those enthusiastic about development have considered the process to have been successful, but those who have viewed it critically have considered it unsuccessful. In other words, the OGE is, in this sense, a typical expert organisation: critical attitudes towards development are also common, and often the management and personnel disagree on the benefits of development work. The difference is that now there is enough openness to start a project that can create renewal in people themselves and in their actions. The management is ready to really put themselves into this; and perhaps others as well. The people at the OGE are especially interested in experiencing the different phases of relating in their everyday work and seeing what will change. Can we really do this and embody new ways of relating with ourselves and customers?

The OGE has had various ways of seeing its relationships with customer offices during the years. In recent decades, the OGE's role used to be that of an omniscient director. This role has changed significantly, and the role of the customers has become increasingly central. However, at the beginning of the renewal process, the all-knowing role seemed to be in-built in several work practices. It had started to crack, as the operational environment changed, and during this process we wanted to move from omniscience towards the role

of a partner or even a co-creator of realities. Some tasks are still performed using the all-knowing role, but even in these tasks it is possible to let go of the role and give guidance in a different way. In the collective, old-fashioned way of thinking, the OGE dictated from above what was best for the client, e.g. civil service employers. The tone was in many ways distant and perhaps even arrogant. There were positive exceptions, though. Different people operate in a different mode with clients. This all-knowing mode was what we became aware of and what started to shift.

In this process, the most important thing for me has been to emphasise and recognise that we want to co-operate with other offices and let them use our own expertise. We have learned to discuss even unfinished issues. Mistakes are allowed, too. (A participant)

No rigid objectives

Our undertaking of organisational culture renewal was often called a renewal process, although some used the name empowerment process. More familiarly, we talked about the process. The name was vague and lively enough for what we experienced together. At the beginning, we also talked about development until we realised that this was a matter of renewing ourselves and the organisational culture from the inside. It was not about developing something outside of us, but rather opening a renewal within, which would lead to a renewal of actions. Officially, the project lasted from late 2006 to the summer of 2008, but renewal goes on every day and the story continues onward (see figure 3). In this story, we have told the story until late 2009 - a 3 years process. The process is on-going without actual starting and ending points. For some participants, such as us writers, it was also the new opening of an in-depth growth journey into ourselves and other people.

At the beginning, we defined the objectives of this renewal process very broadly, and did not agree on any indicators for them, notwithstanding that it is customary to do so. If objectives, indicators and results are defined in the beginning, there is no room for the organisational culture to renew itself. Renewal requires space, and its course cannot be predicted in advance. Along the journey there emerged natural ways of evaluating our process and stopping to reflect. Our objectives were simple intentions for the process, the development of which no one was able to anticipate. This dynamics also strengthened the functionality of the process and enabled us to form the direction together in an organic way.

Figure 1. The initial situation of the OGE in early 2007.

Vision 2011

Brand renewal

Winds of change in the Ministry of Finance

Productivity program

Future personnel changes (diminishing)

Pioneering role

Changes in customer needs?

Why?
Strengthening and renewing
of organizational culture
⇨ a need to develop ways of acting in
ever-changing challenges
tarting from work process as a strategic choice
⇨ quality of customer relations, strengthening co-operation

What and how?
Creating culture together
Developing work processes
Learning together
⇨ examining and re-creating ways of thinking, acting & feeling

The initial situation of the OGE in early 2007
through the eyes of participants

The purpose of the renewal process was broadly defined as co-creating an empowering organisation culture by practicing being present in the here and now. This referred to enabling leadership as the basis of our actions. The intentions were:

- to develop mindfulness skills and an ability to operate flexibly on the verge of chaos, while facing an uncertain future
- to enable empowerment of participants (e.g. one can influence the direction of the changes, as well as supporting personal and communal well-being) and explore the effects of this in customer relations
- to co-create a questioning and open dialogue culture
- to consciously initiate the process of renewal; to re-relate with our thoughts, feelings, will and actions towards succeeding in organisational purpose
- to create experiential knowing of the process of mindful change, to understand how changes occur as processes and how we ourselves can co-create new realities.

As the facilitator I trusted that we would be able to co-create a significant communal and individual growth process that would be at the heart of the renewal of organisational culture. I had been developing my own approach for seven years or so, and I had a feeling that the process would be rewarding if there was enough room for challenges and questions that would arise from everyday working life. I knew that everyday challenges had created a demand for becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing. In this sense I already had my own approach towards the work, but they remained in the background, simply enabling the work towards change. I wanted to leave space for everyday working life in this work community and for how the people saw their work and operational environments. Would I be able to support them in taking another look at themselves, at each other and their environment, and throwing themselves into the unknown? The OGE management trusted this, and we discussed the emergent nature of the process and our inability to predict any outcome, which both inspired and confused us. We let go of the belief that a good project involves specified outcomes and indicators. We trusted that giving room for renewal would create natural evaluation methods along the journey, and bring about surprising end results in the organisational culture.

At the beginning, I shared some fundamental beliefs linked to my approach as a facilitator. These beliefs were living this renewal process and also shifting.

- The usual way of pursuing change is to choose a desired state or a new action pattern. When the earlier ways of thinking, feeling and willing are not aligned, the change will not happen.
- Renewal is possible if we examine our thinking, feeling and willing and consciously align these.
- Mindfulness enables renewal.
- Renewal becomes somewhat lasting when it has been internalised at the level of thought, will and feeling and manifests itself in action.
- Renewal stems from within.
- It is possible for us to grow as people, and for a community to become more mindful and responsible.
- From moment-to-moment, we can co-create the future.

The radical aspect in our process was letting go of our need to know the outcome and throwing ourselves into a process that made us face ourselves. This applied to every participant, even me as the facilitator. The familiar, conventional way of knowing, where the experts know the best solutions for both their clients and each other, proved to be limited. A rational, instrumental way of knowing combined with an all-knowing role had suffered many fractures in its operational environment. The cracks multiplied. This gradually made space for a different way of knowing: an awareness of our own feelings and intuition-based knowing. This meant a journey inwards: How do I feel when I take part in renewing and working? From which orientation am I present in the situation? How open am I? How strongly do I require a sense of control and where do I seek it from? How do I encounter others? How do I make a difference together with others?

What brought us to this initial situation was a new way of renewing organisational culture. Working in small groups without assignments from higher up in the organisational hierarchy was exceptional. So, too, was the situation that the work was not guided by a consultant but enabled by a Co-Creative Process facilitator. Such enabling left a lot of room for what emerged from everyday life and from ourselves. It made us look at how we work together and what kinds of ways of thinking and acting guide us. It also made us look at our own responsibility for what was born and what died.

Before starting the development story, we will share a little bit about the way we were working: the Co-Creative Process and the structure of development work and development practices. This process seems now more structured than it was at the time of development work. However, structure helps us to read what comes after; it makes the renewal story more understandable.

Co-Creative Process and Arenas for Renewing

The Co-Creative Process is an emerging approach, which started in this case with the participants' views and centred on our way of being present in the here and now. It is based on four ways of bringing attention to what is happening in the here and now – and how we are participating in making realities. It makes us aware of what we are inviting by e.g. speaking, listening, or working together in a particular way. The approach is further described in the second part of the book.

In retrospect, our process can be described through four phases of the Co-Creative Process; the cycles of becoming aware, letting go, attuning, and practicing (figure 2). These are connected to renewing through process work, renewing through experiments, paying attention to the culture of renewing, and embodying the new practices in everyday work life. In the becoming aware phase, we started with existing operational processes because we were asked to develop them. The letting go phase emerged by itself through a small crisis, and we started to create experiments embodying the culture of the future. This was a big leap towards a new type of dialogue-based co-creating, and it produced new kinds of experiments, e.g. with clients. In the attuning and practicing phases, we crystallised how our renewing organisational culture could be seen as a guiding philosophy and created practices with which the culture of the future could become a part of everyday life. This created a foundation for making new practices in the workplace.

When the development project started, I suggested three arenas for development work, which we discussed with the manager group. These were communal days for the whole work community, support group sessions, and small group sessions (see table 1). These were accepted as a good starting structure which could enable dialogical and participative ways of working. This structure came from my sensitivity to what was needed, and thus it was

Figure 2. The Co-Creative Process cycle (Takanen 2005, 2012)

CoCreative Process®

Becoming aware

Letting go

Practicing

Attuning
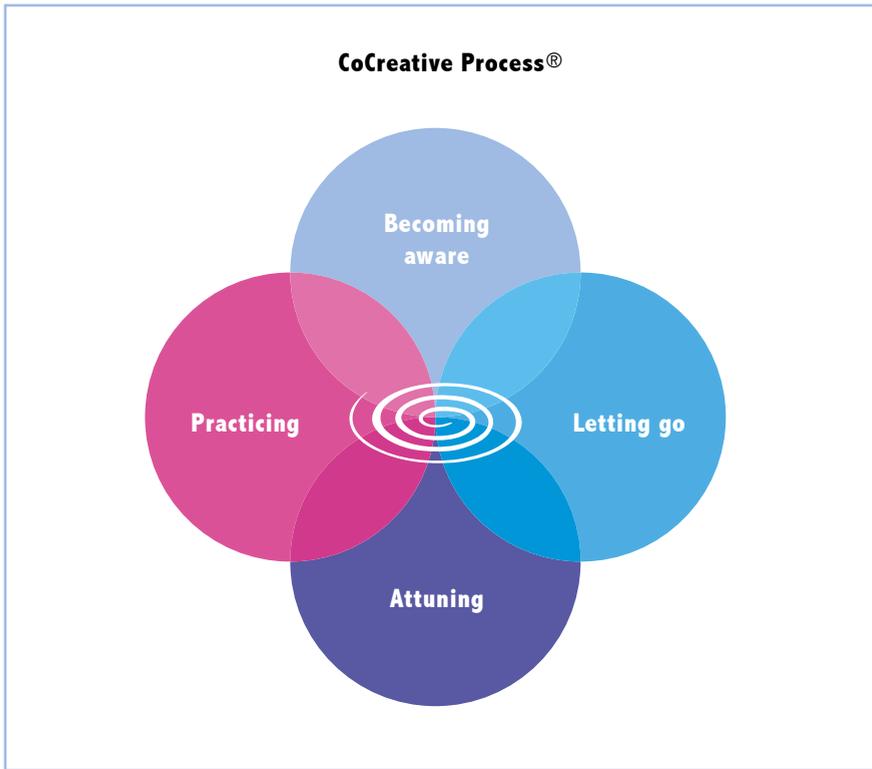
based on my experience as a facilitator. I thought that we would be able to flexibly change this later and question this if needed with participants. In table 1, I have presented the purposes of every arena, who participated, and how long the sessions/days were.

Communal days served as arenas for reflection on "how our culture is living now" through participants' experiences at that moment. They gave us an opportunity to see how it was going in the whole community and to develop living stories together. Support group sessions were often held just before the communal days or just after them: members of this group supported and later facilitated the whole process. Small group sessions were arenas for concrete development work through dialoguing and experimenting with new ways of working. The way of organising them changed in the middle of the project.

Figure 3. The timeline of the development project (Takanen 2013)

THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Phase 4
PRACTICING
5/2008–11/2009

Autumn 2009

Spring 2009

Autumn 2008

Phase 3
ATTUNING
11/2007–5/2008

Spring 2008

Phase 2
LETTING GO
5/2007–11/2007

Autumn 2007

Phase 1
BECOMING AWARE
11/2006—5/2007

Spring 2007

11/2006

: A facilitated small group session (7-8 small groups)

An independent small group session*

A communal day

An independent communal day

A support group session

An independent support group session*

* the number of this kind of sessions is only suggestive

Guided group processes end 6/2008, renewal continues

Taking a leap together: reorganising microcosm groups and themes 11/2007

Guided group processes start 3/2007

The first experimental communal day before the project started 11/2006

Table 1. Arenas for development work (Takanen 2013)

Arenas for development work	Purpose	Participants	Practicalities
Communal days	Co-inquiring how our culture is living now	Whole work community	6-7 hour days, few were in work places, others in nice conference centres
Support group sessions	Supporting the on-going process, reflecting on and creating enabling practices together	9 participants from the OGE from each small group and a researcher-facilitator	Usually 3-6 hour sessions in the work place
Small group sessions	Concrete development work through reflective dialogue and experimenting with new ways of working	All participants were part of one or two groups except the Director (who participated only in the support group)	3 hour sessions in the work place

Working with the whole community during the communal days

The purpose of the communal days was to offer a space where the whole community could participate. Often we were telling multiple different small stories about how our culture was and is changing. This meant: how it is happening just now through us, in the sense of how we are co-creating these realities. Thus, we directed our attention to co-creating realities through our ways of seeing and relating. These days were meant to make space for many different views which could shift from moment to moment. The meaning was not to produce one dominating story which we would reinforce every time, but instead to make a shared vision.

Over these three years, the whole department worked for ten days in the spirit of reflective dialogue as a working community, in addition to regular small group work sessions. These ten days are represented in appendix 1 with their purpose, the theme, and the way of working. The working themes in

these days were always connected to the present moment and on-going process. Thus, the theme was often about how, to the participants, "the renewing organisational culture was living" in that moment. This was often carried out by telling stories in small groups and then all together. Occasionally, I asked participants to interview each other about the changes that felt visible and concrete.

Small group sessions

At the start, participants worked in work process groups, and later in self-organised microcosm groups. These two kinds of small groups mostly had a different focus and different ways of working. They were also formed differently; work process groups were formed based on the management group's view, and then participants had an opportunity to change groups if they felt like it. In contrast, microcosm groups were formed in a self-organising way with the whole working community. Work process groups tended to be more content-oriented, and focused mostly on developing particular work processes. Doing an orientation practice and a reflection practice on interaction (see later in this chapter) created space to move to other ways of working together and focus not only on work processes. These practices made it possible to shift from more stable kinds of structures to microcosm groups and co-develop them together. Microcosm groups served as experimental arenas which had more direct connections with on-going work projects.

Support group sessions

The support group was first named "the core group", but members changed the name after the first year. Speaking about a core group had a connotation where its members are somehow at the core, and thus more important than others. It also sounded to many participants like some kind of a controlling group, which was wanted by the participants, because they were used to such hierarchical ways of organising. However, that was not the intention, and thus "support group" sounded a softer way of supporting, enabling – not controlling.

The support group had members from every small group: five of the participants were personnel (experts and in-house developer), three were managers, and one was the Director. The support group members were not meant to represent the whole community, but acted as engaged participants who tried to feel and sense the whole on-going process. Thus, I had invited them to speak

from their own experiences (not on behalf of others), and I also did the same. I as a facilitator was also regarded as a member of this group, and I often had a strong feeling of belonging into this group. This group's role was central to the whole developmental process, but in many situations invisible because of an attitude of subtle facilitation. The support group members did not try to make strong interventions but to participate in the same way as others, and they became aware of their ways of interacting. However, their intention was at the same time to be aware of how they could support the process in small ways, such as asking questions. In the last phases of this process, the support group prepared the communal days together, and sometimes also participated in facilitating these days. They also facilitated communal days without me in the last phase, and thereafter.

There were eleven support group sessions (3 to 7 hours each) which were meant to reinforce the group's skills for facilitating the renewing process and together create space for new ways of working by supporting the on-going process in ourselves and others. We had on-going dialogues in this group about how our inquiry process was going, and how we could support it. One special kind of support group session was a two-day retreat, which was partly silent.

Some Participants of This Story

The Support Group of the OGE
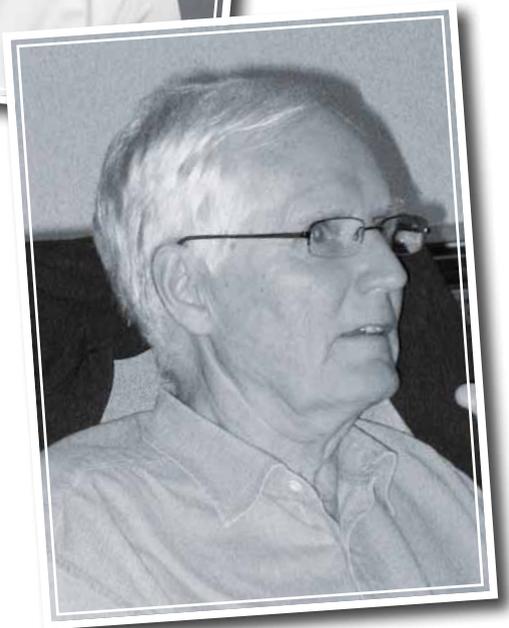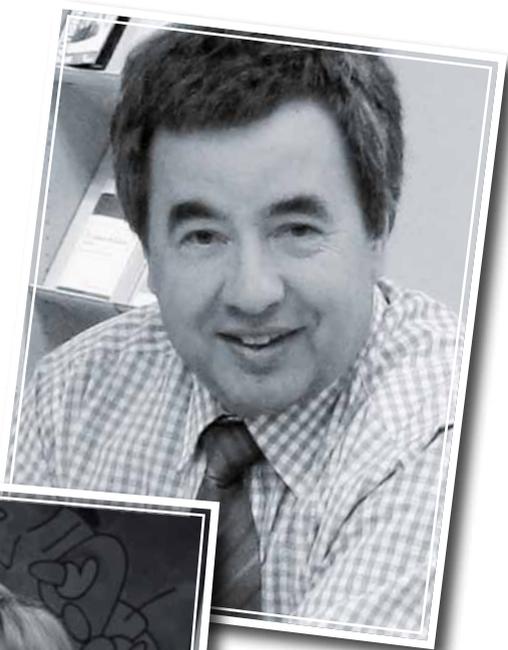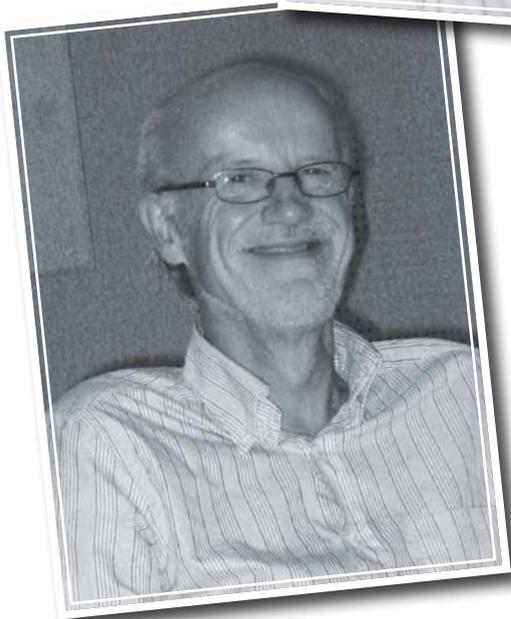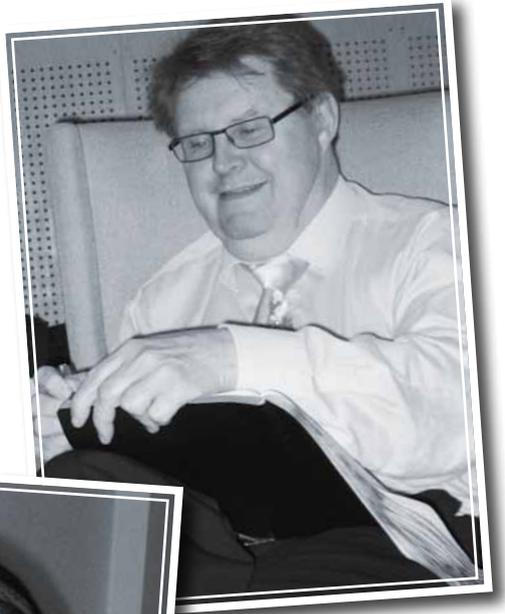
Our Developmental Practices

These arenas made concrete development work possible. The arenas took the form of four central developmental practices, 1) reflection practice on our interaction, 2) orientation practice, 3) experimenting in small groups, and 4) storytelling and drawing. These practices could be seen as embodying the orientation, called being present in action. It focuses on everyday activities and processes in the here and now. Through this orientation we open up and welcome whatever emerges in the on-going moment. Thus it means becoming open in each moment. For example how we are listening to each other, how we are working together. All these practices could bring attention to what is happening in the here and now. Many of these practices shifted and deepened in this process. For me, it became a deeply ethical question about where the attention is focused on in our renewing work; we learned that how attention is directed shapes the outcomes. Thus, those orientations and practices made something possible, and something else impossible.

Reflection practice on our interaction

One central practice was reflecting on the quality of interaction both afterwards and during the work group session at the on-going moment. Occasionally, we used this kind of reflection also during the communal days. As support for our reflection, we used a simple analysis of different conversations (figure 4, Scharmer 1998 in Isaacs 1999). It has four squares, labelled as 1) politeness, 2) debate, 3) reflective dialogue, and 4) generative dialogue. Politeness refers to collectively held monologues that often represent taken-for-granted views. Debate means contrasting views, where indi-

viduals separate their own views strongly. Reflective dialogue means taking some distance from what is happening and reflecting together (e.g. by asking questions). Generative dialogue moves emphasis on to the whole, wherein could arise new views which have not been someone's views but have been created together.

