

The Power of Being Present at Work

Co-Creative Process Inquiry as a Developmental Approach

Terhi Takanen



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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.

Keywords being present, mindfulness, development work, developmental approach, relational constructionism, action research, Co-Creative Process Inquiry, co-creation

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Terhi Takanen

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Läsnäolon voima työssä – Yhdessäluomisen ote kehittämisotteena

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Tämän toimintatutkimuksen tutkimustehtävänä oli kehittää erilaisia läsnäolemisen tapoja työssä. Tutkimuksen metateorianäkökulmana toimi relationaalinen konstruktionismi. Empiirinen tutkimus näyttää, mitä se voi tarkoittaa käytännön kehittämistyössä. Toimintatutkimus tapahtui pitkäkestoisena kehittämisprojektina Valtiovarainministeriön henkilöstöosastolla eli Valtion työmarkkinalaitoksella.

Läsnäolemisen tavat näyttävät erilaisina suhteessa itseen ja toisiin, ja näiden suhteiden laadulla on vaikutusta hyvinvointiin ja tuottavuuteen organisaatioissa. Tutkimuksia, joissa tietoinen läsnäolo *toiminnassa* (being present *in action*) otetaan paitsi tutkimuksen aiheeksi myös tutkimusorientaatioksi, ei ole ollut kehittämistyön alueella. Tästä lähtökohdasta tutkimus on asemoitu suhteessa a) tieteenfilosofiaan, joka asettaa keskiöön meneillään olevat prosessit, joihin tutkija osallistuu (relationaalinen konstruktionismi) b) paikallisempiin teorioihin tietoisesta läsnäolosta ja c) sopiviin osallistuviin kehittämistyön metodologioihin ja metodeihin.

Lähestyin tutkimustehtävää viiden kysymyksen kautta. Ensiksi, miten teimme kehittämistyötä Valtion työmarkkinalaitoksella. Toiseksi, minkälaista suhteissa olemista itseen ja toisiin nousi esiin tietyissä tilanteissa, ja miten itse-toinen –suhteissa olemista mahdollistettiin näissä tilanteissa. Kolmanneksi, miten harjoitimme tietoista läsnäoloa kehittämistyössä. Neljänneksi, minkälainen kehittäminen mahdollistaa erilaisia läsnäolon tapoja työssä? Lopuksi, eroaako tutkimuksen tuloksena syntynyt yhdessäluomisen ote (Co-Creative Process Inquiry) muista kehittämisotteista.

Tutkimus havainnollistaa empirian kautta, miten relationaalinen konstruktionismi metateorianäkökulmana voi toimia käytännössä. Se kuvailee, miten suhteet muuttuvat vahvasti erotteluvälistä (subjekti-objekti) suhteista pehmeämpiin itse-toinen –suhteisiin. Tutkimus osoittaa, miten uudenlainen suhde itseen ja toisiin mahdollistuu harjoittamalla tietoista läsnäoloa. Tuloksena syntyi myös yksityiskohtainen kuvaus yhdessäluomisen otteesta kehkeytyvänä kehittämisotteena. Siten tutkimuksella on annettavaa toimintatutkimusmetodologiaan ja tutkimukseen kehittämistyöstä ja -otteista. Se myös tuottaa uusia käytänteitä paitsi tutkimustyöhön myös työelämään ja osallistuu keskusteluihin tietoisesta läsnäolosta kehittämistyössä. Keskeinen kontribuutio on kuvaus siitä, miten kehittämisprosessi toteutui, ja miten harjoitimme tietoista läsnäoloa toiminnassa. Organisoiminen tulokset viiteen teemaan: 1) muutosten tekemisestä kohti osallistumista tilaa antamalla, 2) kiinteistä rakenteista kohti mahdollistavia rakenteita, joita kutsuimme mikrokosmoksiksi, 3) tulevaisuuden visioinnista ja suunnittelusta kohti tulevaisuuden elämistä ja luomista tässä ja nyt, 4) ajattelumoodista kohti kehollistunutta kokemista, 5) tulosorientoituneesta arvioinnista kohti tarinoinnin kautta tapahtuvaa tulevaisuuden luomista tässä ja nyt.

Avainsanat tietoinen läsnäolo, kehittämistyö, kehittämisote, yhdessäluomisen kehittämisote, relationaalinen konstruktionismi, toimintatutkimus, yhdessäluominen

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The process of doing this action research now feels like a living string of encounterings with others and myself. All these encounterings have enabled me to crystallize this work both as a professional practice and as an academic dissertation. These encounterings reminded me again and again why this kind of work where we can co-create new realities and practices together is so valuable and touching. It feels special to have so many people to thank for their insights, encouragement and engagement. This is a moment to show my gratitude.

