

Knowledge shared and knowledge continually developed: The sharing and growth of a relational and network web across professional, geographical, and national borders.

A telling by one of them

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Abstract

This paper outlines the growth of a relational and network web across professional, geographical, and national borders. Initiated in the European Arctic North out of a search for new answers in mental health practices, the network grew across borders of divergences, welcoming all who wanted to learn by talking to and listening to each other in search of new practices and new answers in ongoing work. It generated a growth of an international network of knowledge shared and knowledge continually developed. The paper outlines the development, emerging practices, and the theoretical understandings, including reflecting teams, reflecting processes, and dialogically anchored practices in mental health services and other human areas. Written in the context of an appeal from colleagues in Argentina and Paraguay, the paper outlines the story of the network as told by one of the initiators and longtime partaker from the European Arctic North.

Key Words: *Dialogical practices, collaborative practices, reflecting processes, reflecting team, open dialogue, dialogical research.*

When meeting Adela Garcia at FundaCes in Buenos Aires in 2019, she asked if anything could be contributed from the European Arctic North to a forthcoming book about the importance of reflecting processes and hereunder about Professor Tom Andersen's work in South America. They had been trying for a long time to get a yes-answer from people up north, without succeeding, and decided to ask me directly. It appeared as a pity that no one met their appeal. Because of their effort and interest, I promised to contribute. Coming home, my three colleagues were asked to partake, Magnus Hald, Pål Talberg, and Solveig Wilhelmsen, with whom the network work was presented at the International Congress of Family Therapy in Buenos Aires in 2010. This time, they wanted me to write, for them to comment. When sending a first draft to the South Americans, the editors wanted just two pages, and recommended sending the longer one til JCDP. Such is the context of this paper,

At Adela's invitation, a meeting in 2007 in Tromsø with her, Leticia Rodriguez, Marilene Grandesso, and Helena Cruz was vividly recalled. They had just arrived from Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil to attend a seminar at the University in Tromsø - the Arctic university of Norway, as part of the "Post-graduate Program of Relational and Network Work". At Tom Andersen's sudden death the day before, they were invited into my kitchen for food, talking, and breathing, while trying to approach a new future. As well, Torbjørg Guttormsen, Magnus Hald, Carina Håkanson, Eva Kjellberg, and Pål Talberg joined.

Through years, the South Americans had been connected to our milieu in the European Arctic North. Some had met earlier at arrangements organized by Harry Goolishian and Harlene Anderson at Galveston Family Institute (later called Houston Galveston Institute) in Texas. Since then, Tom Andersen became a transmitter to the European Arctic North, inviting to our yearly June Seminars, initiating their inclusion into the postgraduate program, and revisiting them and their network many times, alone or together with colleagues from the north. A longtime sharing started. Knowledge shared and knowledge developed were, and still are, at

the heart of our togetherness and network. To illustrate the emerging processes of crisscrossing across borders, some brief historical lines will be sketched out, as seen from the European Arctic North, by one of them.

A start

At its start in the 1980s, the network in the north was initiated by a group of mental health professionals in Tromsø out of practically anchored interest in finding new ways in ongoing practices. During decades to come, an extended network emerged, welcoming *all who wanted to learn by talking to and listening to each other in search of new practices and new answers in ongoing work.*

Tom Andersen at the University of Tromsø initiated this first meeting by inviting local mental health professionals from the public adult, child, and adolescent specialty mental health services to discuss *if and how* new contributions entering into human sciences could inspire our mental health practices. The author partook from specialty mental health services for children and adolescents. One concrete background for this meeting was the entrance of new public specialty mental health services and attempts to decentralize traditional institutional psychiatry. Additionally, questions concerning the impact of contexts, cultures, and ethnic belongings had emerged as challenges for mental health practices.