In small group sessions, this self-reflective practice meant reflecting on one's own experience in writing down, and then sharing the experiences in the group. At the end of each session, everyone first individually evaluated the quality of the conversation by drawing a line of how the conversation moved in the four fields (how you felt it). Then everyone described their own observations out loud.

Figure 4. Scharmer's fields of dialogue (Scharmer 1998 in Isaacs 1999)

Fields of dialogue

Reflective

Cenerative dialogue

Reflection
Reflective dialogue

Emphasis
on the
whole

Emphasis
on the
parts

Politeness
(collective monologues)

Debate
Contrasting views

Avoiding reflecting
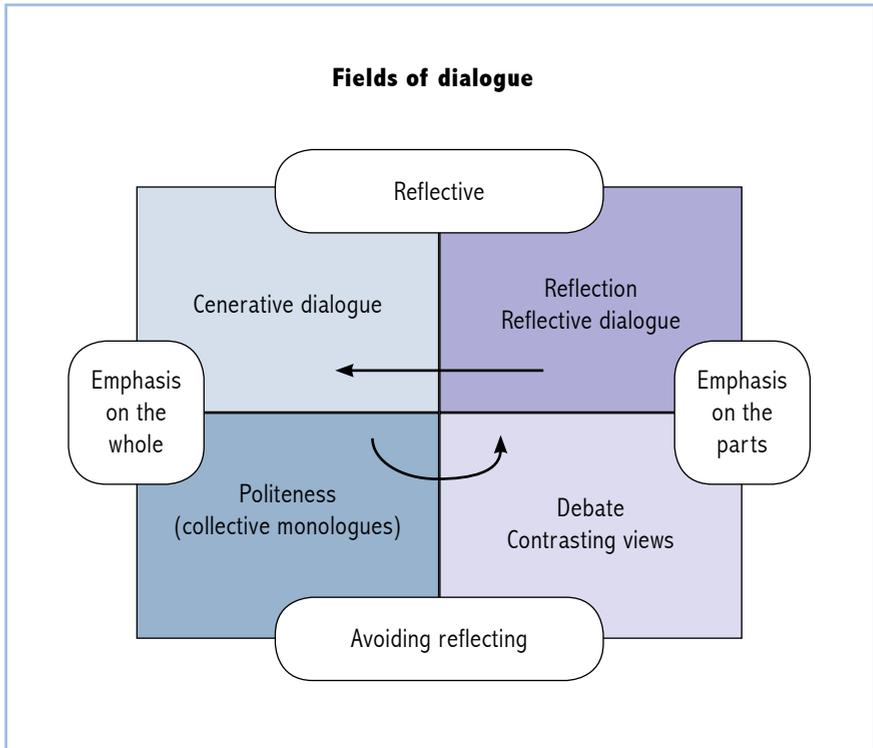
Orientation practice

Another regular development practice was partly made together by reflecting on our interaction, because both were written on paper afterwards. It was called an orientation practice. The purpose of this was to allow us to observe our inner space. We practised being present in the moment by stopping, listening to our breathing and focusing on what was happening in our inner space. We started almost every small group session and communal day with this practice. Orientation practice meant a silent, guided moment of pause where we sat still and turned our conscious attention from our actions within, towards our breathing and embodied experiences. The orientation practice included five phases:

1. recognising 'one's own space' and writing it down or drawing it on paper (before we even started the session);
2. the actual silent, guided orientation (meditation) where attention is first directed towards breathing;
3. after which we observe our own thoughts, emotions and/or bodily feelings;
4. writing down or drawing our experiences after the orientation;
5. a collective round where we share our observations of our own space.

This orientation practice enabled the recognition of the busy, taken-for-granted modes of our everyday work practices. It also allowed us to suspend our conventional way of observation, which takes reality for granted. Furthermore, it enabled the recognising of what kinds of thoughts, bodily feelings, and emotions we had at that moment and how they shaped our ability to be present in our current experiences.

Experimenting in small groups

Experimenting in small groups started when we moved from the work process groups to the self-organised groups called microcosms. Thus, the term 'microcosm' refers to our way of working in small groups as small platforms where "the future is emerging". This term opened up possibilities for seeing how these small groups could be like a macrocosm, our new embodied living culture in the here and now. The idea behind the microcosm work was to explore and create new ways of being in a practical manner, and thus we constructed a renewing culture in the here and now through small actions and encounterings without planning ahead. The microcosm work was guided by principles that had been created in group sessions, and which I had formulated from

our shared reflections. We discussed these formulations in each group and fine-tuned them together. The principles were accepted as guiding principles for reflection and self-evaluation. They were understood as questions that we can ask while working together, for example: are we working dialogically, are we practicing a *power with* stance in our ways of relating etc. The microcosm work and these principles are described later in the chapter "Attuning phase".

Storytelling and drawing from the here and now

Producing stories, through telling and drawing, worked as a natural, dialogical way of reflecting together. This was used mostly during the communal days, but also a few times in small group sessions. During the process, we developed several different experiments with storytelling and drawing. For instance, we used different types of storytelling with relatively open assignments. For example: *"what kind of a garden is our organisational culture at this moment – draw this together in a group and tell us about the picture" (Takanen & Petrow 2010).* Together with the participants we produced, among others:

- in Phase 1: Stories/accounts of how customer relations have changed with the times (some of these are comic-like stories, some linear stories told through professional language), which have led to reflecting on customer relations;
- in Phase 2: Stories born from reflecting on our experiences of what kind of successes have emerged during our process;
- in Phase 2: Free visualisation stories on what the culture of the future could be like (with the help of guided group visualisation work);
- in Phases 2, 3 and 4: Visual and verbal spontaneous reflections on what our organisational culture is like at the moment in story form;
- in Phase 4: Stories about values in practice at a certain time (the stories depict how everyone notices values being realised in practice in their own actions or those of others), which help us self-reflect.

The support group wanted to find ways that would not lead us to a one-dimensional kind of self-evaluation, where things are validated in a certain way. We created a co-creative way of evaluating which does not feel like evaluation but just telling stories together, which arise from the participants' everyday working experiences.

Now it is time to come back to our living experiences of how this renewal was happening.

Phase I: Becoming Aware - What Kind of Organisational Culture Are We Living in?

Is there any human feelings and a genuine desire for development behind the bureau-cracy? (A participant)

We should actively strive for change! Difference in opinions is not criticism but creating a permissive atmosphere. The focus and being present are important. (A participant)

This phase started in December 2006 and continued throughout the spring of 2007. It consisted of one communal day (11/2006) before the official development project started, personal meetings with eleven participants, five meetings with the manager group, one information session for the whole community, another communal day (3/2007), three small group sessions for each of the seven process groups and three support group sessions.

It is nine o'clock in the morning. After a nice breakfast, we have gathered to work together, and there are almost forty people in the room. Not all of them, but almost all of them. The sound of the bell brings everyone to silence. I can feel the sound in my body, even after my ears are not hearing it anymore. Teuvo welcomes everyone and introduces me. Then I introduce myself. I explain why I am in the here and now with the group. I share that I have worked in the public sector for many years and that I feel that it is important to renew ourselves and our working culture through co-creative means which allow all of us to participate. I suggest that we work with the group's questions the whole day, and that I just facilitate the process, not bring anything to them – I am not a coach, an expert-consultant or an educator. I stand there smiling, feel some trust and a little excitement. These are people that I want to work with. I want to listen to what is important to them right now and invite them

to work around these important issues. Today we will experience for the first time how it feels to work together.

People choose their places from an array of small tables, and at every table there are five to eight participants. I ask them to listen and think about what is the most important question to them from the perspective of organisational renewal. Everyone writes this down. Then I ask if they can listen to each other's questions and form shared questions that come from their dialogue. They write this down on a big piece of paper in the middle of the table. "*This question will be a starting point; we will be with it the whole day without trying to answer it, simply listening to it. It can be reformulated, or it can change or possibly not. I will ask you to observe it. We have three kinds of ways of working: inner dialogue with and by oneself, working with your small group, and then all together reflecting on how the process is feeling. There are four phases that help us in this inquiry: becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing. Do you have any questions or something that you want to say?*"

We start a phase which I call becoming aware. I give the participants time to just speak about what they are thinking with regard to their questions. I ask that one member of each group write down as others are speaking – using the exact same words, without leaving anything out just because it may not sound meaningful. The Tibetan bells are making a beautiful sound as I ring them, they stop us. I don't have to say anything, or make my voice stronger. There is silence. "*Now it is time to ask what kind of feelings and needs you are sensing in asking this question and speaking about it*". I am allowing them to name feelings and needs in their own ways without thinking"*is this a need or feeling*" or "*how should I say this*". We are listening to the feelings and needs as a group and writing them down in the middle.

I'm starting to feel a different kind of energy in the room. Participants are very strongly focused on their work, looking at each other and speaking with different tones (more loudly) which express many kinds of feelings. A sound. And silence. "*Now, we have been looking at our thoughts, feelings and needs and it is time to reflect together on how this process is going – you can share your experiences without speaking your content.*" Then we start letting go practice by asking "*what would you like to let go – what ways of thinking or acting?* "

Some hours later all groups share their work with the whole group. In the same group, they name strong emotions like frustration and speak with these. I give space to all voices without trying to analyse, comment or find solutions. I feel a fearful voice within myself and develop some uncomfortable feelings listening to these voices; yet there is another accepting voice wanting to give all these voices space and to accept that this is how the situation looks now to these people.

Listening to these many ways of asking makes apparent to me the number of different ways in which people are constructing their ways of seeing and acting in this on-going moment.

- *What is my role and what possibilities do I have to participate in this community now and in the future?*
- *Why not yet arranged how resources and tasks are fitted together?*
- *Am I aware and do I interact with myself and the community? And do I notice my customers as employee brand makers? How are we, and who are we serving and how?*
- *How can we survive these tasks with these resources?*
- *Why do we stay here? What should be done so that we'd want to work here?*
- *Could tasks be shared by taking account of everyone's competence and well-being? There is so much going on, but is anything happening in practice?*
- Why and from where is enthusiasm born?

Let's look at how one small group worked with their question on this day. The group started with the following question: *"Why are tasks and resources not arranged in a practical way?"* In the becoming aware process they were thinking and writing down: *What will happen to me? [Do I have to go] To the grave? Or do I have to take sick leave? Do our actions adapt to the human resources? Why is this issue only reviewed on the development work days? In spring again? Will they dare to change the tasks in our department? Will they dare to leave out some tasks? Is the issue identified as a problem?* Next, they described their emotions and needs by naming them as follows: *gall, rile, need to be heard, and the desire to see concrete measures, wondering why the problem is not treated, feeling of a consistent disregard (from those in charge), fatigue, powerlessness, confusion, curiosity, compassion, childishness, frustration, disbelief and aimlessness.* In the letting go phase they opened to letting go of "not saying what you think" and named this *"let go of immoderate conventionalism"* and let go of *"speaking (about difficult issues) only in result conversations"* with your boss. They opened also to letting go of *continuing* flexibility. As a result of attuning practices, they attuned to braveness, which connects to an active orientation towards carrying out. They also got some ideas for small micro-experiments like starting group result conversations instead of separate conversations. These could be regarded as practicing.

When they had gone through the whole question process, their question had shifted to *"Could we have an effect on our personnel plan?"* It seems that they had shifted from being emotionally stuck and frustrated toward a more hopeful feeling. They had first located others - the boss and executives - as being the only ones responsible for the situation, and later they opened up to the possibility that maybe they can also have an effect.

This day was a communal start for the whole process, and the first phase which enabled us to become aware our ways of acting and relating. This becoming aware phase was a time for a certain awakening: What is our organisational culture like at the moment? Becoming aware occurred through examining concrete work processes and by reflecting on how we were doing it together. This meant recognising shared ways of thinking and behaving, such as becoming aware of our habits of interaction and learning new ways of co-creating. It also led to us drift out of our comfort zone, and we had to let go of our desire to always know the outcome and develop our action in a clear and predetermined way.

Small group sessions – new ways of developing

The work sessions in small groups led by a facilitator were set up as three-hour sauna cabin sessions. We were sitting in a sauna cabin on Mariankatu (a street); it is a casual and comfortable, although windowless, space. Usually we were sitting in a circle without tables. We started with orientation work, which was a meditation of sorts. In the orientation the participants sit in a comfortable position and divert their attention from the outside to the inside, i.e. to their own breathing and body sensations, feelings and thoughts. The purpose of this is to consciously take responsibility of one's inner space and recognize its effects in a group situation. The aim was to be able to stop, so that we could be present in the here and now – not thinking about other work issues or things on our mind. Some participants considered the orientation challenging, while others felt it was easy right from the beginning.

> *In the orientation I felt frequently, nearly every time, like I went high up in the air and looked at the world from there. From above, I couldn't see any small troubles, but everything seemed possible. (A participant)*

After the orientation everyone spoke about the inner space from which they were starting the shared work. Contemplating this inner space at the beginning and end of every session invoked different reactions in different groups. The strongest reaction was denial, a reluctance to share one's private space with others. This was connected to an impression that one's inner space has nothing to do with work and professional identity. It also demonstrated how hard it was for the participants to trust the group enough to be able to share what was going on in their inner space.

One participant commented on the working method as a whole,

There's a risk that this is not fruitful, although I would try my best for this to work. But there's a risk that this won't lead to any conclusions in the end. This process analysis is a really good thing for us lawyers, except that we don't have any experience in this, so we'll see how it works. All this internalising and putting our soul into this, we don't really have any experience in or insight into it... But for this to work, it probably takes more time than we have in our meetings.

This view reflects the thoughts of many others, too, as well as the common ways of working. A working method is instantly evaluated by thinking of the outcome, and there is a fear that something may not lead to any conclusions. It feels more familiar to examine the processes than to orientate and to contemplate one's own inner space. They both seem new, and inexperience arouses feelings. The participants point out that reaching deep within and putting one's soul into play requires more time than is customary.

In most groups, examining one's inner space gradually became an important stopping ritual and a practice that filtered through the group's entire way of interacting. This was evident in the dialogue, and many participants shared their feelings and experiences differently than before. The participants started to appreciate this kind of experiential knowing.

After the orientation, work usually continued by examining our work processes. We did not only explore work processes and discuss about them (the course of the process, customers, purpose, objective and points of development), but we also examined our way of perceiving matters. It was this latter aspect that enabled a deeper renewal of our organisational culture – the participants' way of understanding and interpreting things was starting to become visible. Examining the work process also shed light on how diversely different people perceive the work processes. For instance, there were various ways of understanding who the client was in the process. Sometimes we realised that we did not really know anything but our own field of work, and the work of many others in the same process was not quite familiar. Highlighting different standpoints and examining our own inner spaces gradually led to a situation where the participants felt surprisingly vulnerable. A certain culture of excellence started to crack when we began to realise that there are skills that we do not hold and that there is more diversity beneath the surface than we expected. At the end of every session we stopped to evaluate the quality of our dialogue together. Here is an example of one group's reflections:

- *Artificial discussion takes its toll on the work, nothing gets done.*
- *This was so well put; this floridness with our terms, so that my experience of the situation as a whole was non-blocked, a well-functioning debate,*
- *We revolved around fields of politeness.*
- *As you heard, we revolved around the same thing again, so this isn't going anywhere, not towards creative dialogue.*
- *About the analytical focus... when we search for a way of working and learning, let's not make this too scientific, technocratic and complex. We should have a clear model; let's not make a clear thing too complex. Didn't the English say, "keep it simple"?*
- *This way of analysing the ways of conversation felt practical and quite easy to participants.*

Naturally, the participants quite often had different views and feelings about what kind of conversation was going on. What felt like a debate to someone, was considered a polite conversation by another. Thus, I regard that this kind of practice also helped us to become aware of how we were constructing realities sometimes in a similar fashion with others, and sometimes quite differently through our earlier experiences, beliefs and body sensations.

We also realised how unaccustomed we were to creative and reflective dialogue. A strength that manifested itself in the existing organisational culture was reasoned argumentation, which often meant expressing one's own opinion and justifying it. Our ability to listen to different points of view and to open up to them was not in active use. The pace of working was so fast that there was no room for creative and reflective dialogue. In nearly every session we stopped to reflect on the kinds of interpretations, beliefs and ways of working that had emerged in the here and now. The purpose of this was to get us to recognise current ways of acting. At the end of the session, we stopped to evaluate the changes in our own space, the space of the group, and the quality of dialogue and its movements in the fields of dialogue. For evaluating the quality of dialogue, we used Scharmer's fields of dialogue (figure 4).

At the beginning, the dialogue seemed to consist of sophisticated monologues and debates one after another. People presented their own opinions. There often was a highly intellectual tone to them. Sometimes they were presented in such a way that the opinion seemed to be the truth. Various perspectives were great and well-grounded, and these produced fruitful debates. The experts were used to arguing for their own views logically and credibly. During the renewal process, debating emerged both as a strength and as a drawback for renewal. We searched for different modes for the dialogue, such

as more reflective and creative dialogue. Stopping to reflect on one's own actions brought along the ability to start listening in a new way. Even though at the beginning the dialogue started from politeness and monologues and debating, it later moved towards collective reflection, inquiry and creative dialogue.

One of the most important lessons in this phase was that we as participants were responsible for developing our own work processes and, more broadly, for the renewal of organisational culture. At the beginning, there was some disbelief towards the idea that the participants really could make an impact. Many had conflicting experiences from the past. The management did not set any assignments, although some groups hoped for it. Also, as a facilitator I did not attempt to clarify what they should do. I trusted that the participants would be able to co-create their own views. We were guided by the adequately broadly-defined organisational culture of the future, which everyone interpreted in their own way. It felt both distressing and liberating. Gradually, an image of the future started to emerge in many groups, as if by itself. It was wise to give room for what was emerging in the way of new attitudes, thoughts and practices. One of the participants later noted: *"We have more liberties than we think of taking... We are not wearing any collars!"*

The need for control

At this phase of the process I wrote in my research diary:

> *The participants' need for control has surprised me with its intensity. I myself was surprised at the agony of being uneasy. I have gone through the same process as everyone else. Like the others, I have no higher knowledge of where our experiment leads or whether it will lead to anything. The process has been easier for me because I have accepted my uneasiness and not resisted it. Yet, I have felt a heavy pressure on both myself and the organisation management – the expectation that someone should guide the participants or show them how it's done. The most overwhelming feature is that in the beginning the participants seemed reluctant to take any responsibility. Some people waited for "an assignment from above", while some longed for systematic process development. Anything that made them feel safe. Receiving a limitless opportunity to influence things seemed to evoke anguish and resistance. Many participants wanted to highlight every possible external constraint that they had at the time, and it looked like there was no space at all.*

The need for control has manifested itself in many ways:
1. A desire to find out the outcome, or to first see where something will lead
2. Intellectualising (not speaking from experience)
3. Debating – defending the correct viewpoint
4. Minimising the sensuous and experiential dimension
5. A habit of sliding into previous action models and seeking solutions e.g. through teamwork, first selecting the chair and so on
6. A longing for clear definitions of expectations

When we free ourselves of the logic of right and wrong, we are free to do the same things in a new way — and this makes them different altogether. (Terhi)

In the process I learned that I don't have to be perfect. I have the courage to say to customers that I can't solve their problems right away, but I will look into it. Earlier I would have been stressed that they might notice my lack of knowledge. (A participant)

My old, narrow work role has been replaced by a person. This creates a lot more opportunities than just playing the narrow work role. (A participant)

This phase started in May 2007 and ended in November 2007. It included two communal days (5/2007: 2-day trip to Tallinn), three support group sessions, three (/four) small group sessions for every 7 process groups. There were also other small group sessions that they had without my facilitation.

In this phase, people started to feel liberated from the need for an assignment from above or clear guidelines. They released themselves from the belief that the responsibility for renewal was somewhere else. Letting go also meant overcoming the assumptions and ways of working connected to the earlier culture, such as omniscience, one truth mode, narrow work role...

A desire for clarity − and the new box image

Many work process groups asked what the bigger picture about the work processes was. Might the core group be able to clarify it? Actually, there was an impressive matrix image of it, created earlier within the management team.

However, we started to re-examine the processes as a whole within the core group, the purpose of which was to act in a facilitating role regarding the whole process. This seemed to demand a lot of time and was continued every now and then by a smaller group. The purpose was to first prepare ground together for dialogue and then start dialoguing together in a participatory way. This way the whole work community could participate in the crafting. Unexpectedly for me, the management team interpreted the situation differently and decided to present a new process image within the department info in order to clarify the process as a whole for everyone. The management team wanted to take responsibility and was affected by a pressure to progress. The means of communication or participation possibilities were not considered; instead, the info meeting took place in the usual way. The management presented the idea and asked for opinions. Most people were quiet and someone said something favourable.