About 7 years ago scientist Arthur Zajonc (now working as the President of the Mind and Life Institute) listened to my dream of this kind of research and encouraged me to start. After that we have continued this discussion every year in different places. When we were together in the 'Knowing and Love' retreat, he spoke about mindful living: the task is not to interpret something as succeeding or not succeeding, but to be present with what is happening. This touched me deeply - it has been a simple but challenging core advice in this action research and in whole life. Doing this action research has been a challenging journey of being present with what is emerging working with others, and of being aware that this is not about trying to succeed but giving ourselves to the on-going moments of co-creation.

This research became possible because of 13 years of work with organisational development in many organisations – so I appreciate those years with many different kinds of people and learnings. Our action research in the Finnish Ministry of Finance, the Office for the Government as Employer (later OGE) took three years. 44 participants became co-inquirers. This made the whole research and development project possible: participants brought their concrete everyday challenges in an expert organisation to the core of co-inquiry. Actually, Otto Scharmer's and Peter Senge's inspirational work around the Society of Organizational Learning brought me together with their manager, Teuvo Metsäpelto, and developer Pilvi Pellikka. In these years, my relations with OGE's Pilvi Pellikka, Seija Petrow and Teuvo Metsäpelto transformed from very formal relating toward warm and open co-creation in many areas. Seija and I co-wrote our development story in which we shared the spirit and path of our work. For a long time, I was seeing the story as the core of this dissertation, even

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This kind of work doesn't become a thesis without good supervision. In the very beginning, I knew that I need a dedicated and challenging supervisor with openness and well-grounded courage to somewhat unconventional research. An experienced action researcher, Keijo Räsänen, showed to have that kind of dedication. Maybe because we shared enormous dedication and strong ethical orientations, our relationship became so fruitful but also very challenging at the emotional level. All emotions seemed to be there in our relationship. I am grateful for his deep dedication, capability to learn together and challenging honesty.

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My daughter, Neda, has been a wise teacher in the practice of being present, which is core of this research. Once, when she was 8-years old, I

asked her seriously what the core of my research work is; what I really want to tell others. She took a breath and straightened her back and said: it is being present. I was amazed how she knew that and asked curiously what it means. She said: I will tell you a story. Once upon time there was a princess, who saw a beautiful shooting star. She immediately went to tell everyone about the shooting star but at the same time there happened to be a thousand other star flights but she didn't see them because she was not present.“ That seemed to be my challenge: while I am telling about a shooting star, our case, do I see what is happening in this moment or does it become like telling stories of the past without being present? There were also other pieces of advice from this same teacher when she was 7-year old: Remember that the world is not black and white, so put all colors there. There has to also be text because if you only leave only empty space there no one can understand. And remember that love is most important. These pieces of advice have lived in my heart during this research process.

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Vantaa, February 2013

Terhi Takanen

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MOVEMENT 1

GROUNDING AND CONNECTING TO THE FIELD

1 Developing Different Ways of Being Present at Work

"How do we co-create our realities in the here and now," is a question that has intrigued me for a long time. In everyday situations in working life, which includes my work as a co-creative facilitator in organisational renewal processes, this is not just a question but a case of continuous inquiring. I do not consider this aspiration as an ideal, but an orientation which I am practicing every day with others, from moment-to-moment. This means being present in every encounter – whatever emerges.

When I met the people who were working in the Finnish Ministry of Finance, the Office for the Government as Employer (later OGE), I listened carefully to their needs for cultural renewal, particularly new ways of acting which would work better in their environment. As a particular kind of facilitator, I did not hear their question: *"how do we perform a real cultural shift and find new ways of acting,"* as a need for an expert-driven intervention with preplanned plans and steps, but with the potential to co-create different ways of being present. *"How could we learn to ask questions instead of knowing everything"* Teuvo Metsäpelto, the Director General, asked. That felt a fruitful but challenging question in the context of where experts often knew answers – even on behalf of their customers. In this question, I heard the desire to take the way of not-knowing, travelling towards the unknown, listening and opening up to new ways of being present at work.

Some months later, when I had started working with them, I felt that I had entered a very hard, performance-oriented culture, where there was certain openness to new ways of acting. At the same time, many participants behaved in not only critical but also somewhat cynical ways. It felt that there was not the space for uncertainty and the unknown. The need for control, or could I say an illusion of control, seemed strong. And my relating to them was strongly affected by the way of relating that we called controlling -mode. I practiced being also present to these ways of controlling without reacting immediately by starting to make controlling practices with them, like telling them how we will get some results, or what steps we have to take. I was just listening to our needs to know, to control, to succeed – by being with these constructions. In the middle of these challenges, I thought, if it becomes possible to develop ways of being

present together here, it would be possible anywhere. Such an exploration felt both a nerve-wracking, inviting and distressing challenge to me. *“Are we ready to give ourselves to a process that is not known, where we can’t say what the results will be? Where I just feel that we could learn together?”* I asked from them.