What the partakers of the meeting had in common, was a search for meeting points to explore and find next steps in our practice fields. Some questions had emerged: Could new inspiration be found among the recently upcoming contributions from around the world from research fields outside of psychiatry? Like for instance the influences from General Systems Theory, showing the direct implication of *context* for all members of a system. Furthermore, could Gregory Bateson, the social anthropologist, and his milieu bring news from research on human communication, telling that any viewpoint or punctuation “makes a difference that in itself makes a difference” – there is *no neutral position* (Bateson, 1972)?

These contributions radically suggested moving the mental health field *away* from its prevailing traditions of looking at internal states of single individuals when working for change *into* focusing upon ongoing communication among human beings, to explore how ways of communication generate conditions for all involved members. These approaches suggested to leave a linear causal explanation of human behavior, (if B regularly follows A, then A causes B), and tried to carve out a circular causality, (everything is connected; no single part is causing a circle of behaviors going on among partakers).

Some upcoming milieus in the mental health field were deeply inspired by these new contributions. Among them were the Milano Team in Italy (e.g., Palazzoli, Boscolo, Cecchin & Prata, 1978) and the Palo Alto Group, at the Mental Research Institute, in USA (e.g., Jay Haley (1966/1993), Paul Watzlawick, and Milton Erickson (e.g., Watzlawick, Bavelas & Jackson, 1966). Radically, both the Milano Team and the Palo Alto Group proposed a fundamental change of focus in mental health services based on the inspiration of looking at *communication patterns* among partakers, and away from seeing sickness as individual dispositions or internal deficits. From this angle, they suggested as a key to change the introduction of *strategic interventions* by so-called paradoxes into ongoing communicational loops, to elicit change by counteracting habitual communication patterns among all involved. A paradoxical instruction implied instructing, through positively redefining existing behavior, an exercise of new behavior involving everyone in the family, which in its effects would break existing communication patterns. At the time, Tom Andersen was deeply inspired by this turn of attention.

However, although these trends radically turned towards human communications *among* people and away from looking at internal states and deficits *inside* single individuals, and although they in fundamentally new ways investigated the significance of *relationally oriented questions* when working with mental health issues, for some of us such approaches seemed *not* to leave a linear causality. In spite of the warnings from Bateson, some of them seemed to hold on to *power* perspectives – the individual’s wish for power as the motor of ongoing behavior, causing consequences for all involved. Existing power positions had to be changed through strategic interventions from outside. Subsequently, these attempts seemed to suggest interventions as defined from better knowing positions – and power – from outside.

A question and a turn

For some of us, such expert positions appeared as limiting. We searched for more inclusive practices and understandings: When troubles arise, could other ways be found that more openly invited all involved voices to obtain influence through a more *equally and participatory shared wondering and inquiry*? How could such sharing be generated? Hence, our search for new practices and understandings continued.

A challenge emerged to look more directly into the construction of human *meaning making* and more precisely into a *mutual construction of meaning*. Subsequently, we invited and visited other mental health milieus for shared exploration. Those were, as earlier, the Houston Galveston Institute, and, then, teams such as the Dublin Team with Philip Kearney, Nollaig Byrne, Imelda McCarthy, as well as Peggy Penn and Lynn Hoffmann at the Ackerman Family Institute in New York, and mental health teams in the southeast and northeast of USA.

During this period, Tom Andersen published the later well-known paper, “*The Reflecting Team*”, based on local practices, exemplifying a more opening process of meaning making and co-construction of language (Andersen, 1987). Through arranging shifts for all partakers between being in a listening and talking position, each person was invited to see and be seen, to hear and be heard, to get room for one’s inner reflections and voices, as well as listening to outer reflections and voices from others – while finding one’s own way of continuing. By so doing, the reflecting team introduced new ways of listening and talking, to let all be heard and seen, and to let outside professionals enter into a more tentative, low-key position, without monopolizing an expert voice from outside. Likewise, it invited the referring agencies to partake in reflecting positions among all involved for shared meaning making of how to continue. By such practices, radical new ways were introduced into the field.