The following week, a state of confusion was apparent in the work process groups: *"These process images have been seen before – what was new about it?"* At the same time, I sensed feelings of disappointment and a reluctance to participate. Participants felt as if change work would be carried out as before. I recognised that this would be a good place for the management team to reflect on the success of its actions. Members of the management team felt that their presentation had been successful. I then told the team about the feelings of confusion and frustration in the groups. Together we evaluated that the course of action, despite its speed and clarity, had not worked out. It was only natural that, feeling the time pressure, the management team had chosen the conventional way of acting. However, we need a more participative way of working. It felt significant that we saw this situation as a learning experience.

Trying again – from the box towards living forms

Even from incompleteness and questioning we have managed to gather "strength" to carry on, but it has all come from the facilitator. (A participant)

We learned a lot from this minor setback. The process required the ways of working that would invite participation. It did not require new box images from the management. When the whole department departed for a trip to Tallinn, the core group was given a surprise task by the facilitator. When they got there, they should improvise a living and incomplete process image in a

way that would enable everyone's participation. This brought energy into the core group. The task felt exceptional; these experts were more accustomed to preparing presentations than risky improvisation. When the Director General, Teuvo, then started to draw the first circle of a flower and another member of the management team started to story what it depicted, the atmosphere was unexpectedly charged. Others started to continue drawing. Many of them leant forward in the small room. Freeform drawing and storytelling started to fire the whole group, and soon we felt like all forty people were creating the story together. Someone wanted to add a field around the flower, an organisational environment, while another wanted to depict the client as a bee, and someone else as the sun.

The following day, the good atmosphere continued and the Director General reflected that *"this way of leaving things incomplete is a significant thing."* It could be useful in various situations. Through our incomplete presentation we realised that in our culture things are usually preconceived, and as such it is not easy to affect them. We did not yet fully realise that the core of the whole process laid in incompleteness – it made everything more alive and let everyone participate in the Co-Creative Process.

Seija reflected on her relationship towards change:

In many former contexts, I have been searching for a new approach to process-like thinking. The usual rigidness of linear organisations has been pulled down by approaching actions and communities in a process-like way – that is, by outlining natural action chains from client to client. Quality thinking has received a worthy platform, when we have been able to "correct" actions truly at their source by outlining processes, not touching the authority boundaries of the linear organisation. Customer-oriented thinking and quality of operations have found each other. Through experience, I have noticed that even matrix organisations can include structural rigidness and formalism. Developmental work that only focuses on work processes has not guaranteed a genuine, permanent change in the people.

In this project, process thinking found more organic form as a garden plan. It has felt good at first; it has been a new non-linear way of looking at operations. Still, I have learned to yearn for even more room to breathe. New ideas and ways of working should be born in many small groups simultaneously. Letting go of linearity also means that we should not seek for one correct answer to questions. This means that when creating new things, our actions are alive and reborn every moment.

Crisis – whether to keep doing the same or take a brave leap together?

I also got confirmation for what I'd known before; that you shouldn't try to avoid difficulties. Through them, the end result is clarified. (A participant)

Gradually the enthusiasm for renewing organisational culture through work processes started to wane. Many important developmental moves had been made and small things had been fixed. Work processes had been self-evaluated, and the group members carried out small and large reforms in the processes. Many had gained a general view of the kinds of work processes they were a part of. Some had had very little clue of anything other than their own field or their own particular job specification.

Additionally, we observed that our group division based on work processes was partly unworkable. It seemed as if the other end of the process was in a different work process group. Some work processes were a small part of each other. This posed practical problems: How to renew action if every participant is not in the same group making decisions? We also realised that some of the work processes were not processes but themes that traversed all operations, such as communications or guidance.

In this phase, there were only six months left of the actual one and half year project. I recognised that the project would remain just a conventional change work project if we continued in the same direction. It would not enable a deeper renewal of the organisational culture, although more and more dialogue had started to emerge. I felt tremendously distressed because I saw great possibilities that would be left unused. Moreover, in some groups the motivation had started to fade. That is why the core group finally decided to carry out a small questionnaire in the groups about everyone's motivation to continue working in this way. Over half of the participants felt that the project was petering out. So, in the core group we decided that it was time to take a big leap to something new. There were only six months left of the actual project; it would have been easy to think that we could not move in a new direction. As a facilitator I felt responsible: I recognised that I was one of the people who in these situations listen to their intuition and heart more than the analytical reasoning. The critical voice in me and a number of colleagues suggested that it would be sensible to continue in the same way, but my intuition listened to what it wanted to emerge. Ethical courage is essential for enabling renewal. Renewal also demands trust in the capacity of the process. You can trust this capacity if you trust the potential that we as human beings have available to us. Addition-

ally, you have to form the structures that enable the potential to be fulfilled. This group was ready for the leap – and in retrospect, not leaping would have led to the project slowly dying. The core group understood this. Our trust was strong: it was worth taking the risk and not waiting around for a slow death.

The miracle and zest of self-organising

During a working community day we got together and reorganised everything, which surprised and energised the participants. Everyone was able to propose important themes for renewal and renewing work from the standpoint of the future. From the work community emerged many microcosms connected to customer relations, but also microcosms related to renewing the inner culture in the workplace. There were many of these: Happy Customer, Collective Memory, Financial and Travel Administration, Tasotu and so forth. The earlier groups were also given the chance to continue, and the communications group did want to continue. Everyone got to choose how many groups they wanted to participate and engage in. Some chose one, some chose two or three. The choices were guided by enthusiasm, and from these themes emerged building blocks for the future. The work was well resourced by the management.

From structuring toward participating

Seija crystallised the trends in work community development and the need for people-oriented renewal based on her vast work experience: When developing work communities, it is easy to rely on shifting conventional structures. I have seen how structural renewal has opened up knots and stiff working methods and enabled new actions. When I speak of implemented reforms, I mean internal structural changes as well as entire state organisations transforming to resemble business organisations. In retrospect, the reforms can be seen as improving profitability, better serving clients, and supporting expertise.

I have noticed that *'the deepest'* have been left aside and often genuinely ignored in conventional change projects. Yet the real participation (not just making something participative), and seeing our mind's habits and our ways of constructing our experiences, are the key to a deeper change of the organisational culture. That is something I have learned during this renewal process. The true effect of conventional change has been incomplete, as if something essential was missing - not touching. The change processes have been blamed for ignoring the person. At worst, changes may have led to losing know-how or even destroying it. Of course, I still feel that a coaching approach towards

leadership, work community coaching and counselling are handy tools for growth – as they have long been used as tools for change – but I do not regard them as the only options anymore, or sufficiently in-depth. In action we need more than tools: new ways of acting and on-going dialogue together.

In this renewal process of the OGE, I have recognised that we need fresh soil and room for growth. Old branches need to be cut off by ourselves and some trees even have to be cut down... and this needs to be done together. During this process we have been practicing letting go. At the same time, everyone has been responsible for their personal renewal. It is not always as important to develop something new as it is to recognise the things that should be let go of. Letting go creates space for something new. A metaphor that emerged from our process was composting: old is not bad; it creates lush soil. Structure, therefore, is not as essential for change as is often thought. The purpose of structure is to enable, but not to lock and stop. I have learned that a prerequisite for genuine sharing is first and foremost a deep, permanent change in the actions and attitudes of both individuals and the whole community. A person's own change is the best breeding ground where changes are enabled at the floor level and in the field.

We started this renewal process by planning and highlighting the processes. Gradually we began to want something more, something more influential and something that concerned everyone in addition to outlining the processes. We needed an element that would enable experiments, errors and questions without immediate answers. So we started small experiments that people could join according to their own interests. We called the experimental groups microcosms. The microcosms as experiment platforms were consciously made a part of the renewal process in the middle of the most pressing negotiation period in late 2007 and early 2008. It was really challenging – no one could have imagined how challenging. The cosmos-likeness created a space for hearing, listening and all the senses, and inner entrepreneurship gained more room.

With the microcosms, we redirected our attention from the external to the internal. This meant starting from within, both as an individual and as a community. The significance of one's own experiences gained space; internal experiences were useful for re-outlining customer relations. We connected to our humanity and to what *"renewal"* and *"renewing"* meant for ourselves. This started to bring out enriching insights into what was going on elsewhere as well – what the customers as people experience under pressures for change, and how this could be taken into consideration. It was significant that in the middle of an intensive round of negotiations people had the courage to transgress focusing on only the subject matter at hand and to pay attention to their own experiences and learning in groups.

Phase III: Attuning – Co-Creating the Culture of Future at This Moment

"At the heart of our future organisational culture there are collaboration, human's faces, listening and equality." (Participants of one microcosm)

"...the cleverness of the client gives us something to work on and appreciate (with a warm, appreciative voice)... I feel truly grateful, gifts just keep coming." (Seija)

This phase started in November 2007 when the whole community was reorganising itself into small groups, and ended in May 2008. The phase included one communal day, three small group sessions for every (7) process groups and self-organised, in-house facilitated small group sessions that were held without my facilitation, and three support group sessions. We also had a two-day partly silent retreat with the support group in spring 2008.

In the attuning phase, the participants started experimenting eagerly. Jumping into experiments, however, demanded a lot of dialogue and gumption to act differently from before. In many groups, customer-oriented thinking or the internal customer became the centre of attention more strongly. The relationship with customers and others was under constant attuning.

The idea behind the new groups was for them to act as so-called microcosms, e.g. small experiments of the emerging culture in the sense of new ways of acting and being in action. Term microcosm refers to our way of working in small groups. This term could open possibilities to see how these small groups could be like a macrocosm, our new embodied living culture in the here and now. At this phase, seven microcosms were created (figure 5). It was essential to move from speculation towards more dialogical and experi-

mental modes of action. *"The world of microcosms is not thoroughly organised"*, said one of the participants. Microcosms seemed to be especially inspiring because this method did not include planning everything completely, but instead was based on experimental action. Some participants said that *in everyday work some things have become "dead" due to over-planning. This left no room either for anything new or participation.*

Figure 5. Themes of the microcosms.

- ⭐ Happy Customer
- ⭐ Communications
- ⭐ Supporting Change
- ⭐ Collective Memory
- ⭐ Financial and Travel Administration
- ⭐ Employer and Agreement Work and Productive Leadership (Tasotu)
- ⭐ Appreciated and Favourable Employer
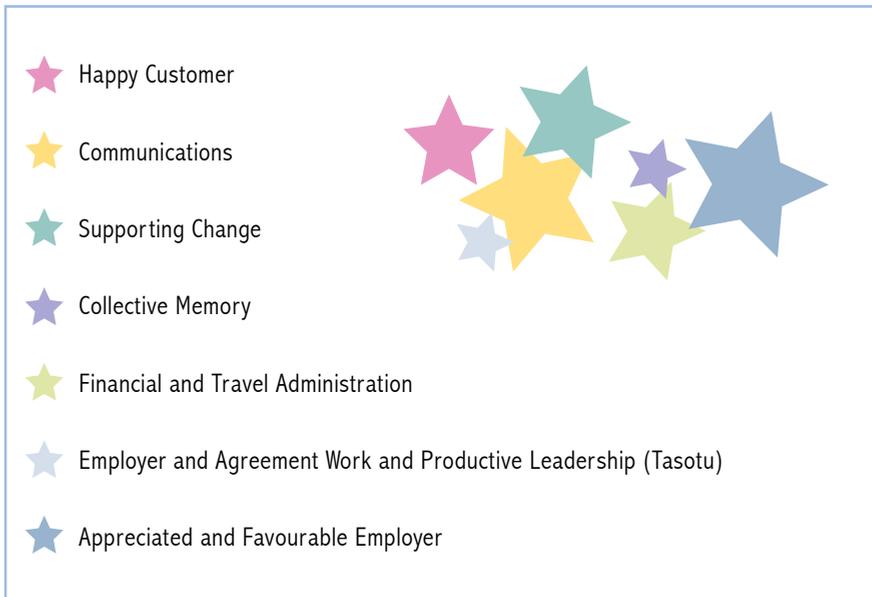
The development work has opened up a positive dialogue, which in itself has been significant for developing team spirit and learning together. At the moment, we're probably closer to saying 'us' than 'me-you'. (A participant)

We formed set criteria for the microcosms in order to enable the co-creation of the future culture in the here and now. The criteria were based on ideas of the future culture, which had arisen in the previous groups, as well as on practices that had, during the process, felt like they could strengthen the new culture. As a facilitator I drafted a suggestion of the criteria based on our dialogues in small groups, and this was examined together in the support group

and in other groups. The criteria describe a microcosm that contributes to a renewing organisation culture (Figure 6).

We also obtained an idea of how the experiment could be started rapidly without too much planning and analysing.

In this phase the core group members had a new role as in-house facilitators. They became so excited that they even partnered as facilitators with members of other groups. This reflected a new kind of interest in co-creating; no individual person would be irreplaceable in his or her role. During the following six months, in the spring of 2008, each microcosm group met three times supported by the facilitator. Most groups also met independently in between these times (one or more times), and the in-house facilitators took care of the fluency of the process.

In-house facilitators and enabling practices

The task of the in-house facilitator was to participate in the group as an equal member. When needed, the facilitator supported the work in various ways, such as facilitating the start of the meeting (orientation), asking questions and making room for reflections. The functionality of these supporting or facilitating practices depended on the inner space of the groups. The inner space of the facilitator and his or her ability to improve the inner working space of the group was very significant. The skills of the facilitators and the fluency of work varied in different microcosms. In most groups, there was a pair of facilitators.

Facilitators used three simple enabling practices: orientation, questioning, and reflection. **Orientation** meant stopping. At the beginning, a suitable method of orientation was selected by, for instance, attuning the purpose and intentions of the work and spending a moment in silence so that everyone could mindfully choose the basis on which they were working. **Asking questions** was important for shared dialogue. The in-house facilitators suspended expressing their opinions and attempted to enable dialogue through open questions. **Reflection** allowed the group to evaluate its work from a distance. The in-house facilitator encouraged reflection on how the group was working. The facilitator attempted to direct the group's attention towards both how different topics were handled (the dynamics of substance-centred action) and the level of inner spaces (how the participants felt). Reflection was especially necessary when the group stumbled in its work, in conflict situations, or when the groups wanted to come up with new ideas. Reflection could be used either during the work, or in the end, or as an independent after-reflection.

Figure 6. Definitions and criteria of the microcosms.

Microcosms*
- A prototype, not a pilot (a pilot has to be a success, while a prototype is about maximising learning)
- Strategic platforms for the future
- Small experiments that include the spirit and principles of our new organisational culture
- Can either expand and become established actions, or change into something different depending on their functionality
- Are simple and flexible new realities
- Form small entities that reflect the bigger totality
- Emerge from an idea that is not thoroughly elaborated
- Are formed in action when they come into contact with the people in their surroundings

A microcosm that embodies renewing culture*
- Supports open, inquisitive and mindful dialogue
- Enables opportunities for influence and encourages participation within the work community
- Strengthens new forms of collaboration and networking
- Is built on an enabling form of leadership and "power with" thinking
- Can enable multi-skilled employees and the sharing of skills
- Supports the organisation's purpose and good customer service directly or indirectly
- Emerges from the future
- Includes a loop for feedback and learning, and keeps changing organically

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* Microcosms (original idea by Scharmer 2007)

** A microcosm that embodies renewing culture (OGE and Takanen 2008)

Phase IV: Practicing – Microcosms as Platforms for Co-Creating the Future

The most important thing for me has been to get to know my colleagues, their person-alities and special characteristics better and more deeply through working together. This way I've also learnt to appreciate and understand different ways of thinking. My "truth" is just one truth, and the bigger picture is composed of various different views. (A participant)

We have achieved a lot and had a good time... we're doing something concrete and have had visible results, though we still don't know about the reception. These things have been new to all of us but they have touched everyone. We don't judge others... and don't bring things for inspection. (Reflection of the Collective Memory microcosm)

This phase started soon after small group work had been reorganised, in May 2008. Actually, it could be seen as having started back in January and over-lapping with the Attuning phase. If we take May 2008 as the start, this non-overlapping phase included four communal days (and a few others that were held independently), self-organised and in-house facilitated small group ses-sions, three customer workshops and three support group sessions. Even if this phase is named the Practicing phase; it does not mean that there was no practicing in earlier phases. However, in this phase practicing became more visible, and expanded to new areas of work.

The practicing phase meant that we started to mindfully embody in the present the qualities we wanted to see and feel in our culture. Collaborating, experimenting and asking started to grow. We had been practising these ways since the beginning of the renewal process, but now the choices to work in these ways became more mindful. The microcosms had been built on certain

principles, such as the use of dialogue and experimentation, and these enabled a new, shared way of learning and doing.

These are some of the ideas that emerged from the microcosm groups for creating and embodying the renewing culture:

- Renewal is everyone's task
- Something that has not worked out before can work out in the group
- We find many different approaches instead of a single correct model
- Doing, developing and learning simultaneously
- Structures should be shaped flexibly on the basis of action
- We will have dialogue and experimental forums in the future as well; time and space to stop together.

The microcosms differed a lot from each other, and they concentrated on different themes. What they had in common was their experimental nature and on-going dialogue. In our renewing organisational culture, space was created for reorganising job tasks and changing responsibilities, for new ways of encountering partners and clients, for doing normal tasks together in a new way, and so forth. One group concentrated on the concerns related to skill transfer, and the group designed a practical and successful process for this.

Things that appeared small, such as everyday ecological practices, also inspired people – small things can make an impact.

(In our microcosm) a question emerged of whether everyone could, wherever possible, do the tasks that they really like. The department decided to hold a so-called enlistment market, which I think was a sensible and brave decision. The results were successful. (A participant)

(We created) many working practices; changed practices; discussed responsibilities and development. In the Collective Memory group, one good idea was to focus on the transferring of skills, because it is a very important matter now and in the future. We also paid attention to environmental matters. (A participant)

Our way of working together on the change exercises has been significant. We have achieved the most productivity in the processes that have no separately authorised "owner" or where the ownership is shared but, in a way, secondary. Indirectly, our adjustment work has also created a foundation for adjusting the core processes. Practicing these lessons is a great challenge and demands changes in both thought patterns and resources. (A participant)

Seija described the events as follows: In the world of microcosms, mindfulness skills and talking became a more integral part of the action. It started to dawn on us why it is important to take responsibility of the orientation we are working on. The natural entrepreneurship of individuals and groups also gained a lot of strength. We started to see more opportunities for influence and co-creation. Silence and stillness were also a part of this experiment. Listening and silence attained a new importance. We practiced these skills bravely with customers. We listened to the customer "with a clean slate" and received feedback that encouraged us to continue.

Pentti, one of the facilitators, tells: I have participated in several departmental development meetings over the last five or six years. We have encouraged each other to take more responsibility and expand our skill set. This has been a great but somewhat painful process where everyone has tried to grow out of the forest of barriers and territories that we had gotten used to in the recent decades. It has been great to participate in a process where we have created a foundation for the "new generation and work community of the 2010s". This new kind of organisational culture will be great, when we start to need new skills in the coming years. In the personnel department, in the next years we need to invest time and energy in networks, their operation and functionality. I am glad to notice that this is already being done.

Towards partnership

The entire department's relationship towards customers had become more listening, more open and more allowing of polyphony. Customer satisfaction had increased in the first year of the project in all eleven indicators, and it stayed at same good level in the following years too. In a collective meeting the shifts in relation with customer was outlined as described in figure 7. The historical arch related to the change in customer relations is visible in this. The 1980s and 1990s emphasised the OGE's role as an authority that dictates and gives instructions. The customer was sometimes referred to as a subject or an executor. By 2008, the OGE's focus had in more and more situations moved towards the role of a supporter that guides and gives practical advice. From 2008 to 2010 there were several situations where the OGE worked with the customers as a partner and enabled co-creating. For instance, materials needed for a future review was created in a dialogical retreat together with partners and this leadership group continued their working together after that with issues that everyone in group could bring.

From my viewpoint as a facilitator and action researcher the dialogue and experiments in the Happy Customer microcosm reflected a change in the group's ways of thinking and acting. I examined the ways of thinking that came up in the group's mutual dialogue during several meetings. At the beginning, the dialogue reflected the idea that *"we should have ready-made answers for the clients' problems"*, and in the background there was a belief in omniscience. *"We know better than our clients."* The HC group members renewed these beliefs when they started to encounter customers with a clean slate, without any agenda. They let go of ready-made answers and started to listen to the customers and to learn with them. At times, the group almost slipped back to previous ways of working, for instance when they wanted to draw conclusions from the results of the customer encounterings. They were not really familiar with discussing experiential material, and at some point they felt the need to get something out of the material and present it to the customer. Surprisingly, the group rethought that a different approach could function as well or better. One outcome was an open discussion forum organised for the customers, where discussion was continued together and conclusions were drawn with joint effort.