As Tom Andersen later explicated: “What made us leave the families and go to our closed rooms to discuss the “interventions” we were to give them? How came that we did not stay in the room and talked together in the presence of the family? Perhaps listening to our discussions of the situation could have some value for them?” (Andersen, 2007, p. 33).

In the midst of these evolving explorations, our network in the north initiated a June Seminar called “The Greek Kitchen in the Arctic” (Andersen, 2006). It entered as the sixth in a row of yearly June Seminars, inviting anyone interested to meet each other and foreign guests of special interest. (For more details about the June Seminars, see Hald, Kjellberg, Lindseth & Talberg, 2007). This year, contemporary teams elaborating new clinical practices (the Milano-team, Houston/Galveston-team, the Tromsø-team), were invited to present their clinical work to be reflected upon by outstanding, contemporary epistemologists. These were Stein Bråten (Norway), Heinz von Foerster (USA), Ernst von Glasersfeld (USA), Humberto Maturana (Chile), Fredrick Steier and Lynn Hoffman (USA). The aim of this seminar was to share

reflections based on clinical practices and theoretical understandings in search of our next steps.

For many of us, this June Seminar brought about a major shift. The understanding turned away from the perspective of the so-called 2nd order cybernetics of General System Theory, that change can be instructed into human systems from outside, like for instance by strategic interventions as defined from outside perspectives. From now on, *co-construction of meaning* and *shared meaning making* entered at the front. The challenge of how to invite into a shared understanding of language and meaning making came into the fore. It puzzled and triggered.

A question and a turn

Soon, Anderson and Goolishian (1988) published their later well-known paper, “Human system as linguistic systems: Preliminary and evolving ideas about the implication for clinical theory”. This paper elaborated how meaning can be understood as created through *co-construction of language*. After some time, they introduced a connected metaphor, “*a not knowing position*” (Anderson & Goolishian, 1992). This term went beyond any notion of strategic interventions. It suggested putting one’s pre-understanding under *continuing criticism* through a questioning and exploring stance, saying that no one can define from an outside position what is true for another person. It did not suggest abdicating from one’s own pre-understanding or knowledge, but asked *not* to give privilege to one’s own knowing position from beforehand. They advocated a questioning and wondering stance towards people asking for assistance, to open for change through a *shared exploration of meaning*. (See e.g., Anderson, 1990, 1997; Anderson & Goolishian, 1992). As Hopstadius later explained: “I was deeply touched by the respect towards a human being’s unique life narrative that characterized their work.” (K. Hopstadius, personal correspondence, 2019).

In the wake of these turns of attention, the metaphor “*problem-created system*” entered (Anderson & Goolishian, 1992). By linking to the early suggestions from General System Theory of focusing communication systems as the point of departure, they continued looking at systems. They changed, however, into conceptualizing human systems as a fluid phenomenon, defined in language. They suggested seeing a problem as created by those *linguaging* about something as a problem, thus constituting a problem-created system. This metaphor pointed directly towards asking who are relevant to include at a certain point of time.

In line with the northern practices of reflecting teams, this turn of attention expanded the focus upon a family as the system of relevance, which previously had challenged an individual focus. It moved forward, into focusing larger networks in language. That is, it moved from family system to potentially wider webs or systems of meaning making.

This metaphor corresponded with the ongoing practices in the European Arctic North: Those engaged, were the people of interest when working for change. These persons made up the actual network of importance. Thus, it widened the focus on human conversations and shared meaning making: Who are talking with whom about what, when, and how? For some of us, these changes resonated with our evolving practices of “*problem-involved webs*”, which left the metaphor of systems and turned into movable *webs*—inviting those engaged as well as potentially new contributors. Our situatedness inside huge geographical areas inhabited by divergent cultures and ethnicities, augmented looking for *potentials of resources*—of people, traditions, and cultural reservoirs, for the invitation of problem-involved webs for connectedness and contributions. Such a turn of attention brought potentials for a curious stance towards the weight of meaning as embedded in meaning-saturated signs like culture and narratives of traditions (Johnsen, Sundet & Torsteinson, 2004). Later, the milieus of Michal

White in Australia and David Epston in New Zealand more deliberately explored how cultural narratives and traditions of healing could inform and form therapeutic work. (See e.g., Epston & White, 2011; White, 2011; Wiremu, Bush & Epston, 2017).