Figure 7. The role changes of the customer and the OGE (self-evaluation in 2008)*

The employer-customer role (from the OGE's viewpoint)

The OGE's role

Power over

The employer-customer role		The OGE's role
Subordinate	Orders	Dictator
		①1
"Coachee"	Guidelines, recommendations	Instructor
Applier	Guidance, advice	Supporter
		②2
Partner	Thinking and doing together ③3	Partner
Co-creator	Enabling co-creating	Facilitator

Power with

EMPHASIS

① 1 The 1980s and 1990s

② 2 Present, 2008

③ 3 The near future

*The original idea of the role evaluation from Scharmer 2007.

What kind of a garden is our culture now?
– Collective Storytelling

In the summer of 2008 all participants storied how we saw our on-going organisational culture in the here and now. This kind of common meeting seemed to significantly contribute to our shared new on-going identity and our renewal story. The day was officially the last day of the project, but in terms of the organisation culture renewal it was just a memorable day in a process that was still on-going. We told a collective story (actually many stories) that became unbelievably polyphonic. I had asked the participants to co-create an image and a story about how the future culture is present in the current moment and suggested that this could be based on a garden metaphor. The participants surpassed the garden metaphor and created an eco-systemic and multiform story. The story consisted of the independent stories of the small groups, which formed one polyphonic, collective story during the telling.

The story started by the first group begins in a very descriptive way along these lines: First there was a cleanly cultivated field (the previous organisational culture) where growth was slow and plants relatively small. Then emerged a freer habitat, where lots of different wild flowers started to sprout. The most beautiful of these belonged to the Collective Memory microcosm, the success of which the proud participants wanted to mention. The sun was shining, but there were some clouds in the sky as well. But *"we blew them away together"*. Also in the sky, as a partner for the sun, was the moon which symbolised the client. The client observed our change and *"was waiting for what was to come"*. The core message of this group was *"we ourselves believe in what we do"*.

The image for the next group was like an ecosystem. In the ecosystem, competition and collaboration can be seen as a simultaneous reality. In the middle of the image, there runs a river, along which a man is fishing. There is also a prey fish and an adder. Everything is not as in paradise. The following day in the core group the most upsetting things in the story were the prey fish and the adder. One participant had said, *"The customer is still the prey fish."* The members felt that in the group, two persons had just been drawing their own thing. On the other hand, they felt that this was *"reality"* as well. There are different views and not everything produced in the group is shared.

One group was very associative and brought up subjects that are usually kept hidden. The sarcastic humour stemming from tiredness was also visible in the manner of representation. In their picture, the lead figure of the organisation was depicted as a bird of prey that was destroyed by a comet. The conventional respect towards higher-ranking officials and civilized discussion were opened up to images that included strong aggression and chaos. The uni-

versity client was depicted as a dying tree that only had one green branch: the future Aalto University. This predicted the significant situation for the OGE when the universities as client offices were moving away from the Office for the Government as Employer. The group obviously had been working in a pressure-relieving and liberating spirit; they said things out loud that were not usually brought up. They had not been striving for anything logical. This was partly to let out tiredness, frustration and pressure before the summer. There was space for it as well, and it was accepted.

Figure 8. The organisational culture as a garden. Stretchylegs and the process of composting
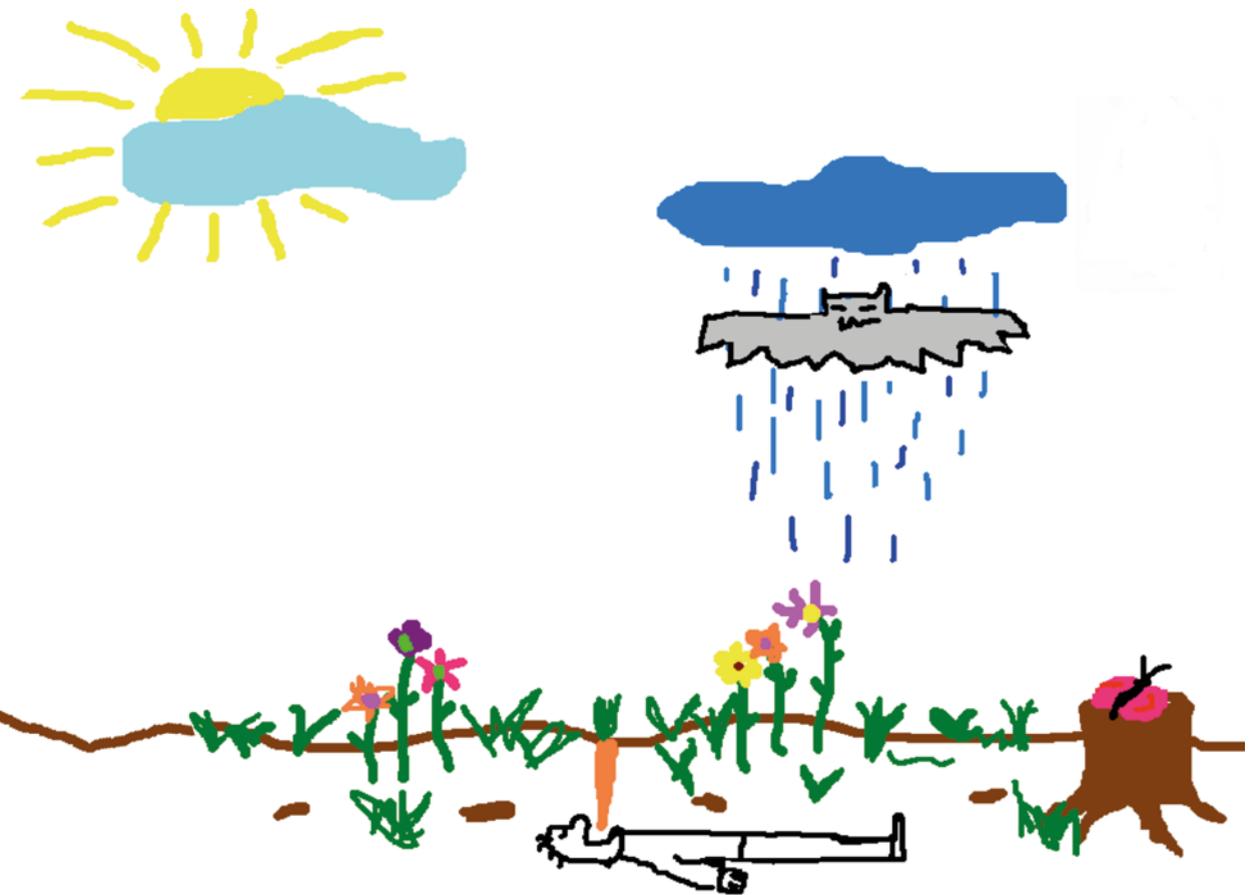
In the story of another group, the sun was now rising and a culture of the sunrise was forming. Something was already in view but not completely visible. In the picture Stretchylegs, can also be found; someone notices he has been left without an explanation and asks: *"Hey, who is that guy?"* This sympathetic character lying underground can be seen as a metaphor for the renewal process. Stretchylegs has a relaxed attitude; he is not toiling away but, instead, is enjoying the fruit right now; he is taking it easy and eating a carrot underground. That new, tasty carrot is a product of lush soil, where the rotten parts of the *"old"* culture have transformed into nourishing earth. *"A rotten network is a beginning for everything new, this is a positive thing…"* The picture transmits a relaxed and humorous spirit. Something significant is happening underground which is part of the larger ecosystem. The new and the old are not opposed, but parts of the same totality. The invisible dimension where transformation starts has become a familiar place (Figure 8).

Digesting the stories in the core group

During the last day and the core group meeting after that day, I sensed a feeling of spring fatigue in the entire group and also exhaustion caused by the toughness and intensity of the process. At the same time people seemed to fear that this would be the end of everything that had started to emerge. One participant felt all previous projects had ended on the last project day. Another confirmed this. They both described how difficult it was to understand that the organisational culture had really been renewed and that the renewal could continue. Other participant said, *"we are in a crucial, emotional phase"*. Many group members had strong emotional experiences and many different voices deep inside them. The participant that recognised the emotional phase referred to my observations of the changes in the cynical voices the previous day and said that she noticed the same. The voices had transformed. In the beginning these voices said: *"This is not going to work out; it hasn't worked out before."* Now they are saying: *"What has happened is not a result of this process."* She also said that her own cynicism and realism had grown during the process, but at the same time she was convinced that the organisational culture had been successfully changed. Another one of the previous speakers describes how she was afraid of disappointment and had realised that everything starts from yourself and how everything already existed – you do not have to strive for anything, just do.

The new ways of thinking naturally sprung up in the participants' comments. They mentioned the model of open dialogue. *"The foundation of the*

culture is so strong that it is not necessary to bring up only positive things anymore". One participant mentioned that in their culture they do not separate good and bad people, but instead *"there is everything in all of us"*. Seija confirmed that we do not need to point out bad people. *"Often you find out that you are weak"* and *"you cannot always have the courage and strength to say things out loud"*. Seija referred to a situation where someone is in "a prey fish mode" and you want to help that person to become aware of this. The garden images brought up in an interesting way the multi-layered nature and polyphony of our multi-centred renewal process. Our discussions brought about an accepting and broad interpretation that there is some *"prey fish"* in all of us. It became one of the basic defaults of the new culture that we should not see some people as bad, but we all have various sides and we do not only have to highlight the positive things. People were awoken by an interesting detail where Stretchylegs relaxes underground, eating a carrot. The dysfunctional ways of acting which had been let go of produced lush compost soil from which now grows a tasty, big carrot. It seems like you could just casually enjoy it. By stopping. By being. The core of the process is just this: letting go. This core can be compared to nature's organic, rhythmic renewal where dead leaves are composted and give material for a new birth.

OBSERVATIONS

OF CIVIL SERVANTS
OF THE FUTURE IN THEIR
NATURAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT
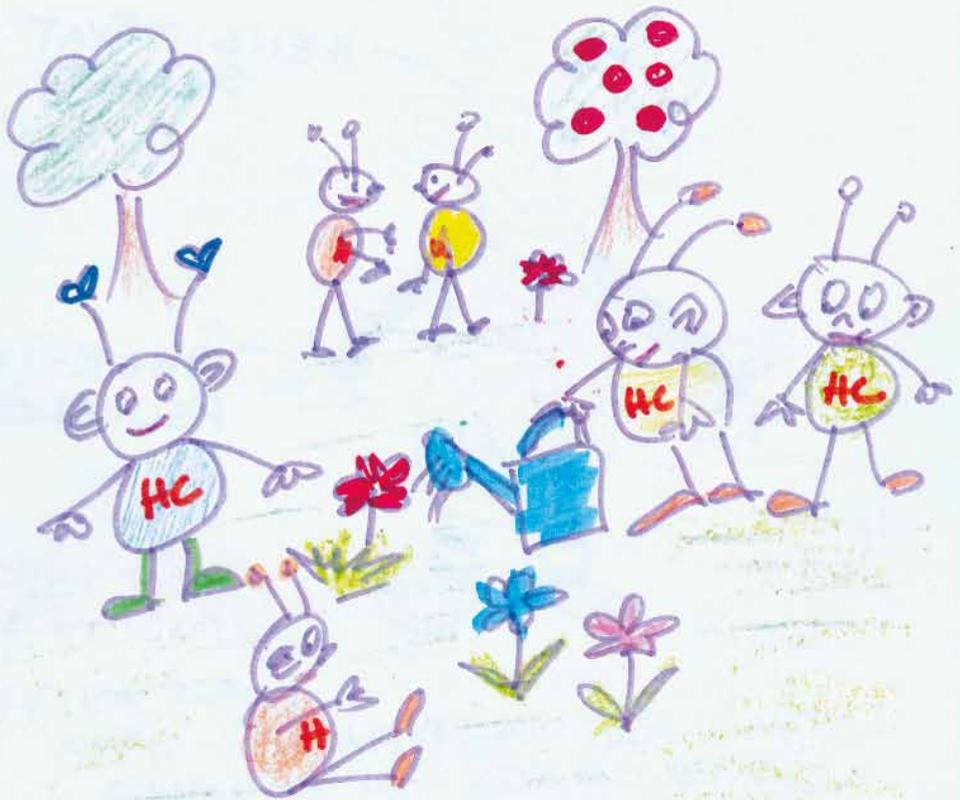
PARTICIPATIVE OBSERVATIONS BY T.TAKANEN 2008

Is living in the here and now

A PASSION FOR SUBSTANCE
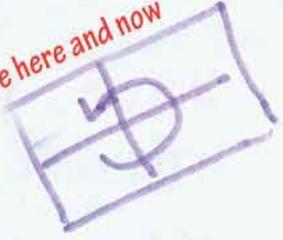
SENSITIVE ANTENNAS — SENSITIVELY

GOOD LISTENER

'OBJECTS' OF OBSERVATION

GREEN THUMB

WORKS ACCORDING TO THE HAPPY CUSTOMER PRINCIPLE

ALL CUSTOMERS ARE SHARED

LIKES TO MOVE, ES A LEARNING SPECI

USES ALL FORMS OF DISCUSSION
- ✕ POLITE
- ✕ DEBATING
- ✕ REFLECTIVE DIALOGUE
- ✕ GENERATIVE DIALOGUE

OBSERVES HIS/HER SURROUNDINGS AND OTHER PEOPLE, UTILIZES HIS/HER OBSERVATIONS IN CUSTOMER RELATIONS

LETS HIS/HER 'OBJECTS' OF OBSERVATION TO FLUCTUATE WITHOUT BEING FIXED À DOES NOT LOCK ONTO ONE SINGLE INTERPRETATION

GREEN THUMB À TAKES CARE OF THE COMMUNAL GARDEN

PECIALLY VISITING CUSTOMERS
IES

LEARNS BEST BY ENTERING INTO DIALOGUE END EXPERIMENTING TOGETHER WITH OTHERS

- USES TWO DIFFERENT MODES OF EFFECTIVENESS

T1 = PRODUCTIVE, GUT FEELING A WORKS BEST IN
      SITUATIONS WHERE FAST ACTION IS NEEDED IN
      TRIED AND TESTED WAYS

T2 = OPEN, EMERGES FROM STOPPING, CREATES
      NEW À WORKS BEST IN SITUATIONS WHERE
      NEW APPROACHES AND WAYS OF ACTING ARE
      NEEDED

PRODUCTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS, WHICH GUARANTEE A
HEALTHY SPECIES & INDIVIDUAL

- LISTEN

- ASK QUESTIONS

- ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO TRY SOMETHING NEW

- REFLECT

- TUNE YOUR INNER SPACE

* FOR SELF-CARE AND CO-CARE

The Guiding Principles of Renewing Culture Are Emerging

When the renewal process had lasted for almost two years, the OGE's mission statement, future and values started to take new forms. These traditional elements of the strategy process had not been made clear at the beginning of the process for two reasons. The first was that the participants were satisfied with the existing descriptions for the mission statement and vision. The second, there was my belief that if you want a new interpretation of the mission, future and values of an organisation, the interpretation cannot be produced on the basis of earlier ways of thinking and working. In this sense, a reinterpretation drafted at the beginning of a project cannot work because there has not yet been space for renewing. I could half-jokingly say as a facilitator that first you need a bit of confusion, awakening and space for the new. I realised at this phase that our journey would be shifting from conventional strategic thinking and the securing of one's status towards organically creating an emergent co-creative strategy. In our case, this was strongly connected with renewing as individuals and as a community.

The spring of 2009 was a suitable time to look at the principles that our renewed and renewing culture would be built on. At the time, the Office for the Government as Employer was a part of the Empowering Organisational Culture learning network where various organisations listen to each other' guiding philosophies and give feedback. This allowed for the benchmarking of our guiding principles and receiving outside feedback on the principles of our organisational culture.

The support group took on the task of gathering, combining our values, vision and mission statement and depicting these in a verbal and pictorial form. The material collected in a communal meeting for the department formed the basis. The challenge was again how to avoid an end result created through

intellectual reasoning and language games, and to give space to something more vivid and experiential. Our intention was not to launch a new vision and a set of values and principles but to pay attention to what had already been born and what was being born in the core of the co-creation process of the shared on-going organisational culture. In every microcosm, as well as other day-to-day work, we could see new sprouts; new ways of working that were based on living values.

The guiding principles in the shape of a cone

A vision for the future is not something out there (in the future) but something very concrete in the moment. Each of us should be carrying out our mission as purpose and the vision in the present; living it in a dynamic way. (Terhi)

The full set of guiding principles – living values, vision for the future, purpose and core beliefs – were given unique visual form at the OGE. They formed the image of a cone where the future and present were as one. Here internal facilitator Pilvi describes what the principles mean.

Purpose is depicted in Figure 9, the dot represents the present and the ends of the line segment represent linear time, the past and the future. The base circle of the cone is formed from these, and represents our purpose. It is a foundation for everything. It stems from the core values of the OGE and reveals why the OGE exists. The purpose remained somewhat unchanged for decades, so it can be recognised by looking at the past and the future.

The star represents our vision for the future (Figure 9). It describes inspiringly what the OGE wants to achieve. Our vision for the future is not simply

Figure 9. The base of the cone: the purpose of the OGE in the present.
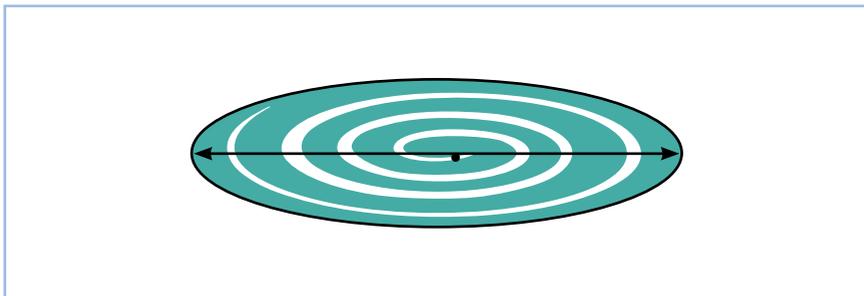
a linearly thought out moment in the future, towards which we would proceed along a familiar path. At this moment, our vision for the future is renewed organisational culture. Therefore it can be seen as rising into a third dimension, as the top of the cone. It represents fulfilling our mission statement based on our values in the here and now. Since the future is created all the time, at every moment, and because it is already present in the current moment, it can be examined from the top of the cone, and it becomes apparent how it is nestled within the present. In the present, the past and the future come together in a dialogue.

Our values are the vertical line inside the cone, the part supporting the whole structure (Figure 10). The values describe what is important for us in our work, how we are treating each other, our partners and our clients. The core values could remain unchanged for decades, even they live all the time. Our core values are trust, joint effort, an appreciation for diversity and courage. These values form the spirit necessary for organic renewal. The sides of the cone consist of enabling leading, and the enabling structures that invite renewing. Our beliefs and ways of working form a spiral of dynamic movement in the present. From the future viewpoint (from above) this moment is expanded; it includes the dialogue between the past and the future (Figure 11). Thus the future is already here in this moment, it happens when we live through our purpose in the here and now.

In the earlier development project our mission had been formed as the following: By human resources management at the central government level, the Office for the Government as Employer promotes the functional efficiency and service capability of operational units and thereby advances their influence on society. (2003)

In this phase, the purpose opened up from a new perspective and was gradually formed to represent us as people and to describe our renewed customer relationships:

We work together with our partners in state employer operations and human resources management. (The Purpose, first draft spring 2009).

The Office for the Government as Employer is a collective, uniting entity in state human resources management. Together with the state offices, we secure high-quality services in our society. (The purpose, second draft, autumn 2009).

The state develops as an increasingly human and inspiring employer. Together we turn changes into shared possibilities! (The vision for the future 2009)

Figure 10. The cone of the guiding principles.