However, at this point of time, for some of us another question emerged: Do these contributions somehow privilege humans as verbal beings? What about humans as *sense-making bodily beings*?

A question and a turn

In the European Arctic North, our attention now moved from reflecting teams into practices of *reflecting processes, reflecting positions, reflecting conversations, and dialogical processes* (see e.g., Andersen, 1995, 2003, 2007; Wangberg, 1991). Our flexible ways of including partakers during conversations enforced elaborating words more in correspondence with such practices. In line with the inspiration from Wittgenstein (1980), the meaning of a word lies in its use—the word we use both form us and may bewitch us. Thus, a challenge emerged to search words in alignment with our evolving practices.

Simultaneously, for some of us, the focus now turned towards humans as *human bodily beings*, that meaning making goes on between humans as bodily dialogically oriented and dependent beings. After years of researching collaboration, Øvreberg and Andersen (1989) published their book “Aadel Bülow-Hansens fysioterapi”, about the physiotherapy of Aadel Bülow-Hansen. Thereafter, a group of Norwegian psychomotor physiotherapists continued in collaboration with Øvreberg and Andersen (Ianssen, 2012, 2020). Their work explored the subtle, dialogically dependent connections between the breath, the bodily movements, and other meaning making such as through words. To come closer to the dialogical processes going on between humans as bodily beings, they introduced the term “*movements of life*”.

One of these days, our neighboring team in Northern Finland came to visit in Tromsø. Jaakko Seikkula and his colleagues called their new work in specialty mental health services “*open dialogue*”, thus naming and exemplifying an invitation of all involved voices at problems of psychosis (e.g., Seikkula, 1993; Seikkula et al., 1996; Seikkula & Arnkil, 2015). By its *simplicity*, this metaphor underscored looking directly into the *open*, the yet not to be defined from outside about who or what is of relevance during ongoing sense- and meaning making. From this point of departure, the Finlanders went on exploring dialogues, language, and meaning making as embodied relational existences (e.g., Hopstadius, 2015; Seikkula & Trimble, 2005; Seikkula et al., 2015).

However, when meeting them, for some of us a question emerged: How did they invite a shared exploration of divergences? Did it somehow underestimate creating time and space for alternating reflecting processes across different voices?

A growth of practice fields and continuous questions

During the following years, new language- and dialogically oriented practices emerged in family therapy, mental health services, and other human areas, linked to reflecting processes. To exemplify, some explored working with psychosis, rehabilitation, and medicine free rehabilitation (e.g., Hald, 2019; Håkanson, 2009, 2014, 2015), others with children and adolescents (e.g., Bøe, 2016; Kjellberg & Andersen, 2001; Lidbom, Bøe, Kristoffersen, Ulland & Seikkula, 2014; Reigstad, 2007). Some concentrated on relationships with high conflicts or violence (e.g., Flåm, 2018; Nilsson & Trana, 2000, 2001) or art- and expressional work (e.g., Johannessen, Rieber & Trana, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001; Kjellberg, in Andersen, 2006). Others elaborated supervision (e.g., Flåm & Talberg, 1997; Flåm, 2016; Vedeler, 2011) and the

significance of human encounters (Håkanson, 2020; Sivertsen, 2016). Some explored through books and films how people find health and dignity in situated contexts of being at home in their local worlds (e.g., Hopstadius, Trudevall & Östberg, 2011; Merok, 2003; Ragazzi, 2001, 2003). By meeting the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer and linking to his work, Ragazzi, Merok and colleagues exemplified an understanding of health as being at home in the world, knowing and mastering one's context with options to respond adequately to demands at hand. By calling it by the name of "*being at home in the world*", they exemplified how ethnographical descriptions could provide a deeper and more relevant historical and anthropological understanding of the concerns and stories that people share. In short, the network diversified and expanded at home and through the participation in new national and international arenas. (For other descriptions, see e.g., Andersen, 2006; Anderson, 1997; Anderson & Gehart, 2007; Anderson & Jensen, 2007; Eliassen & Seikkula, 2007; Flåm, 2008; Friedman, 2003; Hopstadius, 2015, 2016).

In common for these emerging practices, there existed *a shared challenge*: How to include involved voices and arrange arenas for shared exploration of divergent meanings—for all to be heard, seen, received, and having a voice, when troubles and concerns arise? How to create relationships of *thrust* through inviting involved people to tell and talk by their own words, metaphors, and knowledge – and for others to listen, see, be moved, and to answer each other's addressed concerns?

New questions and new wonderings

During these evolving processes, the English psychologist John Shotter made a deep impact on some of us by his thorough elaboration of the philosophical heritages of psychology and its implications for the understanding of human sense– and meaning making (e.g., Shotter, 2012; 2016). His metaphor *witness knowledge* as knowledge from *within encounters* connected, inspired, and intrigued. Based on thorough exploration of contributions from scholars across historical times on epistemology, human understanding, and meaning making, Shotter amplified the critique of the possibility of assembling knowledge from outside positions to establish objective truths about another human being. To understand another, he proclaimed, we need to see human beings as *expressive persons turning towards others in concrete situations*. Such a view brings strong epistemological and ethical implications by turning towards another as an expressive and meaning seeking person *in situ*.

For some of us, contributions of other scholars connected by amplifying humans as expressive persons asking for and being dependent on answering others (e.g., Bakhtin, 1985, 1990, 1993; Linell, 2009; Markova, 2006, 2016; Markova & Gillespie, 2012; Rommetveit, 2003; Stern, 2004; Trevarthen, 2011). Consistent with Shotter, their works explore how meaning is *directed and situated in local contexts*. Following the Swedish scholar, Per Linell, although a word or a sign is loaded with meaning from the past and directed towards a future answer, its actual *meaning* is created in the encounter *in situ*. (Linell, 2009). The Norwegian language scholar Ragnar Rommetveit pinpointed this position by saying understanding *is* responding.

As well, the child development studies of Trevarthen and colleagues (e.g., 2010; 2011) made a deep impact on some of us by turning the attention towards how human beings are born into *bodily dialogical processes* from its birth and even earlier. He outlines an understanding of what he called intersubjectivity, as an orientation existing in infants for joyful dialogical companionship over and above any need for physical support, affectionate care, and protection – as an intersubjective readiness from the start. Trevarthen accentuates how a rationalist, outside knowledge position, has "*closed our minds* towards the intersubjective motives that are

active not only at birth or even before that time, but remain in that essential form throughout lifetime” (Trevarthen, 2001, p. 114, my italics).

For some of us, these scholars entering from divergent angles connected to our evolving practices. Their contributions resonated by turning the attention towards the *situated, co-authorship of sense- and meaning*. From different angles, they added to our ongoing practices by underscoring the *polyphony of a voice, the meaning-potentials of words, and the co-authorship of language going on during a present moment*. Their contributions illustrated how meaning and truth are created *at the boundary between people*. Included in any human saying lays a turning based on trust towards another for an *anticipated answer*. Thus, an ethical implication of answering follows. *Epistemic responsibility* of answering the other as an expressive person addressing our answers, enters as an intrinsic feature of any dialogue.

By such contributions, these scholars entered as important companions for some of us into our evolving practices, underscoring that human sense- and meaning making evolve in the meeting between people, in the becoming between them *in situ* during ongoing human encounters. By so doing, *human becoming* enters into the focus rather than human beings.