Vision for the Future

V
A
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Purpose
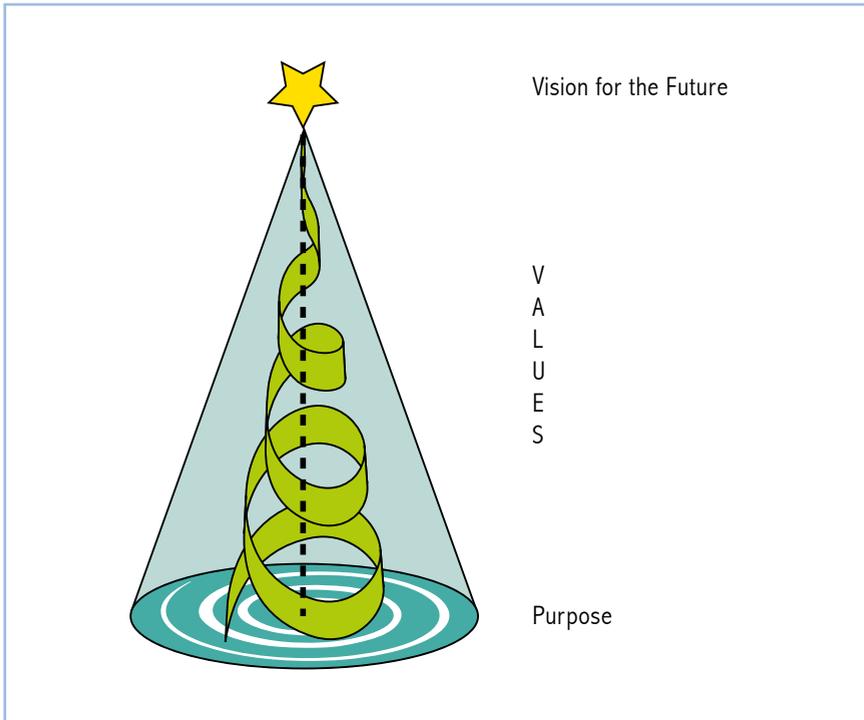
Figure 11. The base of the cone as seen from above: this moment and the future become one
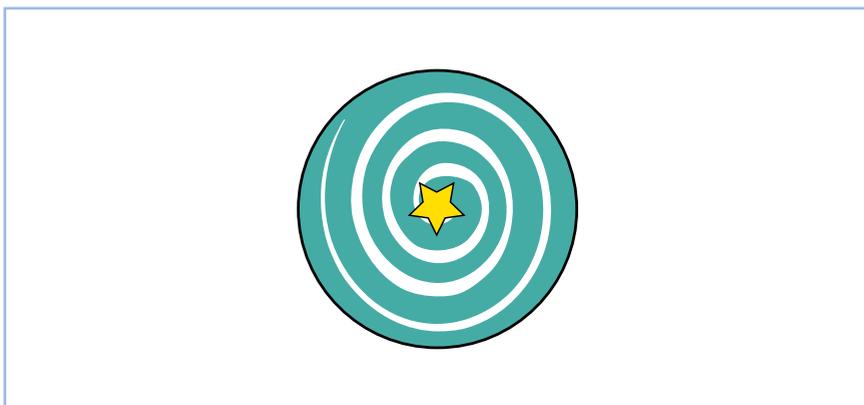
When I am listening to these formulations of the mission statement, there are big differences between these three. The statement from six years back is very thorough, but it does not convey feeling or spirit. It also feels like the connection to customers is very formal. In the newer interpretations of the mission statement, the customer has been lifted to the centre, as a partner. The language is also more human and easier to understand. In the previous mission statement, our work is passive "promoting", whereas in the new interpretations we work actively together. A shift towards co-creating with partners is clearly visible.

Both the OGE's mission statement and the OGE's vision for the future have been left loose and spacious on purpose. The greatest insight of the support group, when highlighting the guiding principles, was that these should not be defined and described to death. We almost slipped back into polishing wordings and crystallising the shared view, which would have led to a loss of the liveliness and possibilities for different interpretations. Various practices (such as art work, meditation and visualization) that invited the different ways of knowing helped us suspend the work becoming intellectual repartee.

Sensing and seeing values

Our core values were described as trust, joint effort, appreciating diversity and courage. We expressed core beliefs connected to values as: we learn from the old and create new. We grow and renew ourselves as humans. Thus, renewal of existing and upcoming values is an on-going process. Therefore, through Terhi's voice, we want next to offer some insight into our meetings when the OGE support group was producing values. Prior to this, the support group had many times shaped the guiding principles based on all participants' shared experiences. This short piece of story concretises very interestingly how the future is visible in the present with everyone creating it. In every participant's actions, the future and the values at its core are already visible[1].

> *I am sitting with Pilvi, the inspiration for the OGE's renewal work, and preparing for a meeting of the collective support group, and for presenting our guiding principles to our guests. The purpose of the following day's meeting is to crystallise the guiding principles of the emerging culture of the future. Suddenly Pilvi asks: "Could the values be something more than two-dimensional?" I fall silent and smile. I feel a tingle of excitement in my body; she has just put into words what the work needs now. "What do you mean?"*

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[1] This text is an excerpt of an essay Takanen 2009 and it has been partly modified and abridged.

I ask enthusiastically, although intuitively I know what she means. Pilvi laughs and says that she does not know yet. Suddenly we throw ourselves into the stream of ideas about how forming the guiding principles into words could be changed into multi-sensuous, living work. The work would embody the spirit of the renewing culture and we would not get caught in the trap of intellectual polishing. We both remember what it feels like to submerge oneself in an intellectual debate and to lose the quintessence or spirit of the matter, which has previously been very familiar in this culture. At this phase, it is possible to lose the essence when the work has been done many times and deadlines are looming. There is a danger that we crystallise our thoughts into sentences, polishing the wordings, and suddenly lose all the spirit that has brought openness and space for the new into our work.

The meeting in which we present the guiding principles to the guests. The previous day, we have experientially created the guiding principles on the basis of six months of formative work. We have created our presentation by first embodying the values, sensing them as embodied feelings through meditation and then forming them from clay in pairs. I have promised to orchestrate this meeting for the part of our presentation. We at the OGE do not have a PowerPoint presentation of our organisational values, purpose and future vision. We have a living improvisation based on a long history and collective two-year process on how the culture is co-created in this moment. There is a slight thrill in the air, although the atmosphere is also relaxed.

We are sitting in a circle at the OGE, in the main meeting room. The big, long tables have been taken away so that we have enough space to sit in a circle. We are used to this. The mood is relaxed, we have four guests and from the OGE there is the support group: the facilitators of the future culture. Our work is well underway and we are finally getting to opening up the values of OGE. I tell the guests to get closer, to sense and feel the clay works on the table, describing the OGE's values. The guests gather around the table and start to freely describe their impressions and feelings.

Gradually everyone from the OGE moves closer to stand and to listen to how the guests are experiencing the clay works. I sit and observe the subtle shift being part of this happening. People are smiling, nodding, getting closer to the table and each other, rejoicing and laughing. "Did you hear, this is a table and people, it's a meeting situation", I excitedly repeat what some guest has said, and think to myself: "How on earth can that be seen from a work that consists of small poles in a circle – with no table or chairs?" And my heart answers: "Yes it can. It's there."
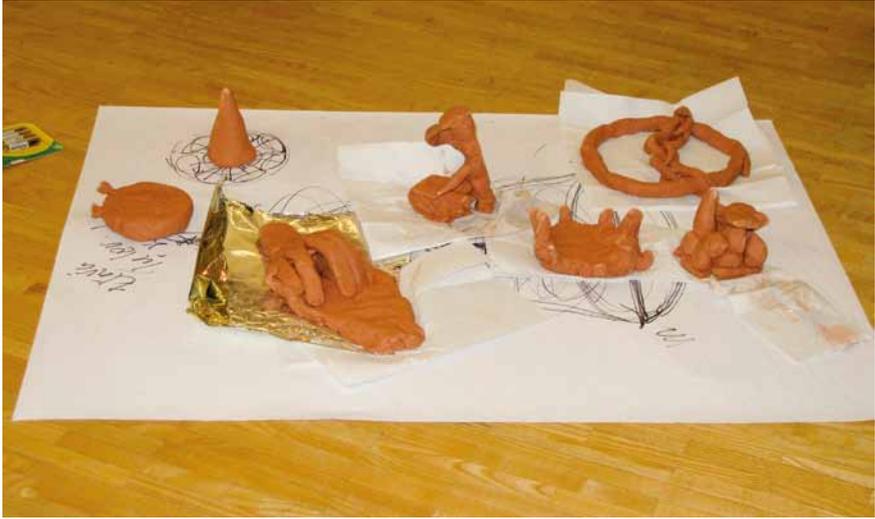
The guests grasp the essence of the values. I live in the spirit of the group. It feels significant that the guests are able to grasp these materialised values. We do not have to tell them; they recognise it in the works. "There's no need to explain this", one participant from the support group puts into words what the whole group is feeling, and I reply with a laugh: "The values are here." Shared laughter and a warm spirit can be felt in the space – is it my space or the group's space – it is shared. There is a feeling of encountering – the guests have grasped the spirit of our clay works. When the participants from the OGE begin to tell others about the values through stories and in a way that leaves a lot open, I feel that the way of representation reflects this "new culture".

Suddenly I return to a short but very vivid memory of our retreat a year back, where the support group members had a collective insight into how much talk can cover and veil and how revealing silence is. At this moment, this group has strong trust in that talk is not the most important thing – the clay works speak for themselves and the others have been attuned into observing them.

Our values have been born without thinking and planning and become visible through the renewing practices. The support group has given them a form – as unwritten and unspoken they have already lived in some of the emerging practices of the new culture. The guests' interpretations are at times very apposite and they even use the same words that the support group members had used the previous day when creating the clay works.

Snapshots from the value book

The support group members described the values in the guiding principles presentation as follows:

Value: trust

...a person has the courage to be open and transparent. I think of it as a symbolic gesture... When you have the courage to put your hand into someone else's hand, you get a strong feeling that the other is supporting you, and it can even be turned around (when you become the supporter).
- And I've revealed quite a lot about myself when I'm touching.

Value: appreciating diversity

This is a meeting situation. As you can see, there's a meeting table and the participants. From the outside they probably look similar, but they're different. They may look the same age and be the same age but they have differing opinions. In this organisation, the special thing is that they all get heard and we devour each other's different views, sometimes debating very passionately and sometimes reaching a creative situation.
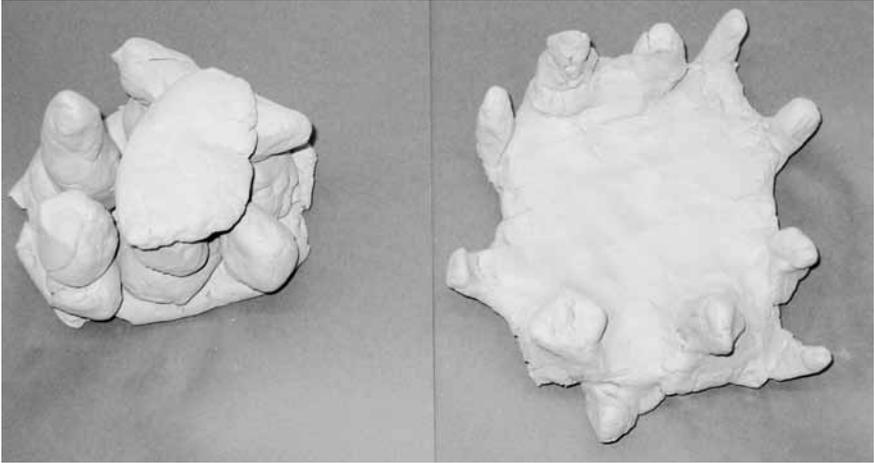
Value: courage

- *He clearly believes in the future, I mean he's from another dimension, with those cornet ears*
- *Antennae*
- *But he has a friendly smile, a very peaceful (face)*
- *(He's) a future civil servant*
- *What if the cones are his ears*
- *The antennae, the positive expression, it's like a good basis for this, certain sincerity, he hasn't lost his hope, you can see the faith, as an attitude I think that's a good way to go forward, having some good faith*
- *He's courageously different, pretty radical, a kind of moderate radical*
- *Yeah, he has courage, and that's needed to work one's way into the future... and clear the barriers.*

Value: joint effort

...everyone bears their own responsibility. It's a part of it. On the other hand, you're not left alone with your responsibility, but the community supports that and through joint effort we get support and a better result than if... or it fulfils the purpose better than everyone by themselves. Each person's own responsibility for it is strongly connected to it. That we work for the common interest. And the purpose is shared, that our collective result is this works... we achieve it in the best possible way.
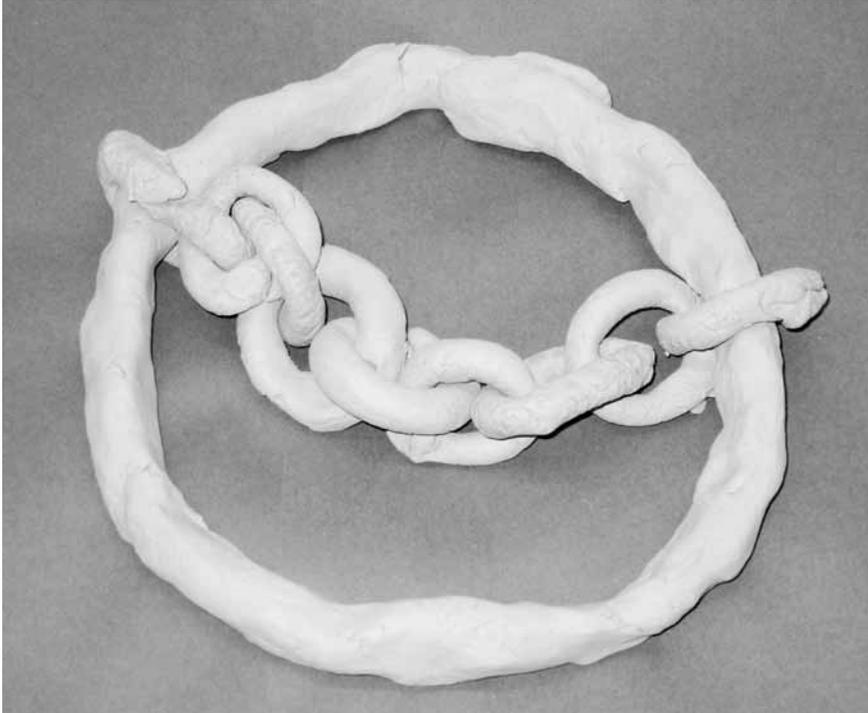
Paying attention to the values

The values are visible and alive in practice. They are not something that the management needs to apply. They just need to be recognised in everyday situations. Everybody is responsible for that. An idea of applying the values would take us back to the narrow thinking.

In the meeting for the work community some said that these expressions of values felt so natural that "*there is nothing new in them*". Later, the conventional

way of thinking tried to come back and in the department info the participants started to think about how the values could be defined in a collective way; maybe squeezed into a few sentences. After the info meeting, the support group got an insight that the values can live on and be defined every moment – and that some kind of understanding of them could be found but it, too, could be left alive and multidimensional. So the facilitator's idea that the values should be recognised in the day-to-day job started to feel good. Everyone observed for several weeks how the values showed in their own work. The aim was not to improve or develop one's own work but to mindfully observe it. Based on these observations, everyone took some notes, wrote short stories or made observations a few sentences long.

The in-house facilitator, Pilvi, continues: So we agreed that everyone in the department would observe for four weeks how they were embodying the values. Everyone chose which of the four values they wanted to observe. One way to do this was that every unit would spend a silent moment for this purpose at the unit meeting. Other ways were discovered as well. Everyone in the department wrote down their observations during the week. After that, the observations were compiled into a collective story.

The purpose was to see the values in practical work instead of developing intellectually and verbally perfect definitions. Embodying the values can be seen in how others respond to my actions and vice versa. We noticed that when we take notes of our observation, something happens. Mindfulness increases, our way of seeing develops. Experiences regarding the values speak for themselves: from genuine and different experiences emerge observations on how we have changed. Or what qualities in ourselves and in our culture have strengthened. The first of these is trust. During the process, more and more practices where everyone can contribute more to their job tasks have evolved. Many of us can sense the atmosphere of trust in that there is no fear of judgement because of our views. There is now space for many voices.

We are still continuing the living observation of values. During a shared value breakfast we pondered how the values can be seen in our actions. I added these observations to the value book that everyone can edit and complement. It includes dozens of interpretations and stories of every value. They describe us. For instance, there are many interesting interpretations of trust. Some think that it is *"the trust of a colleague towards another person as a person"*. It includes *"an ability to trust that insights can come from surprising directions"*. Someone says that trust can be seen in that *"I have been delegated a new, responsible task"*. The ways of managing and leading seems to be based on trust: *"The bosses trust experts."* *"The trust and courage of the subordinate regarding the bosses, dare to give*

heavy critique." Someone says that in our community all *"trust that the given task is carried out as agreed without any intermediate checks."*

There were various interpretations of observed trust as a reflection of the renewing culture:

> *I see trust embodied in my work, for instance in that I have the courage to express my honest opinion in job-related matters without having to fear that I'll be "judged" by my colleagues because of my opinions. I've noticed that it is the same in opposite situations as well. We can trust that colleagues won't judge our opinions.*

> *Sometimes you see trust, sometimes you don't. That's a part of everyday life as well. The renewed culture means, however, that these things are brought up. One's own disappointment can be brought up.*

How Is Our Renewal Journey Living on in Us?

The development is continued by us because people have noticed that they are responsible for both their actions and creating solidarity and togetherness. (A participant)

In November 2009, the work community participated in a renewal day, the purpose of which was to explore who we are and what our story is now. The actual renewal project had ended a year and a half previously but we still felt that we were on the same journey. The first version of this story written by Seija and Terhi had circulated in the department and prepared us for the renewal day. During the day, people described their own meaningful experiences from along the journey in different ways. We surprisingly brought together our three years' renewal work by various methods. Pilvi and I had prepared the day with many others. At the end of this day, we crafted a huge table of outcomes (see appendix 2) in the wall, which included our self-evaluations of what had happened during the three years in customer relations, communications, leadership, our identity, and our ways of knowing.

The day began with a small exercise opening up body awareness. After that, everyone had the opportunity to start producing a story of the renewal work by pictures and words. We had some photos ready from the journey, and there was space for drawing or making new ones. Pilvi and I had drafted an outline beforehand on the wall, which showed the four phases of the process: becoming aware, letting go, attuning, and practicing. People were able to describe in their own words how they experienced these phases. Someone said that the memories do not appear to be in a linear order but are interwoven into an altogether different story. Visual work aroused memories, feelings and moods. We moved on to bodily and vocal expression: how could we describe our

journey through movement and sound? This method produced an interesting series of short film clips. One group described the change that had occurred in customer relations: a genuine interest and getting near the customer. Another group presented a phased interpretation of the process: first a star in the sky symbolising the birth of Jesus and the phase of becoming aware and the continuing, 2000-year practicing of Christianity. The same group offered Darwinist evolution development as an alternative metaphor. The message was that there was nothing new under the sun – thousands of years ago we were on the same journey of growing as people as we are now.

We didn't meet customers and didn't see each other that much, we just lived our own life just like before and started to open up. At first, the OGE expert's hands are on his stomach and he's looking towards his own belly, then his fingers open up, he looks at the customer and shakes hands with a smile. The customer and the expert shake hands smiling and with kisses on the cheek.

One group brought up a flower on a person's palm and said: *"Actually this crystallises our whole life and work – we are remembering that flower in Tallinn."* The presentation was incomplete but it included a tremendous amount of sensitivity and humanity. So much so that someone said: *"This was a good presentation but it lacked the pain of preparation."* The group answered: "There were these phases as well, agony and confusion and such, but *in this fast schedule we didn't have time for anything more than these.*"

After this, we created drawings in small groups about the cover picture for our collective story. The cover would reflect how the participants' felt the core or spirit of the whole journey: what has been most important to them. There were a lot of ideas and they described the spirit of our story in many ways. Let me open these up.

The emperor DOES have new clothes

Our idea was sort of like this: someone said about this development work that the emperor has no clothes, but the title should be "Hey, the emperor DOES have new clothes". (The emperor) should be on the cover and he should be at the end, there's the emperor in his new clothes, and the illustration would continue throughout the book. At some point, there could be a hot summer – the emperor has a woolly hat and he's sweating, and then he gets rid of the hat. Not everything goes as planned but you need to change patterns...

I view that this interpretation describes how something invisible has become visible. The traditional story of the emperor's new clothes tells about two fraudsters who sell the emperor new clothes that do not even exist. The

emperor believes the fraudsters, and when he parades himself in front of the people naked, a little girl cries out that the emperor has no clothes. The emperor wanted so badly to believe that he was somebody that he fell for it. We have at times discussed this story and talked about which character we are. Are we the emperor who wants so badly to be somebody that he cannot see the truth? Or are we the fraudsters who weave an invisible cloth? Or are we the little girl who dares to shout out the truth? Are we all of them?

The group has interpreted the story in a new way. It has been reversed. The emperor has new clothes, and sometimes he wears too much considering the circumstances. However, he is self-reflecting, realises that he has too much on and is ready to change his conventional ways of acting. The group thinks that the emperor represents the whole department.

Looking for Atlantis

Another group drew a magnificent, medieval map of the world. *It is very old-fashioned, like what Columbus used when he found his country. The image, as you see, includes the entire known world drawn flat. In the middle, there's small sailing ship that happens to sail that way. There is a whale called Sea Monster... the sun is up here.* The group thought that on the cover of a book, there should read *"A Journey into the Unknown"*. By that they meant *"the development work in general, orientation, especially this work"*. They thought that even better would be *"Looking for Atlantis"* because *"the ship happens to be in the spot where the sunken Atlantis is according to the legend"*. There was a slightly satirical tone to the description, which was the teller's usual way of presenting things, especially regarding to renewal.

This group's story is very multidimensional, too. Here, a journey into the unknown is a metaphor for the change process. Columbus's journey of exploration represents this. It is also worth noting that until the day he died, Columbus really thought he had found India and not the New World. Therefore there might be some satirical tones in the group's choice. The same applies to choosing Atlantis: it is essential for the group's presentation that the ship is on the spot of the legendary Atlantis but Atlantis is not found. The legend of Atlantis depicts a paradise with vast natural resources where people lived in peace, enjoying the riches of the island. The inhabitants were thought to be of godlike descent. Gradually, divinity and virtue began to diminish and greed took over. The whole island sank into the ocean.

There are several versions of the Atlantis myth. Some versions emphasise the way the people became too self-centred and intellectual. Their technological achievements were magnificent but their emotions were not in balance

and their morals deteriorated. In this regard, the myth could be placed in the contemporary setting of today's organisations. In this story, I am intrigued by man's desire to rediscover the mythical paradise, and our relationship to virtue and immorality. These things are processed at a deep level, and the central question is whether we are able to transcend the boundaries of good/bad thinking: Can we accept the potential in ourselves without labelling it good or bad?

The third group had a stream of ideas:

- First there's the field of flowers, it's not a name but we'll let all the flowers bloom. Next was like "Together we are more" and this OGE 2.0...- We thought that there's Web 2.0, so this would be the New OGE 2.0. And then there's this We – Together! And there could be a picture of the department people. There's more name suggestions: "Candida pro causa ense candido", (many participants burst into laughter). Everyone of course recognises the motto of Marshal Mannerheim: With pure arms for a pure cause! There could be some copyright issues but we'll look into it... "Looking for Today" is another. And then "OGE is life" (laughter) and in the pictures could be the ex-skijumper Matti Nykänen (who said, "life is life") just jumping from the jumping hill. This also reflects one of our values, which is courage. And then there's "We deserve appreciation" which refers to a famous Finnish poem.

These creative ideas describe richness of experiences: there has been enough space for all the flowers, our collaboration has felt influential, there is a new version of the OGE, the journey has included ideologies and faith, the journey has been one of searching, the journey has been genuine and has awaken the participants to the meaning of values. The ideas are humorous and not too serious. They include various interpretation possibilities and it is the reader who should interpret them.

1+1 can also equal 11

The third group brings to our attention a curve that is growing exponentially. The curve is spirals and includes smiling faces of the people at the department. Alongside it is a normal straight line. "*The growth of customer impact, and the contentment of personnel are correlated with each other*", the group says.

This is mathematical, like 1+1 isn't 2 but it can also be 11. Like when we work alone, we get less done when they're added up. But when we work together, this collective good and benefit accumulates. This is a curve that's

straight when we work alone, but if we work together, it's ascending and customer satisfaction is the result here. So, another effect is that the personnel satisfaction and customer satisfaction are very much correlated with each other, and then I thought that there (on the curve) could be, like, many heads...

The whole group starts to laugh. The laughter sweeps us along when we picture each other on the curve – as funny heads in a spiralling movement.

This cover suggestion includes an interesting combination: a relational, human point of view has been added to a logical presentation method. The mathematical graph and logical thinking have been complemented with a living spiral and human faces. Different ways of knowing, the experiential and the rational-logical, exist side by side in harmony – just like in everyday life in this community. The cover suggestion seems daring, bold and creative. Its most central aspect is collaboration with *"faces"*, by encountering as humans, a lot can happen. The same kind of thinking can also be found in the next group's suggestion where boxes become circles and living amoebas.

How can a box game turn into moving circles and amoebas?

We came up with change, customers, people... collaborating and we tried to depict them with symbols. Immediately we thought of a phrase... like from squares to circles – this graph where there could be one square which would change into many, through transformation into many circles and they're actually blurred and become amoebas, which depicts this interaction and plurality. With this picture we want to say "from one to many", and on the other hand that transformation is genuine and in these conventional squares everyone can understand these organisational boxes and games, and we're changing into something more network-like. Now I'm using my own words, we didn't use these in working together, but this could be thought of like this. It says: From oneness to plurality. This is just a title draft, one theme in the background, which probably won't fit the final version when it comes.

This group's message captures the idea that emerged from nearly every group and during the collective afternoon meeting: at the centre of everything are change and people – us and the customers. This message repeats the idea of a transformation where a logically advancing interpretation method changes into a symbolic one. From boxes and linear thinking, we are moving naturally

towards circles and amoebas. The significance of interaction is emphasised, as is its nature that allows plurality and diversity. It seems a shift from one single truth towards various truths, which is repeated later in discussion.

The future work community in the here and now

For me as the facilitator this day included, in a living small form, all that had been central during these years. I think that the group work, presentations and cover suggestions reflected courage, joint effort, trust and an appreciation for diversity. The values seemed to be living in what the participants created together during the day. I noticed that everyone in the groups dared to bring out incomplete ideas to be discussed together. It struck me that there was now space for incompleteness. My insight was confirmed by the way many participants had personally experienced the liberating feeling of space. The day aroused strong feelings in many participants, and in me as well. I was deeply touched by participants' braveness, in front of the working community, telling about their own meaningful and very personal experiences. This was in complete contrast to the oppressive atmosphere at the beginning when sometimes it felt that people were only acting out development. I did not see masks anymore, but people in interaction. Even the table of outcomes (see appendix 2) that we made felt alive – I saw our whole process crystallised in it.

Regardless, I also had to process how I would accept the different voices that did not see any change or said that it had nothing to do with this process. We talked of this question often in the corridors. One employer put it like this: *Generally the atmosphere in the department has become friendlier, (more) relaxed and conversational. There surely still is a lot of room for development. We have to remember that people are different. Everybody is not as responsive to development work and renewal.* If you think like that, you can beautifully encounter and accept this reality with its different voices.

I felt touched when during this day, one of the old-timers of the department said that the process for him signified a miracle of renewal every morning. He had the courage to tell me openly about his failures and feelings. He described the meaning of working alone and together and how the collective experiences of success can give us strength:

> *The first thing that comes to mind is that this development project will in the coming years help me in my miracle of renewal every morning. I have the energy to leave for work happy and sprightly. Well, this viewpoint was a little self-centred and personal. Another thing is that collaboration is altogether different now. At my age, I have had*

time to stop and think about different things and ponder... it's good to see that on a community level things are talked about openly, and it's not just matter-of-fact working. It gives a different feel and drive to collaboration, and we have been systematically trying to improve that, to improve collaboration. We appreciate each other, but sometimes it just fails. People decide to do things themselves and don't start to explain things to others or take time to understand different views... or then they just forget. Of course it's embarrassing when you get caught, "oh, like this". Or, have you asked him? Then again it's balanced by the way we're doing things together and in interaction with either colleagues or interest groups and when we succeed in that, it gives us new strength so that we have the energy to continue together in the following years.

While listening to how the participants were bringing up their own failures and incompleteness, I felt that the space had grown: the space where renewal is possible. It is acceptable to even admit embarrassing situations. One participant reflects: *In the development work of the past few years I have more consciously interacted with colleagues and co-operation partners. It hasn't always succeeded; I've wanted to do something on my own or have forgotten a partner. Being reminded of it has been embarrassing. But constructive collaboration and especially a successful, collective result is always a delight that encourages going on!*

When another old-timer starts to talk about the work community as a garden, we all turn our heads to see and hear better: *I thought about this work community as garden. There's a gardener, someone is watering, something blooms for a while and then withers away, dies or otherwise goes away, autumn comes, the garden withers... all this. Then I drew this flower, and I say that our working together has led to flowers blooming.*

A moment to stop. To listen.

To touch the inner self.

At this moment.

What lives in me? What flows?

At this moment.

What am I co-creating?

At this moment.

How am I connecting to the stream of life?

At this moment.

A moment to join the stream.

Listen together.

Touching each other —

the innermost, the interbeing.

At this moment.

Unfinished beauty gently calls us

to co-create together.

At this moment.

Future.

A Space to Pause

The most important moment in reading is this empty page.

It gives you the opportunity to pause.

Your way of relating,

your orientation,

at the moment you begin to read this story

constructs what your experience will be like.

So pause to listen.

Listen to your breathing for a moment,

let it find its natural rhythm.

Let go of all thoughts, feelings and expectations for a while.

Let yourself open up to listening to yourself through this text.

Become aware of what is happening in the here and now.

What touches you?

What are you learning about your way of being

through this reading process?

Part II

Co-Creative Process Inquiry

In the first part of this book, we shared our renewal story. Maybe it awoke feelings and questions connected to your own experiences at work. Stop reading now and take a minute to listen to these questions. Take a sheet of paper and write them down. Only the questions. You do not need to answer them now, just become aware of the questions you have right now.

In the second part of this book, it is time to take some distance from our renewal story and our own experiences and share the essence of this developmental approach, called Co-Creative Process Inquiry, as it crystallised during our work. The questions that will lead us to this part of the book are: what is this approach; how does this approach work; and why does this approach make a difference and why is it valuable?

With Co-Creative Process Inquiry you can support both individual and organisational renewal. You can work with this approach very well to support your own personal change or renewal process. As a coach, Co-Creative Process Inquiry can help you support other people or teams in their change process. Here in this book we are sharing how the CCPI approach can support the organisational renewing process.

We will speak about this approach from the perspective of organisations in a very practical way. If you feel you want to go deeper into this approach by reading, there is the book *The Power of Being Present at Work – Co-Creative Process Inquiry as a Development Approach*. This academic thesis speaks to professionals in development work and academics. However, the easiest and most rewarding way is to just start to experiment by yourself. That is why the second part is also a workbook – you can work with your own questions here and experience how Co-Creative Process Inquiry works.

What is This Approach?

Before we take you into Co-Creative Process Inquiry, it is good to say something about the way we see co-creation. Co-creation is the process where we participate in creating realities with our thoughts, feelings and actions in our relationships with others. Co-creation is continuously manifesting and opening in what we call the relational space. This relational space is about the way we are relating with ourselves, each other and the world around us. The ways things happen at work and in our lives is born in this relational space of co-creation. Co-Creative Process Inquiry helps us to become aware of the way we are participating in the co-creation of the reality we live in. It helps us to become conscious and responsible co-creators. It shows us how we can take responsibility for the kind of world we are inviting or suppressing with our ways of relating. It does not work to say: I would like to live in a trustful and healthy working community, if you do not see how you can participate in this with your own way of acting from trust and well-being in the here and now. So this insight that we all can make a difference both gives energy to us but also challenges us. We are not waiting for something to happen – it is happening in the here and now – and awakening to how I am a part of it opens the space for the new.

Co-Creative Process Inquiry is a developmental approach that helps us to become conscious and responsible co-creators and renew the way we are working and living together. It enables us to be present in action. Being present means becoming aware from moment to moment of what is happening in ourselves and in others and seeing how we are participating in co-creating our reality. It is about inquiring into and becoming aware of our everyday encountering, the way we are listening to others and our way of relating. So ask yourself, how aware are you of the kinds of feelings and sensations that are

happening in you when you are debating or negotiating or having a dialogue? Co-Creative Process Inquiry stops us to ask: how are we co-creating particular kinds of realities in our ways of acting and being?

The roots of Co-Creative Process Inquiry (CCPI) lie in Finland where I (Terhi Takanen) started to develop it through my work as a developer and action researcher. During these years Co-Creative Process Inquiry has been co-developed through working together with clients and CCPI practitioners during several coaching and organisational renewing processes. During a 6 year Action Research Project, it has taken the form of a systematic developmental approach which is now being published as the academic thesis (Takanen 2013). Nowadays there are many professional CCPI practitioners working with and co-developing this approach in Finland, and CCPI is growing now to a bigger movement in Europe.

What is different here?

The basic premise for most change models and approaches is the belief that we as rational operators can achieve the desired results by planning and advancing in a goal-oriented manner. This may be true if we are talking about practical and instrumental issues. But in renewing culture and the way we work together, this way of handling organisational change often does not work. These kinds of *power over* approaches often ignore the deepest sources of renewal and exclude the dimensions of people's intuition, body, and feelings. These are seen mainly as obstacles and something that needs to be controlled, and not as significant processes in co-creation. These traditional approaches do not work very well in the continuously renewing and increasingly complex environments, where people no longer want to be parts of an organisational machine but active operators. The complexity of everyday life does not submit to these models; we all know that we cannot control future happenings. Daily working life demands from us the ability to co-create new ways of thinking and acting, which can only be done by seizing the opportunities for action. Our approach starts from the logic of everyday life, the participants' ways of seeing it, and the logic of experience and intuitions, where people at work are placed in the centre.

Managers and developers in many organisations are struggling with practical questions like how to do the same work with fewer people, how to manage on-going changes, how to provide good-quality services to customers, how to work together in fruitful ways. Co-Creative Process Inquiry does not

try to solve any of these questions. Every CCPI process starts with questions. The common way of working is that you find the answer to this question, create a vision, a solution and then implement this. This is not the path of CCPI. CCPI stays with the question and starts with the daily challenges and people's views and feelings. This approach asks us to stop and become aware of these questions and to listen to them carefully. It is not about answering them, or making plans on how to quickly fix something but instead it opens up a new kind of awareness. You can bring back how we started in the OGE and what kind of questions the participants had at that time. Then you can ask yourself, what is your question concerning your work/organisation just now? Stop reading for a second and allow yourself to listen to what questions are emerging. Write your questions down without trying to analyse or find answers to them.

So, what is this CCPI approach and how does it differ from other approaches? The CCPI way of working with change is radical in many ways, as you can guess from the renewing story we presented in the first part of this book. First, it says that there is no strict step-by-step model for change. No fixed steps to take. The path of change emerges by walking it. Second, there is no need to control or try to manage change, because we are the change itself. The CCPI way of working is about allowing change to happen in a natural way. Opening up to the on-going changes is a core process in this work. It is about being present to what emerges in the here and now. Third, we believe that there is no one thing like an organisation and another thing like people in action. Organisation and people are continuously interweaving and not separate things. Organisations are relational processes which people are co-creating. Thus we cannot just try to change the organisation. Fourth, in every organisation and in every human being, there is a need to stop and listen, not to try to find out how to solve and manage our so-called problems. CCPI is about becoming aware of what is happening in this moment and what kind of change is emerging. Fifth, there is a need for letting go, letting go of our thoughts and feelings, letting go of our ways of being and acting which do not work anymore. Letting go and opening up to what is emerging right now.

How Does This Approach Work?

Interaction situations are the core of most organisational processes. The core renewal theme in most organisations is centred on the way we are relating to or with each other. The way we interact and relate with each other is not only the main theme of change work, it also is the 'place' where change is happening, where it emerges. Change emerges in interaction, in open dialogue with each other. And it always emerges in the here and now. If something shifts, it happens in the here and now – not in the future. In the OGE case in the first part of the book, we spoke of the power of encountering; it is a moment of being present to what is emerging in the moment. If we look carefully, we can become aware of how these encounterings are spaces where realities are formed through the way we are relating with ourselves, each other and the environment (see e.g. Hosking 2011). In line with the relational view, Co-Creative Process Inquiry does not start the change process by analysing problems or formulating objectives or even possible outcomes. It starts with listening to how the core theme of organisational renewal is living in the people of the organisation. It starts with their questions connected to that core theme.

In CCPI we see all people as developers, as co-creators who are bringing to the process what is meaningful to them. Thus, there are no managers and consultants who know what to do and how to do it, who plan, dominate or control the change process. The whole community is participating in this development work as equals. Everyone is an important contributor here: everyone's voice is heard. The whole community participates – this makes organisational renewal possible. In bigger organisations it could be practical to start in one

department, and then look at how it could naturally flow to different parts of the organisation. Often, it is necessary to start some kind of support group where participants from this organisation could become in-house-facilitators of this on-going process.

Thus this is actually a profound question about power – are we relating to/with each other through a *power over* stance or a *power with* stance. In table 1, you can see how organising, leading, managing, knowing and developing differ if you have a *power with* stance or a *power over* stance.

Co-Creative Process Inquiry and Relational Constructionism

One important source of inspiration for Co-Creative Process Inquiry is relational constructionism (Hosking 2010). This philosophy makes possible a specific view on change work in organisations. This view invites new kinds of ways of relating with others. The relational view does not reproduce taken-for-granted change work practices like problematising, analysing, reproducing *power over* practices and top-down interventions. On the other hand, it views change work as a potentially transformative inquiry that engages participants and starts from within the organisation.

Hosking (2010b, 234-235) has described practical themes of this way of relating in change work which resonates with the CCPI approach. First, all acts are seen as potential contributions to influence. Second, it accepts multiple local ways of seeing and making realities in different but equal relations. Third, it works in the present and with possibilities. Fourth, it orients to transformation. Fifth, it works with both language and the senses because these are constructing our worlds.

Table 2. Comparing *power with* and *power over* stances

	Power with stance	*Power over* stance
Organising	Openness to self-organisation Inviting new ways of organising	Controlling, checking
Leading and managing	Enabling everyone to participate (enabling leadership) Non-hierarchical: everyone is leading in some sense.	Organising on behalf of others, delegating, taking charge, educating others. More or less hierarchical.
Knowing	Knowing is understood as many different ways of knowing Knowing together	Knowing is understood as factual knowledge Knowing on behalf of others Knowing on behalf of customers
Developing	Participating through re-relating with ourselves, customers and environment. Taking shared responsibility, working as equals. The emerging process is most important because it brings valuable outcomes without controlling.	Managing change, educating others, making developmental projects which are separate from our own ways of acting Often substance-oriented (as opposed to process-oriented) and too heavily focused on objectives and outcomes.

Our experience is that most organisations are full of *power over* practices. This means that someone (the manager) knows on behalf of others, experts know on behalf of their customers, consultants know how to do change work in the organisation and so on. You might remember how in the OGE case expert organisation started with hierarchical ways of developing. The question is not which way – *power with* or *power over* - is better. A *power over* stance could work, but often it does not give space to the creativeness that is needed in the change process. In almost every organisation, there are spaces where people are encountering each other differently: having dialogues, opening up new ways of working, sharing leadership. Both ways could co-exist in the same organisation, just as the *power over* and the *power with* stances are living in us: a controlling player and a trusting co-creator. This is not a question of right and wrong, but a question of taking responsibility of what we want to co-create

together. We can change *power over* practices slowly by becoming aware and acting differently together, not by trying to deny or restrict them. But it takes time and patience.

Working with questions

In CCPI renewal work, different questions coming from the individuals and the community form the starting point of the renewal process; the questions through which they want to examine the renewal and their organisational culture. The renewal processes of the individual and the community are intertwined during the renewal of the organisational culture. They enable and mirror each other. Both the identity of the organisation and that of the individual are born in interaction. In this way this kind of a culture-renewing process touches processes of identity-making and quality of presence. When we radically renew our actions, it entails examining and renewing our deepest basic beliefs and who we think we are. Figure 12 depicts the process for both the individual and the community in a simplified way.

Why organisations want to work with Co-Creative Process Inquiry

- It gives every member of the work community more opportunities to influence and take a larger role in renewing and co-creating;
- It brings the customer view to life: e.g. how can we develop our services with customers;
- It helps to let go of those practices, beliefs and ways of experiencing which are not working anymore and enables us to co-create new *power with* practices together;
- It is based on the ethical growth process of both the individual and the community, and on the renewing ways of working;
- It gives us the opportunity to balance different ways of knowing; strengthens experiential, bodily, intuitive, and emotion-based knowing which are often undervalued;
- It allows space for re-relating with oneself and others in a meaningful way;
- Overall, it makes it possible to mindfully take responsibility for what we are co-creating with others through our orientations, our thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Figure 12. The co-creative processes of the individual and the community

BECOMING AWARE:
In what kind of (action) culture are we living in?

PRACTICING:
How are we living our intentions here and now?

LETTING GO:
Of which practices it is time to let go?

ATTUNING:
Why do we exist?
How can we be at service?

WORKING COMMUNITY

INDIVIDUAL

BECOMING AWARE:
Where am I right now?

PRACTICING:
How do I live my purpose in this community?

LETTING GO:
Of what can I let go?