For some of us, they continue as main talking partners. They resonate with and widen our ongoing researching processes of how to work to include other human beings as expressive persons addressing others in situ in search of answers and meaning.

Examples of meeting points across borders

Throughout these years, the network in the European Arctic North continually changed and expanded. A conglomerate of meeting points evolved. Into this conglomerate, the South Americans arrived, finding their own ways in accordance with concerns in their homelands. For instance, by linking to ethically oriented scholars at home, like Paulo Freire, they developed new ways of community therapy and community consultations (e.g., Garcia, 2018).

By the time the South Americans entered, the name of the European Arctic network had changed into *“The North Calotte Project of Relational and Network Work”*, to better capture its evolving and co-creating character. Again, in line with Wittgenstein (1980), the challenge entered to search words in alignment with evolving practices. Below, some meeting points in the north are outlined to exemplify the many folded and ongoing development of the network:

A “Northern Norwegian Family Therapy Education”. Rather early, and based on local interest, the northern network established a formalized, licensed education program of family therapy. This program included locally situated professionals, doing practical work in groups, on a regular basis, including a supervisor, reading, and discussing relevant literature, all within a two-year schedule. It aspired at a both-and, to generate locally validated family therapy practices based on *both* local practices and knowledge *and* encounters with invited outsiders of relevance.

A formalized education program: “A Post-graduate Program of Relational and Network Work”. However, after some time, a successive initiative was undertaken, inviting into a *greater openness* than did the word “family therapy”. Once again, in line with Wittgenstein (1980), the challenge emerged to find words in alignment with new practices.

After some discussions, the program *“A Post-graduate Program of Relational and Network Work”* started. This program aimed at an easier access for the participation of extended national and international milieus by being formalized as an internationally accountable and licensed program (Hald, Guttormsen, Emaus & Sandberg, 2006). Yet, before starting, skeptical voices argued that the formality of linking to the Tromsø University College, with its subsequent

formal regulations, could hinder the fluid exchange of ideas and the vivid, flexible growth characterizing the milieu until then. However, the program started and Torbjørg Guttormsen at the Tromsø University College and Tom Andersen at UiT - the Arctic university of Norway took the formal lead. Whereas on the one side adjusting to formalized criteria, the program on the other side continued the appeal of its initiating network: Giving priority to practices by inviting practice-anchored presentations and research into dialogically oriented reflecting processes—for each to find their own local ways to continue. From now on, the network grew into a large international web; new partakers entered from Northern Norway, Northern Sweden, Northern Finland, Northern Russia, Denmark, and South America. The network and the crisscrossing across borders expanded.

The June Seminars. As mentioned above, each June, the northern network invited into an international seminar, with the aim to share and reflect upon practices and understanding. Tom Andersen had the original idea, and his affiliation to UiT - the Arctic university of Norway made it organizationally possible, while members from the network partook as arrangers. The June Seminars made up an open, three days event, all arranged in peripheral and remote places in the north for attendants to meet at the margins and to invite viewpoints out of the ordinary. To each June Seminar, guest presenters of special interest from around the world were invited. At first, it aimed at participants coming from the north, but expanded due to great interest. The seminars became an important meeting place for many coming from divergent professional disciplines, working places, and nations. Why it evoked such interest, brought pondering. However, instead of inviting people to be told about new and privileged lessons from outside, these gatherings gave priority for attendants' own experiences, assumptions, wonderings, and queries by arranging ample time for outer and inner dialogues during the bright light of days and nights in June in the Arctic north. As underlined by Andersen (in Hald, Kjellberg, Lindseth & Talberg, 2007), the June Seminars opened for moving one's own pre-understanding, making attendants reflect upon themselves as understanding persons with cultural, geographical, and professional anchorages, positions, and homes.

The January Seminars. Linked to the June Seminars, a yearly two-days January Seminar materialized in Tromsø city. In conjunction, invited guests visited local agencies to mini pre- or post-seminars for collegial inspiration and mutual learning.

“Borderline Meetings”. Besides, based on local initiatives, a “Borderline Meeting” appeared each autumn, as a practice-anchored, two-day seminar. Its name reflected the invitation of professionals across borders at the North Calotte. Its location altered among remote places in the two northernmost counties of Norway—Finnmark and Troms. These meetings were practice-anchored—local teams presenting own work, focusing how cultures and contexts may influence practices and understandings.

The Thursday Meeting. As well, an open, monthly evening meeting was arranged at the university in Tromsø, also based on local interest, inviting presentations of practical work and theoretical contributions for joint exploration and knowledge development.

The Friday Forum. Parallel, an open Friday Forum was established at the specialty mental health service for children and adolescents in Tromsø (BUP-Tromsø). It consisted of a monthly, half-day meeting (on Fridays), aiming at strengthening local, practice-anchored research. The forum occurred during the times of an emerging master narrative of evidence based research with an idealized randomized control group design for valid knowledge. Outsiders of special interest were invited, knowledgeable on qualitative research, witness-oriented and phenomenological inspired research, like philosophers, anthropologists, literates, sociologists, and clinicians. Through years, the Friday Forum attracted great interest.

The Psychosis Network. After some time, based on local interest from mental health professionals working with psychosis, Tom Andersen initiated a network for teams working with questions of psychosis. It started in 1996 in cooperation with Jaakko Seikkula at Jyväskylä University, Finland, and the Falun Team, Sweden, and included teams from the European North Calotte and the Baltic countries. (Andersen, 2006; Hald et al., 2007). Each autumn, a coming-together goes on for sharing research practices, questions, and understandings. The network continues by yearly meetings.

Continuing. These days, people move on to new milieus, including participants across contexts, like organizational workers, consultants, therapists, researcher, etc. To exemplify, some join the dialogically oriented networks, such as the Seikkula-initiated *Network of Dialogical Practices*, with international webs of collaborations, congresses, and the Open Dialogue Program. Others attach to Harlene Anderson and colleagues by its international collaboration, seminars, and *International Certificate of Collaborative and Dialogic Practices*. Others immerse into the network of alternatives to medication in mental health service (e.g., Hald, 2019; www.iipdw.org; www.utvidgaderum.se; Whitaker, 2010), or into the development of narratives of recovery and experience-based practices (e.g., <https://erfaringskompetanse.no>; Nepustil, 2016), or link to the psychosis network, or attach to the evolving milieu around Gail Simon (2018) and the *Murmurations: Journal of Transformative Systemic Practice* (Bøe, Bertelsen, Hillesund, Sundet & Lidbom, 2018), or to the milieu discussing causality in health professions (Anjum, Copeland & Rocca, 2020), as well as immersing into more local arenas.

However, across all forums a common endeavor continues: That is to establish arenas among partakers to generate *knowledge and understanding* anchored in locally situated experiences, practices, and concerns.

A preliminary summing up

Looking back, a network of continuing crisscrossing of practices and inspirations has evolved. It was initiated out of a locally and practically anchored interest in finding new ways in ongoing work. It continued across borders of professions, agencies, nationality, continents, historical times – and oceans. Its ways into the future are continually evolving.

However, all meeting points turn towards arranging arenas that respect and give credit to an understanding of language and human sense- and meaning making as continually generated through situated, dialogically anchored processes. It points towards knowledge as continually evolving in dialogue, both in practical work and in co-researching processes. As underlined by the dialogical contributors, there is no place left without addressivity and answering taking place. There is no place and no word outside of an *answering responsiveness* intertwined with ethical responsibility implications. Thus, intriguing questions continue, such as:

- How can future possibilities be created, with whom, when, where, and how, to include involved and affected voices into being heard and having a say?
- With whom, how, when, and where would you want, like, or need to talk and listen to?
- Who would one find necessary and useful?
- Who would be possible?