ATTUNING:
What is my purpose?
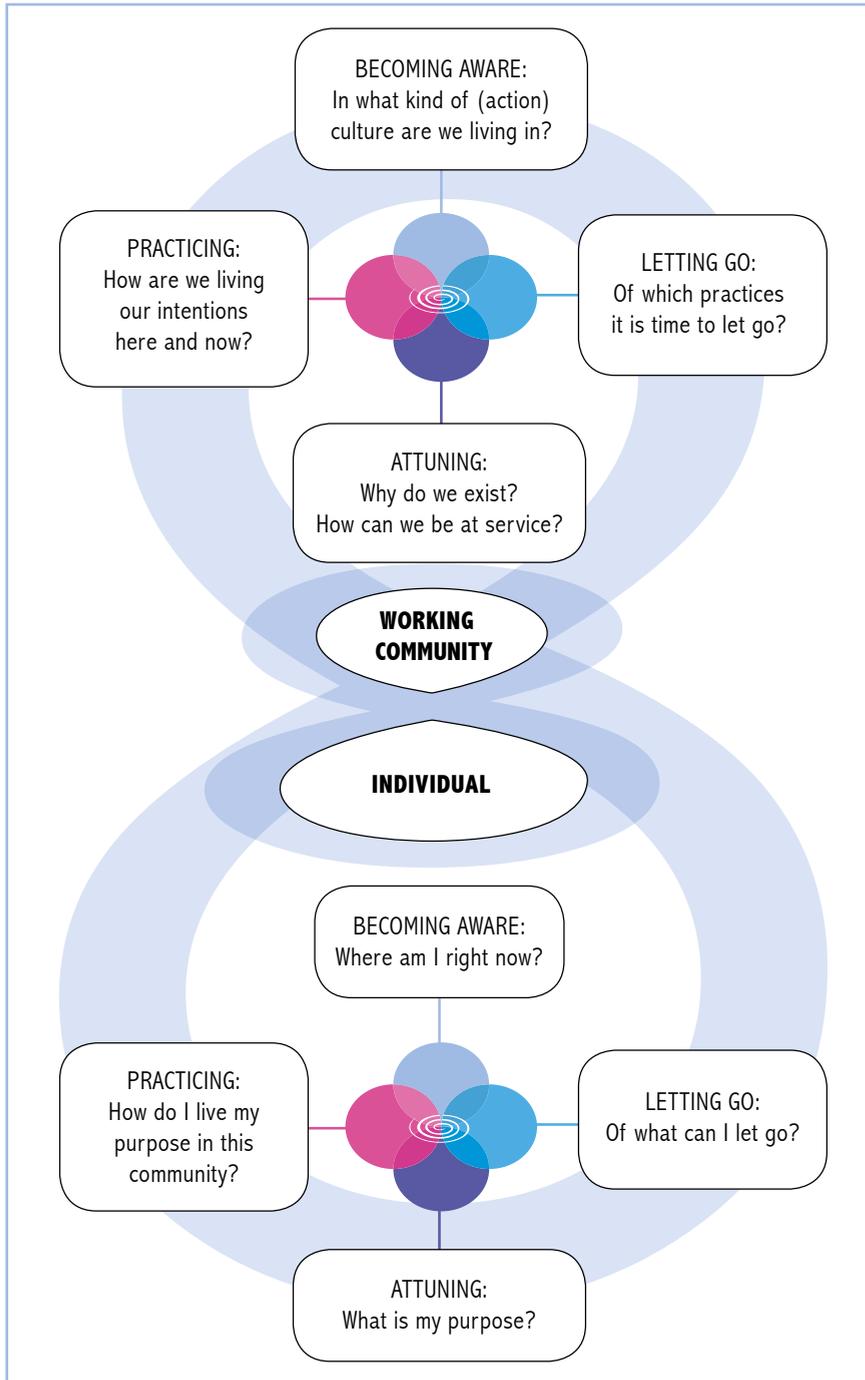
Questions have an essential role in Co-Creative Process Inquiry. Questions are the starting point for the process of becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing, the four phases in the CCPI process. In practice, the different phases are connected to various questions arising from the participants.

A personal question in the Becoming Aware phase could be, for instance, "Where am I now?" In the Letting Go phase, the individual might ponder, "What could I let go of?" And the question in the Attuning phase could be, "What is my purpose or from which inner space do I want to act?" And finally, in the Practicing phase, "How is purpose manifested in my work and in this community?" or "How can I embody this orientation in the here and now?" However, this is only one example.

As a communal process, the journey of the Office for the Government as Employer could be seen through four questions:

1. What kind of an organisational culture/environment are we living in?
2. What should we liberate ourselves from or let go of on the level of thought patterns, feelings, or actions?
3. Why do we exist? / How can we serve?
4. How are we making these intentions come to life in the here and now?

What is my question now?

● **Take a moment and listen to what questions are coming.**

Write them down without analysing or answering.
Choose one question and write it here.
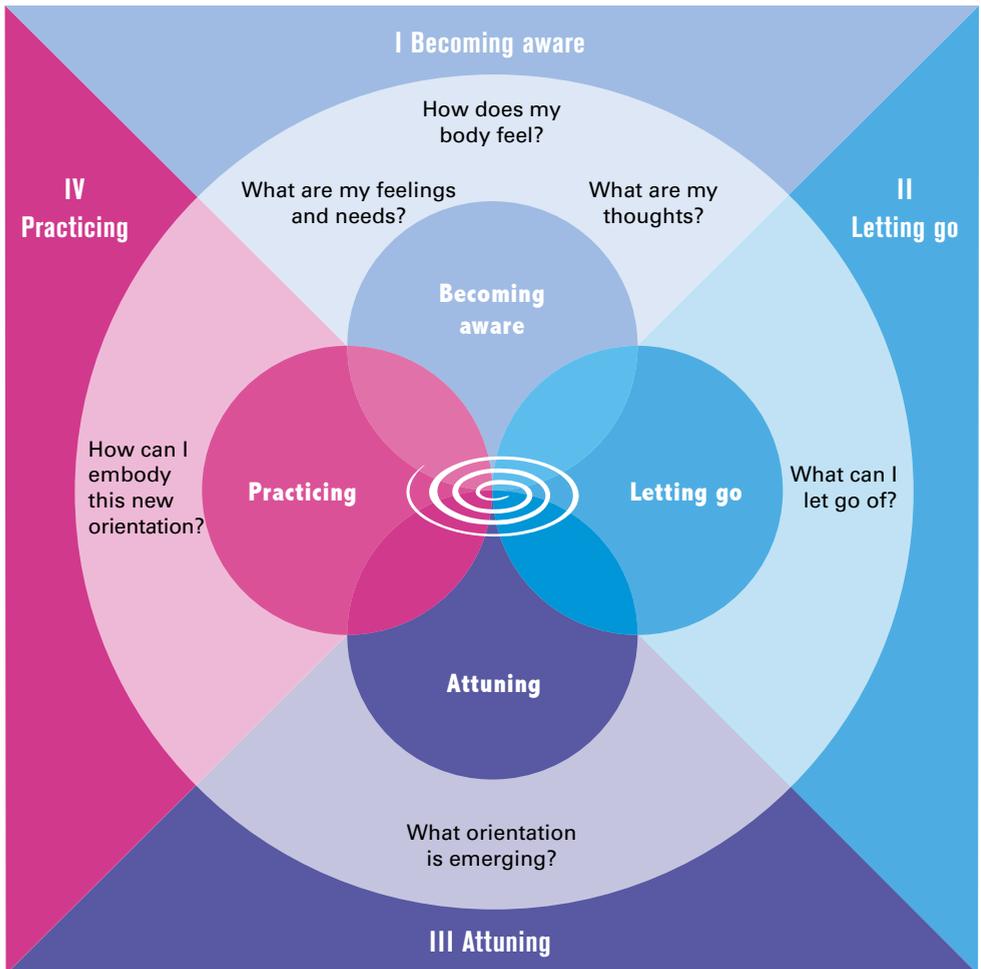
I Becoming aware

How does my
body feel?

IV
Practicing

What are my feelings
and needs?

What are my
thoughts?

II
Letting go

Becoming
aware

How can I
embody
this new
orientation?

Practicing

Letting go

What can I
let go of?

Attuning

What orientation
is emerging?

III Attuning

● **How does my body feel?**

When I think of my question, my theme, how does my body feel now?

● **What are my thoughts?**

When I think of my question, my theme, what thoughts are coming up just now?
Write down all thoughts that are coming without analysing or judging them.

● **What are my feelings and needs?**
● **What are my feelings and needs related with my question?**

Just listen to the feelings you have and ask what needs are connected.
Write them down.

Letting go

- **What can I let go of?**

- **What ways of thinking and acting can I let go of?**

*It helps to support the letting go phase with your body language.
Take a standing position, feel what kind of movement could be releasing
and start with that. Then ask yourself what you can let go of.
See what comes up and write it down*

Attuning

- **After letting go, what new orientation is emerging?**

- **What new way of being or acting is coming up?**

Take a silent moment. Put down your pen and close your eyes.
Feel your inner space and notice what new orientation or feeling is emerging.
Write it down or make a drawing of it.

Practicing

- **How can I embody this new orientation?**

- **How does it feel to embody this orientation here and now?**

- **How can I embody this orientation when I meet my question or theme?**

Embody the new orientation: speak from it, move with it, walk like it. Observe what happens. Write down what you are noticing.

Being present in action

In CCPI, being present in action is the purpose and core orientation. This orientation embraces everything which emerges without judging it as positive or negative. It is about opening up to what is emerging and accepting it.

In the CCPI process, the participants are working with their own questions. Through the process of becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing, these questions often shift and the participants re-formulate them again and again. The participants can explore their questions from many perspectives through practices that invite different ways of knowing, like drawing, silencing etc. Thus, the CCPI way of working suspends quick answering and one-sided reasoning. It leaves space for practical and experiential ways of knowing, which connect to our emotions, and sensing. For example, drawing brings out emotional processes that we can feel in our whole body.

Becoming aware

So let us take a closer look at the CCPI process. After a participant has written down a question, start this phase. The first guiding questions enable us to become aware of our on-going feelings, needs and thoughts. They direct our attention to the inner experience connected to our question or theme and help us to be present to what is happening here and now. In this process it is very helpful to start with sensing and noticing how the body feels. This will help us to connect more deeply to our inner experience, our emotions, needs and thoughts. In becoming aware of what is happening in our inner space in this moment, it becomes visible how we are co-creating our reality/realities around the theme or question we are working with. By expressing and sharing our current thoughts, feelings and needs and hearing them from others, it becomes clear how we together are inviting or suppressing particular kinds of realities.

Letting go

The second question enables the letting go of our feelings, needs or thoughts. With letting go we do not mean that you have to get rid of thoughts or feelings you do not like. It is not about judging or trying to change the way you are feeling. It is about gently sensing what feelings, needs or thoughts you are ready to let go of in a very natural way. This way of letting go is about opening up the space so new perspectives can come. It opens up your inner space for other possibilities to arise without any need to think about how it could

be possible yet. For most of us letting go is very challenging. Our mind likes to hold on to what we have, to what is known and familiar. In supporting our mind in letting go and making space for the new to emerge, our body is again very helpful. By making movements that feel releasing, like for example simply swinging your arms up and down in a gentle way, the process of letting go feels more natural.

Attuning

The third question invites attuning, which is the process of becoming present as an embodied relational being. This meditative process invites experiential knowing where there are no separations between I, the other and the environment. In the attuning process we can become aware of our way of relating with our self and our question/theme without trying to do anything except simply listen to what kind of new orientation emerges. In this process the way of relating could shift in a subtle way: a new orientation could arise while listening without trying anything.

Practicing

The fourth question focuses on practicing, which could start by, for example, speaking or moving together from a particular orientation that has arisen. This new orientation could be felt as peaceful relating, joyful relating and humorous relating. A facilitator could ask how this orientation feels in your body, how you feel when you move through it. It brings a present-oriented focus that shifts a participant's taken-for-granted ways of connecting to this issue, and opens up new possibilities to act differently. Thus, the word 'practicing' is used here in a particular sense. Practicing is an on-going activity where awareness is focused on what is happening just now. It is conscious acting with a particular orientation. For example, if I have felt that openness is an orientation that is needed in encountering some challenging situations, I will try to practice openness when the challenge emerges again, and if I find myself reacting in my usual way, I just softly become present again and bring some openness there, such as trying to let go of thoughts or emotions that block this openness. Hence, I do not do it by cutting them, but listening to them and thus making space to openness.

Table 3. Process Perspectives of Co-Creative Process Inquiry (re-formulated table from Takanen 2013)

The process perspectives	The questions	Example practices	Possible shifts
Becoming aware	What thoughts connect to the question/theme just now? What kind of feelings and needs are related with these thoughts and this question?	Journaling, sharing with pairs, listening, re-telling.	Seeing your way of co-constructing as one possible story that is accepted as it is. Opening to different ways of constructing your story.
Letting go	What can I/we let go of without knowing how? What ways of thinking/acting could I let go of?	Dialogue walk with letting go theme in pairs. Movements that feel releasing (Asahi, yoga asanas or other movements)	Giving space to letting go, and opening towards currently unknown other possibilities. Re-relating with your whole body.
Attuning	What kind of orientation could I/we re-relate with this theme/ question?	Guided meditation. Silent intuitive drawing or moving.	Opening up different ways of knowing, where you are no longer constructing yourself separately. Something new could emerge.
Practicing	How it feels to embody this orientation in the here and now, and how can I embody this orientation when I/ we encounter this theme again?	This is practiced in everyday situations by becoming aware of when "I am encountering this theme again" – how I re-relate with it through a particular orientation.	Re-relating by being present in action by embodying a particular kind of orientation. Observing what happens.

Five shifts in the OGE – when developing shifts towards letting go

Next, we will share our reflections about how our ways of working and developing shifted during our OGE renewal process. The process of becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing, and the way of working with questions helped us to shift our ways of developing and working together. These reflections are based on the action research project (Takanen 2013). During our renewal process, our ways of developing shifted in many ways. Let us start by looking at five spontaneous shifts: 1) from making changes toward participating by giving space, 2) from stable structures to enabling structures, called microcosms, 3) from visioning and planning the future towards embodying it in the here and now, 4) from thinking-mode towards embodied sensing, 5) from result-oriented evaluating towards on-going storytelling in the here and now.

From making changes toward participating by giving space

One key shift in the OGE connected to a radical insight that we do not need to make changes or try to manage them. This meant moving from a *power over* stance toward ways of developing which are based on shared power. Changes are happening all the time if we just become aware of them. One small but meaningful example was that Teuvo, the Head of Department, started to open up space just by listening to his co-workers. Suddenly, many things changed: people started to take more initiatives. When Teuvo started to open up new ways of thinking together, hierarchical practices slowly started to shift.

Overall, we did not try to *make* changes: there was no problem-finding or analysing when we started. We did not define fixed targets and measures, we did not have a master plan. Instead, we started with very open intentions without clear-cut definitions. We also learned to focus more on the process itself than on the ends or particular outcomes. All these aspects gave space for something new to emerge.

Living practice

To experience this shift from making changes to giving space you can try out two options, first a more conventional practice, and second a co-creative practice. Focus on a question or theme that you want to change in work or life.

1. Make a list of what you want to change and how to make these changes in your life/in your organisations.
2. Let go of the list you just made. Relax for a moment. You do not have to do anything to make this change. Gently ask yourself what kinds of actions could help you to give space… Look at your question or theme and listen to what kinds of changes are emerging and how they are feeling.

From stable structures to enabling structures

In this OGE case, it seemed a big shift to move from stable structures to enabling structures such as microcosm groups. At some point in the development process, we let go of the stable structures that the participants were used to. This seemed to be needed because pre-existing fixed structures such as work process groups did not enable the renewing process. The way of working with work processes were narrow and somewhat too structured. Our purpose of renewing our ways of acting and organisational culture (as we expressed it at that time) required more flexible, diverse and enabling structures. These were created together with the whole working community.

The idea behind the microcosm work was to explore and create new ways of being in a practical manner and thus construct a renewing culture in the here and now through small actions and encounterings without planning ahead. Earlier I had called these simply practical experiments, but a more metaphorical name brought new dimensions: seeing these kinds of groups as small cosmoses, as arenas where the future could emerge in a present-oriented way. This move from process groups to so-called microcosms was a radical shift towards more participative change work where we are seeing each other as co-creators.

Another enabling structure that emerged during the process was the support group, a group of people that were not managing the change process but were supporting it wherever they could. We let go of the habit of making stable structures from our need of control. However, light structures are truly needed.

Some criteria for a microcosm group that emerged in the OGE case were

- Supports open, inquisitive and mindful dialogue
- Enables opportunities for influence and encourages participation within the work community
- Strengthens new forms of collaboration and networking
- Is built on an enabling form of leadership and *power with* thinking
- Can enable multi-skilled employees and the sharing of skills
- Improves success rates in basic tasks and good customer service directly or indirectly
- Emerges from the future
- Includes a loop for feedback and learning, and keeps changing organically

Living practice

Experiment with your own microcosm now. First listen to what kind of a future you would like to invite and then start listening to how that future is living in this moment. See and feel this future in the here and now on a small scale – What could it be? Who are the persons who could support you in co-creating this kind of future in the here and now?

From visioning and planning the future towards embodying it in the here and now

The third shift we want to share here was the move from conceptually-oriented, quite fixed strategy practices toward on-going, emerging strategy work as co-creative reality-making. Before our development process started, the organisation had made a strategy by presenting its future vision and purpose. The challenge was to shift from big plans and visions toward embodying the

future in the here and now and focusing on small everyday actions like encountering others.

For example, in the support group "the future" was not understood anymore as just something coming, but as an on-going process of co-creating it here and now. It felt like the future was not separate from us anymore but that we were co-creating the future through our ways of relating with each other here and now.

We also developed a practice to again and again bring attention to how values were emerging in our ways of relating and acting. This simple practice of becoming aware helped the participants get a feeling for what values they were embodying at the present moment. They were just feeling the values in their bodies *without trying to change them*. We found that the process of becoming aware itself invites living values in our action. This was challenging because participants were so used to seeing vision and values as just statements, not as living processes in everyday-action.

Let us draw together how our ways of developing changed through practicing being present during the developing work. The first shift is connected to how not to focus on the future by visioning or planning possible paths or steps, but listening to what is emerging in the here and now. The second is connected to the first: how to suspend our intellectually oriented ways of forming visions or purpose statements, and instead listen to how these are already present in our everyday actions.

Living practice

Listen to what kind values are important to you. Close your eyes and feel them as bodily feelings. How does it feel to embody e.g. trust or peace. Then continue your daily routines being aware of how these values are manifesting in the way you are doing your work and in the way you are relating to others. Become aware of how you trust your colleague or how peace is living in your way of speaking. Just be present without judging yourself.

From thinking-mode towards embodied sensing

Starting the renewal process at the OGE, we found that most people were very much used to thinking, analysing and controlling which resulted in easily separating 'you' and 'me' and debating in a fruitless way. When people were in their thinking mode, they were not sharing their feelings or intuitions. Embodied sensing at work did not have any space and it was not valued at all. Most participants were not aware of what was happening in their bodies and how they were feeling in a given work situation. This is not surprising, because these ways of knowing are undervalued in many organisations. However, this sensing in our bodies gives us important messages of what a good way to work is, what the best choice in a situation is. Our bodily feelings could also restrict new ways of working, when we are not aware of them. If my body is tensed, it is really difficult to open up to anything new.

One of the most important developmental practices in this case seemed to be an orientation practice, which we always used when we started working together. This kind of pausing is a simple practice, based on being present in action. It teaches us to listen to ourselves and to each other in a new way. It means suspending ready-made views, and just listening to your own emotional experiences. In this listening there is no need to change anything – no need for developing – but only the need to be liberated and let go of what no longer serves us.

Some participants expressed that they became more aware of what was happening "in" them in the middle of conversations and how they were relating to themselves and others, and their whole environment. A few participants (who were from the support group) also told me that they started to focus on their inner space before important meetings and in meetings.

The core idea of the process is to create space between impulse and action. Often we are not aware of this space. We feel there is no choice and we are automatically acting on impulse. The space between impulse and action is not even recognisable. These happen in the same way as breathing – automatically. Breathing in is followed by breathing out. If we stop and listen to our breathing, we can observe a gap of only a fraction of a second before inhaling changes into exhaling. It is possible to mindfully learn to extend it. This is the skill of suspending, and it works in all kinds of contexts. What if we learned to suspend the reaction aroused in us by a combination of thought and feeling?

The skill of suspending also entails relating to one's personal emotions and feelings through observing instead of reacting outright. This creates an opportunity not to identify with the feelings. When we let go of the logic of right and wrong, we are free to act in a new way.

If we let go of our complete identification with our perceptions which are our interpretations, we are able to renew and open up. We keep finding new kinds of openings in the world. Expanding brings along a sense of space and an increase in opportunities for influence. What we see as reality is only a small part. It is also coloured by our lenses. If we have the courage to open up to the stream of life and to see reality as a flowing force, we will find ourselves in the creative stream and relate to life's own way of expressing itself. This means also being in one's discomfort zone. It requires an accepting environment that sees failures as opportunities for learning.

Living practice

Observe yourself in this place and this moment. Let a natural and safe state emerge through your breathing. Listen to yourself, give yourself time to pause. Listen to your body, your thoughts, and what you are feeling just now. Open yourself up to listening to not only yourself but to others and our shared theme. What kind of a shared future are we creating in this moment? How will my own thoughts, feelings, motivation, and actions influence what we are creating? To what extent do I have the courage to be incomplete, to what extent do I have the courage to strive for renewal in myself and my community?

If you want, you can create an intention to open up to the future. Just simply listen to the images, associations and feelings arising. Just accept them, there is no need to evaluate them or think about them, just let them come.

From result-oriented evaluating towards on-going storytelling in the here and now

In the OGE renewal process, we saw evaluation in a new light. Before we started the renewal process, people were used to result-oriented evaluations where at the beginning of the process you decide what outcomes should be and at the end evaluate to what degree you have reached this outcome. However, CCPI is not about formulating strict results and trying to get there. CCPI is about opening new, maybe surprising outcomes, which are valuable for the whole working community. In this approach, evaluation is primarily a way of co-creating realities. Naturally, self-evaluation occurs constantly and people can also practice it consciously. We aim to modify our actions in order to achieve a good result.

In this co-creative view, evaluation does not mean evaluating something that has already happened, as is usually thought. Instead, it means recreating and recognising – or perhaps killing – something that lives in this moment. Along the journey we have sometimes asked in the support group: What kind of collective inquiring and evaluating serves the renewal of our culture? What is the purpose of evaluation? How should it be done? What kinds of things do we want to evaluate? How are we going to take advantage of the knowledge produced in evaluation?

Let us roughly examine different types of evaluation in order to understand the nature of co-creative evaluation and how it differs from other ways of evaluating.

Evaluation that strives for objectivity[2]*
- Is often performed by an outsider and/or the management;
- Often uses quantitative methods;
- Strives for objectivity;
- Can be generalising, does not bring up individual experiences.

Participative evaluation*
- Helps to understand the community, its strengths and problems;
- Gives the community members power over their own life and development;
- Helps in committing to the project;
- Produces fast and easily understandable results for the locals;
- Brings up qualitative changes in the work;
- Teaches during the work, not after it has ended;
- Supports the participants' own growth processes.

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2 *Source: http://www.kepa.fi/palvelut/julkaisut/raportit Report: Get excited! Excite! Tips for participative community work (in Finnish)

Co-creative evaluation

- Emphasises many ways of self-reflections which are shared together;
- Makes evaluation an on-going process in everyday work life; enables learning and growth;
- The power of co-creating realities is shared consciously; evaluation is co-creative power;
- Through evaluation, we can strengthen emerging realities and co-create it at this moment;
- Brings up qualitative changes through people's experiences;
- Acts as a way for co-creating the future in the here and now;
- Facilitates the individual and collective growth processes;

Enabling leadership

The OGE renewal process is about the practicing of enabling leadership; all participants were appreciated and authorised to renew themselves and their organisational culture. Enabling leadership was most clearly seen in new enabling structures and in interaction situations, where we strengthened reflecting and creative dialogue instead of an expert debate. This was further embodied in the self-"managing" and co-creative work of the microcosms.

Enabling leadership is embodied on four parallel levels:

1. Self-"managing", where people concentrate on what they feel is significant in their work and bring their skills to the use of the organisation. They practice being present to what is emerging without controlling everything. They also participate in their "inner" (relational) processes in a new way: by observing and suspending without analysing or judging, and connecting to feelings without reacting to them.
2. Shared leadership, where people start to renew their organisational culture and themselves together through their ways of acting.
3. A type of leadership, where space for collective leadership is created alongside line management, for instance by initiating a process where people become the focus of action, and where participants have sufficient temporal resources to start renewing themselves and their work.
4. Making clients the focus of the work and developing the services together with them.

Where does enabling leading show? In listening, working together, co-creating enabling structures, making space for questioning, re-relating with customers and so on. It is an orientation to practice being present in action, letting new things emerge and working from a *power with* stance.

An important focus in enabling leadership is 'holding the space' for co-creation. This way of renewing culture is like a challenging journey. In advance you never know what will happen. In moments when the process seems to be stuck, the impulse of leaders is very often to fall back on old habits of control and relating. It is especially in these moments when enabling leadership is needed the most, and it is most valuable to hold the space for co-creation.

Leaders and other workers can also work as in-house-facilitators if they can practice and develop facilitator skills through some kind of training. Their biggest challenge is becoming present to what is happening in the here and now – in themselves and others. Everything in the CCPI way of working is based on this orientation of being present. If you are not aware, you cannot enable others to become conscious co-creators.

From the point of view of enabling leadership, one of the most important tasks of a leader is to create structures that enable collective responsibility and co-creating. This can enable an emergent, continuous strategy process that renews us and our organisational culture. An enabling leader builds a genuine creation partnership with the clients and the personnel. This calls for an ability to be present in interaction, to listen, and to enable the emergence of potential. An enabling leader shows his humanity and admits his own incompleteness. This leaves space for failure and thus for genuine renewal to everyone.

Working as a Co-Creative Process facilitator

A Co-Creative Process facilitator, or an enabling leader, is committed to creating space for renewal in the people and the organisational culture as a whole. The most important thing is that the facilitator is aware of his own orientation: an on-going practice of being present, of becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing. Being present shows up as peacefulness, clarity and listening. There is no need to force anything, try to achieve something or even try to succeed, but just to trust the emerging process. This sounds simple, but it is actually a very challenging practice. There is always some kind of need for control in everyone, and in changing situations it becomes strong. So how to just be aware of it, but not to act from that need? When the facilitator is

capable of taking care of his own orientation, he enables others to become aware of their orientations. The facilitator holds the space, an open and creative space of being present – listening to oneself, others, and the on-going themes. The facilitator helps uncover the group's existing views of realities and ways of acting that are taken for granted. This enables the group to co-create renewing ways of relating.

It is essential to create a collective intention for the renewal work: no rigid objectives – this allows the results to be surprising. Objectives always emerge from what is already known, and in these processes we strive for a new, unknown future. Creating a sufficiently open and protective structure enables natural motivation and commitment, and connecting to those who share the same interest. Creating a space of trust, acceptance and non-judging (dialogical methods, mindfulness practices, the facilitator's orientation). The facilitator's task is to co-create with others a space for pausing and awakening. There could be need for creating a collective, polyphonic story that creates and strengthens the organisational culture that is being reborn. All new structures, practices and the renewing culture have to be living and in tune with each other. Appreciating the different ways of knowing often broadens our ability to create new things. This means connecting to feelings, not reacting through old patterns and giving space to intuition. Thus the facilitator helps the group to connect to different ways of knowing – bodily feelings, emotions, thoughts, and intuition – and to use them as powers for renewal.

**The role of a Co-Creative Process facilitator
in organisational culture renewal**

- Serves the whole organisation (not just the management);
- Works as a facilitator of the conditions for renewal and renewing; brings a developmental approach and ways of working, and customises these together with the participants;
- Does not work as a saviour or a helper, but enables the strengthening of the participants' own mindfulness and co-creation skills;
- Works together with in-house facilitators that are coached to become co-creative facilitators for the organisational culture;
- Gradually shifts more responsibility to the organisation;
- Works in various roles during different phases of the process and in different situations;
- Has the courage to bring up breaches, conflicts, and chasms between words and actions in the culture, as the trust gradually solidifies, and as required;
- Does not express many expert opinions or proposed solutions, but instead asks questions and opens up collective discussions;
- Grows as a person and encounters the community in an open and accepting way;
- Is ready to accept her/his incompleteness as a person and to share her/his feelings and experiences in a way that serves the renewal process.

Why Does This Approach Make a Difference and Why Is It Valuable?

As you have probably felt, this is a challenging approach because it is about becoming responsible co-creators. This is not just about doing change work, but deeply engaging in co-creating the kinds of realities we and our partners can appreciate. Thus, this approach is not for every organisation – if managers are not willing to put themselves through the emerging process and letting everyone really participate, this is not the way. However, any kind of organisation can work in this way if there are people who are willing to engage in this way and willing to learn together. This book has described only one path which was co-created through developing with the CCPI approach. In every place, the ways of developing are partly new. And that is why the approach works, because it starts from within the organisation, it starts from people and their environment. What could this become in your organisation? What kind of a future are you willing to co-create in your work? What you are willing to invite?

If you would like to know more about how this way of working changes our ways of relating and how this differs from other development approaches, please visit the website of a CCPI community: www.cocreativeprocess.org

Appendix 1

Communal days between years 2006-2009 in the OGE (Takanen 2013)

Time	Theme	How	The main purpose
11/2006	Co-Creative Process with questions (as systematic process of becoming aware, letting go, attuning & practicing)	Finding meaningful questions, experiencing this way of working together through Co-Creative Process cycle	Becoming aware what kind of questions are meaningful to participants concerning their work, and renewal
3/2007	Organisational culture as stories and beliefs	Exploring cultural beliefs, stories of customer relations	Becoming aware of multitude of beliefs and stories
5/2007 (2 days)	Re-storying work processes	Learning café about work processes. Drawing a picture of processes in operational environment and storying together.	Learning together, sharing insights, encountering on-going challenges in developing work process, revisiting processes and how they are connected by storying
11/2007	Re-organising together our renewal process: the leap to microcosms	Exploring not-working-any-more ways of thinking and acting (Argyris 1992)	Re-organising together new theme groups in engaging way
3/2008	Storying on-going changes	Inquiring together what I am feeling is changed/is changing	Becoming aware of small everyday changes and reinforcing them by expressing them
5/2008	Storying our organisational culture as different kind of gardens -how it is living just now? What we can let go of?	Drawing the gardens as our on-going culture, and storying together	Becoming aware how we are storying our culture just now, and already happened/happening letting go's
8/2008	Culture cafe – how our organisational culture is living just now?	Exploring our ways of thinking and acting through Schein's model (1987, 1999)	Becoming aware how our values are living in the here and now, seeing how our purpose and the vision could be storied as on-going process in the here and now
4/2009	Listening emerging guiding principles of our culture	Sensing and feeling emerging values, the purpose and the vision. Empathising different customer's views about our action	Stopping to feel, sense and story shared values, purpose and vision as on-going process
11/2009	Collective storying with movements, pictures and stories: who we are and what is our story. How this journey is living in us?	Evaluating together whole renewal process from the here and now. Balancing experiential, presentational, practical and propositional knowing	Self-reflecting our living story and thus bringing attention to it and renewing organisational identity

Appendix 2

The Table of Outcomes. A Collective Evaluation of the Renewal Process. 30.9.2009

OGE RENEWAL PROCESS	Initial situation 12/2006	Present situation 12/2009
Quality of dialogue	• A culture of being right is dominating. Discussion practices are more debating than discussing. • Both the quantity and quality of dialogue is insufficient and undeveloped. • The aim is to move from quickly expressed opinions towards more genuine discussion.	• Internal collaboration has increased and deepened, we have got to know each other better. • A shift from saying "me/you" towards "us". • The quantity of dialogue has increased; likewise the quality is getting better. • More listening and asking. • A sprout of a new discussion culture has emerged and should be nurtured.
Relationship to customers and partners	• Customership is still partly "unformed" – especially in regard to choosing an operating method. • Customership has been recognised, but the methods have not been defined.	• The fences have been lowered; we are easier to listen to and to approach. • The meaningfulness of work has increased as we have come closer to the customer. • The quality of customer meetings has been diversified and systematised. • The customer is nearer to us and is a part of our day-to-day work. • Customers have been involved in directing our operations.

	How is the process affecting everyday work?	Examples of renewed practices	Which ways of thinking and acting have been let go of?
	• More polyphony, e.g. in department info meetings. • Awareness that discussion is needed and this shows up sometimes even in new events/situations. For some, this has always been natural. • Themed and spontaneous gatherings without any assignment have increased. • People are talking more and freely. • Participants are not afraid of receiving critique.	• There is more collaboration instead of working alone, both inside and outside the department. • Critical viewpoints can be brought up. • There have been more customer meetings. • The ability to recognise a situation where there is no genuine discussion has been strengthened. • Regular, discussing department info meetings. • Labour market meetings of the Office Directors enhance the relations between the management and the OGE.	• The separation of "the work self" and the real self. • A command culture and working alone have been gotten rid of. • Self-centredness has been let go of.
	• Developing and succeeding. • Customer forums have been increased and their methods have been diversified. • We are trusted more as there is more openness. • Listening has increased systematically. • The professionalism of a client is appreciated, which can be seen in that they are genuinely involved in the discussions. • There have been more customer meetings. • Research in customer satisfaction has been encouraging.	• In employer groups, the customer has more space to talk. The groups are more interactive and allow customers' introductions. • Customer knowledge has been utilised systematically, e.g. by collecting negotiation objectives. • Better discussion inside the ministry. • An open listening practice has become permanent. • Offices took the matter in their own hands after the OGE enabled a dialogical connection between them. • Listening to the customer with a clean slate is "something new".	• The fear of mistakes and the necessity of solving everything. • The necessity of being right. • People are no longer thinking on behalf of others. • An independent and narrow definition of our work's additional value to the customer.

OGE RENEWAL PROCESS	Initial situation 12/2006	Present situation 12/2009
Enabling leadership and enabling structures	• Decision-making is delegated upwards. The atmosphere limits risk-taking. • Individual freedom of action is more limited. • An expectation that the management would direct more strongly. • Leadership has been accordant with the hierarchical organisation during the years. The industry has supported a hierarchical leadership model.	• Ideas and thoughts are brought up by more people. • The personnel's preconditions for creative work are seen as the management's task. • Hidden power structures are breaking up. • Leadership means creating a collective space and encouraging risk-taking instead of delegating. • We are responsible for our own actions and as the OGE, we are responsible for all actions.
Diversifying of the ways of knowing	• Focusing on inner knowledge (our in-house knowledge). • The hierarchy of knowing, upper level and unit level • Only fact based opinions are valuable, no space for emotional knowledge or intuition.	• Inquiring in the field. • From knowing towards asking good questions. • Knowing is broader and more polyphonic, incl. taking the customers' knowledge into account. • Alongside factual knowledge there is space for other ways of knowing.
Renewal skills	• A good foundation was created in the past years.	• Advancing and performing have been replaced by focusing and presence. • Experimenting. • The freedom to fail. Courage to take risks. • "Opening starts from the inside."
Expert identity and the OGE's identity	• The culture supported development. • Customer skills were not systematic. • Different expertises were appreciated differently.	• Everyone is an expert in their own tasks, and there is new space for doing. • Communality has come back. Community spirit has increased. • Efficiency has increased through experiments and collaboration. • We are forerunners in some things at least. The desire for renewal has increased.

How is the process affecting everyday work?	Examples of renewed practices	Which ways of thinking and acting have been let go of?
• A shared feeling: the micro-cosms drew people in. • Current structures have been questioned and people act differently in them. Everyday work has diverged from the structures. • There is more discussion, also regarding personal work and searching for develop-mental solutions for it. • Wider contribution. • Less matters dealt with by the management team, decisions made elsewhere as well.	• Renewing structures into a more supportive direction. • Giving responsibility for inde-pendent action. • Enlistment market: changes in job descriptions. • The microcosms are an enabling structure for implementing ideas. • Everyone has a voice. • Everyone's participation is expected.	• Knowledge is at the top hierarchy and not elsewhere. • Only some people having useful view-points. • High unit limits. • The hierarchy of different personnel groups.
• Operation is more customer-centred and customers are being listened to with a clean slate, non-judging.	• More case-specific customer groups were used in negotia-tions. • There is more space for experi-ential and emotional knowledge. • Spontaneous interaction also with interest groups and cus-tomers.	• Thinking on behalf of others. • The department thinking unit-specif-ically.
• People are questioning work methods more easily. • New ways of working are experimented with.	• The way we introduced the "Mahti" document model. • We are taking steps towards a paperless office (printing settings, electronic circular distribution). • Some have started to use adjusting one's own space in adjusting interaction situations. • We have the courage to carry out inner space practices in different situations.	• From the feeling of knowing everything towards accepting incompleteness. • Independency and own world view be-ing the one and only. • Connecting certain background factors (age, education, background) to an inability to renew.
• We aim for collaboration in-side the Ministry of Finance. • Togetherness and interaction with a clean slate are our ways of working. • External contracts have increased.	• The support group's work has enriched leadership. • The management is more ap-proachable. • Everyone has got more space to represent OGE. • Players have been highlighted.	• Territorial thinking and withholding information. • Thinking that only some people hold the expertise. • Staying silent.

Appendix 3
Co-Creative Process Coaching

- The basic idea of CCP Coaching is to give space for becoming aware and letting go. The process starts with the challenges expressed by the client or themes that are meaningful to the client. This is a radical way of re-relating with ourselves and others, and the quality of presence is the core of the approach. The process connects to our thoughts, emotions, motives, intuition and actions. The approach is not goal-oriented or solution-oriented, but opens toward a new kind of orientation – being present.

- The relationship between the Coach and the Client is special. The professionalism of a CCP-coach is based on the ethics of encountering another human being in conscious co-creation. The approach emphasises the human encounter which provides an opportunity to face a new creative space, instead of the coach being an outside expert. This approach is reflected in the work as a quality of presence.

- The ethics of the Coach are to accept his or her personal incompleteness and to authentically encounter the other person as a human being. The Coach strives not to understand the other person in an empathetic way, but to accept the other person with loving kindness. The Coach does not evaluate or judge the other person's interpretations. The Coach suspends personal interpretations or leaves out the interpretation completely. The Coach is just a mirror. The most crucial thing is not what the Coach says or does, but what is left unsaid and undone – and from what kind of orientation the Coach is relating with the other person.

- The Coach guides the process in a systematic and lively way based on four perspectives of being present in action: becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing. These processes open up as a spiral; the question opens up in new ways. The question will probably shift during the process. The initial question is a starting point, from where it will be visible what kind of qualitative changes have taken place in the way of relating with the question, and also in oneself and others during the process.

- CCP coaching is based on Co-Creative Process Inquiry, which is practiced as a systematic developmental approach in organisational contexts.

Appendix 4
Abstract

Takanen, Terhi (2013): The Power of Being Present at Work
– Co-Creative Process Inquiry as a Developmental Approach

Aalto University publication series
DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

In this action research, the research task was to develop different ways of being present at work. The research is based on relational constructionism as a meta-theory, and through empirical study, this action research shows what this could mean in practice in development work. The context of co-inquiry was a long-term development project in one department of the Finnish Ministry of Finance, called the Office for the Government as Employer (later OGE).

Ways of being present at work show up in different ways of relating to/with oneself and others, and the quality of relating has an impact on well-being and productivity in organizations. Studies that take being present in action not only as a subject of study but also as a research orientation have been missing in the area of development work. From this point, the work is positioned in relation to a) a philosophy of science that centers on an ongoing process in which the researcher participates (relational constructionism), b) more local theories of mindfulness and being present, and c) related methodologies and methods of participative development work.

I explored the research task through five questions in this thesis. First, how did we carry on development work together OGE? Second, what kind of relating emerged in particular moments and then, how was the soft self-other relating invited in those moments? Third, how did we practice being present in our developmental work? Fourth, what kind of way of developing enabled different ways of being present at work? Finally, does Co-Creative Process Inquiry (one result of this study) differ from other developmental approaches?

Through empirical work, the research illuminates how relational constructionism as a meta-theory could be put into practice. It shows how relations can shift from hard differentiation (subject-object) to soft self-other relating. The research also shows how new ways of relating

can be invited and facilitated by practicing being present. One result is a detailed description of Co-Creative Process Inquiry as an emerging developmental approach. Hence, the research contributes to action research methodology and the studies of development work. It also produces new practices to being present not only to research work but also to work life, and participates in discussions about mindfulness in developmental work. Another central contribution is a presentation of how the development process was carried on and how we practiced being present in action.

These findings are organized under the following five themes
1) from making changes toward participating by giving space,
2) from stable structures to enabling structures,
   called microcosms,
3) from visioning and planning the future towards embodying
   it in the here and now,
4) from thinking-mode towards embodied sensing,
5) from result-oriented evaluating towards on-going storytelling
   in the here and now.

- Read the dissertation: http://www.cocreativeprocess.org.

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The Power of Encountering
A Story of Co-Creative Process Inquiry

How to stop and see our taken-for-granted ways of organising? How to practice being present at work? How to become conscious co-creators in the middle of everyday work? How to renew not only the ways of acting - but actually our ways of relating and ourselves?

This is the story of how the organisational culture was renewed at the expert organisation the Office for the Government as Employer starting within the organisation.

This story is neither a success story nor a failure story. It more closely resembles a bumpy ride filled with manifold learning experiences and a diverse range of feelings and emotions. This journey does not really have a beginning or an end. During our journey, we experience both delightful and jarring moments; the beauty of incompleteness; bright moments of insight; failures; different voices.

The purpose of this story is to touch especially those struggling with renewal in expert organisations. This story can encourage us to search for new ways of encountering change. The entire work community can carry out renewal work together from within the organisation. Co-Creative Process Inquiry – as the way of being present at work – invites more mindful participation in the process of co-creating new ways of relating with ourselves and others at this moment.

To be able to work in a field full of continuous changes, we need to find new ways of relating: new ways of knowing and working. Changes cannot be controlled, but we can live with them and find new possibilities to make a difference. This approach centres on the on-going moment and everyday challenges. It approaches participants as relational beings who act, experience and feel. There is not only 'rational' knowing but space for experiential, emotional and intuitive knowing as well.

Co-Creative Process Inquiry, CCPI, is a radical and practical way of working with personal, organisational and cultural renewal. This developmental approach helps us to become conscious and responsible co-creators and renew the way we work and live together. Shifting and practicing new ways of being and relating is the core of Co-Creative Process Inquiry.

Office for the
Government as Employer