A common agenda was, and still is, to let oneself and others be inspired and enriched by new and many folded contributions, while trying to watch out for monopolizing knowledge which privileges pre-defined knowledge positions. It honors plurality, inviting knowledge from many folded arenas; it honors transparency, making all suggestions as visible and discussable as possibilities (Sundet & McLeod, 2019). However, above all it strives for inviting and being sensitive towards the *polyphony and alterity* of voices, the voices of the other, the margins, and

the not-so-easily heard or understood knowledge positions, to let these inform and form future understanding and practices. A continuous challenge exists to let our practices—and existence—be informed and formed by voices not so easily heard (Bøe, 2016; Flåm, 2018; Kirkengen, 2020), not having a traditional cultural capital of power (Bourdieu, 1997), not having sufficient legal rights (e.g., Wekerle, 2013), or being easily outsourced by cultural or conventional habits, such as dominant professions, positions, or agencies (e.g., Duncan & Sparks, 2008; Sundet, 2014, 2017).

Un-finality

When looking back from that first meeting in the European Arctic North, a movement appears. The first meeting started out of an uneasiness with the predominant linear, causal explanation of human behavior in mental health practices ((if B regularly follows A, then A causes B), then turned towards a more circular understanding (everything is connected; no single part is causing a circle of behaviors going on among partakers), then moved on towards an open invitation and exploration of dialogues and sense- and meaning making among persons in situ.

This movement corresponds with Linell (2009), who argues that the resistant customs in human and behavioral sciences have been to think in terms of *causal relations*, “seeing some events, things, or even systems, as prior to and causally impinging on other events (things, systems), which is fruitful in physical sciences (Linell, 2009, p. 432, my italics). However, “in monologism, the primary analytical units are entities, which may enter into relationships and interactions only *secondary*, but in *dialogism*, the relations and interactions are *primary*” (p. 433, my italics).

Thus, when communication is understood from a dialogical point of view, the communication is not viewed as a *product* of someone, but rather as a *process in between involved*. When seeing any single word as polyphonic, saturated by many meanings and possibilities developed through history and culture, the exact content which develops in the encounter cannot be tapped or known of on beforehand or finally defined from outside the actual encounter. The encounter enters at the fore: The invitation and inclusion of those concerned addressing an answerability from whom and the invitation of a possible answerability.

As suggested by Bakhtin: “...addressivity, the quality of turning to someone, is *a constitutive feature of the utterance*, without it the utterance does not and cannot exist (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 99, my italics). However, as underscored by both Rommetveit (2003), Bakhtin (1990, 1993), as well as by Markova and Gillespie (2012), to enter at the border of another rests on a fundament of trust and holds deep ethical implications for all involved.

Such words may give inspiration for future practices. It may offer continuing *curiosity and courage* in our ongoing work to keep on turning in trust towards interested and wanted others across borders of pre-established knowledge, as was done from the start of the network illustrated here—for knowledge to be shared and knowledge to be developed based on locally anchored practices, experiences, and concerns.

When meeting at the margins of established knowledge

The descriptions presented above makes up *one picture at one point of time* of a network evolving over time across traditional borders—based on local, situated concerns. It offers examples, given in the context of an appeal from the South Americans, of small glimpses into the *infinite and evolving meetings* and melting points that characterized the network and its webs over time. The attraction was, and still is, to meet at nonhierarchical borders welcoming

all who wants to learn by talking to and listening to each other in search of new practices and new answers in ongoing practices.

Hopefully, the presented picture can inspire others to find *courage and trust* in searching new practices and new understandings *across boundaries of established truths* – crossing borders of professions, agencies, continents – and oceans. That is, to dare turning towards meeting at the margins, *at the borders of the already known*, to invite addressivity, to explore polyphony, and to include answering responsiveness – for each to find one’s own ways to continue.

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