I have started to rethink both reading and writing as relating in the sense of how you participate in re-making text while reading and how am I inviting some kind of realities through this way of writing. How are you relating to this text? What kind of relating this experiential first person writing invites? Could you be(come) aware of how you are participating in the co-creation of a particular kind of reality/ies when you are reading? Could this open up an opportunity to relate also in a not-conceptually-oriented way? This thesis has been written from particular meta-theoretical stance which centres on the relational processes of co-creation of realities (McNamee & Hosking 2012) rather than representing the world out-there. So, I have tried to write this thesis in such a way that you, the reader, could connect with the on-going reality-making processes, not only through the conceptual level of thinking, but as an embodied, relational being. So I have written this thesis like a story which includes many different stories; some of them are dialogues with others who have supported me in this inquiry, one of them is a story of our development work (ch. 5) strongly connected to a co-written story of our renewal process (Takanen & Petrow 2010).

In this kind of writing I have used many ways of knowing (e.g. Heron 1996). This means appreciating different ways of discussing and giving space to both a personal experiential voice through presentational knowing but also some conventional ways of knowing, like organising my thoughts using numberings and lists. Thus, I do not see, for example, propositional knowing (e.g. statements and lists) and presentational knowing (e.g. stories and drawings) as opposites but rather going fruitfully, almost playfully together. This choice –putting these together- could seem contradictory if you do not take a relational perspective. This conscious choice arises from my learning: there is no need to construct strong opposites when you want to invite something fresh and new. New is always arising in some relation with earlier ways.

By bringing stories and writing with a personal voice, I try to open opportunities to feel the power of living expression (Shotter 2010, 2). Thus I will use concepts more as a way to create opportunities and openings, rather than to tell the truth. So I do not have any truth to tell because I view reality/realities as relational processes that are going on all the time

(Hosking 2010b). Put another way, words are used here as tools, in constant movement: appearing differently again and again in different moments and contexts. I try to be clear what concepts that I have chosen, and how they have developed through this work.

I have written this mostly from the first-person view, by using the I-pronoun as a storyteller. So, it makes sense to stop viewing this concept “I” and “self” here. Gergen (2006, 119-124) has described how the self became an object of psychological, historical, and political concern in a historical context, and how this has been reconstructed by giving space to the relational self and relational practices. This text could be read as one kind of talk of the relational self and practices (e.g. Gergen 2009) in a particular context. This includes using “I” in text as relational being. “I” is also used as a practical way of referring to a relational actor who is writing (sometimes knowing what comes, and often opening up to what comes while writing) and acting in other ways too. Further, “I” is conceptualised as an embodied space where encounterings happen all the time, not as a separate, rational agent. Thus, I use here “I” as a flowing, changing, identity in interaction (see also Gergen 2006, 2009, Malinen, Cooper & Thomas 2012). When I *speak about my* feelings, beliefs or intuitions, this is simply a practical way to express how I am constructing my inner life (e.g. Shotter 1997), which happens in relational processes. Using the first person, I have taken responsibility of those interpretations and analysis I will present. Other participants and our ways of relating with each other have influenced strongly these interpretations, and the pronoun I is used from a relational stance. I use “we” when I refer to other participants and myself in those situations. I have chosen to speak of other participants always with their names when it is possible. It makes them recognised not as objects that are spoken as anonyms, code names or numbers. This choice brings visible their contribution. These people whose name I use, have accepted it. Others are not willing to be recognised. Let me now open up on why being present at work could be valuable.

1.1 Why Could Being Present Be Valuable at Work?

As a developer, I believe(d) that we are co-creating realities in every moment, and thus in these moments lie possibilities to participate in and change ourselves and our realities. I had learned from my experiences that

there are many possibilities to become more present in this on-going moment where reality-making is happening. However, often this needs some regular practices, like silencing and listening to our inner space or ways of reflecting on what is happening now. I also believe(d) that becoming present at work means richer experiences, diverse possibilities to act, what could be named as freedom to act, differently and seeing more meaningfulness in our work. Thus being present could be considered as a valuable purpose in itself in development work. It could bring better work well-being, more initiatives and innovations, a different quality of interaction, and so on. Many mindfulness studies have reported these kinds of outcomes (e.g. Dane 2011, Langer 1989; see next chapter).

In these last few years, movements have also emerged towards slowing down and mindfulness in work communities. Mostly, these have taken the form of developing, which aim for work well-being or individual mindfulness skills. However, mindfulness understood as being present in action, particularly at work, is not researched in long-term developmental projects in organisational contexts, as I will show in next chapter. In this experimentation, participants started to orient present-oriented ways to their everyday challenges and create new ways of acting. Thus, this co-inquiry was not a pre-planned mindfulness *programme*: it explores how to be present in the middle-of-action, not how to make change but to allow changes and become co-creators who take relational responsibility (e.g. McNamee, Gergen & co 1999, McNamee 2009) of their ways of acting which invite particular kind of realities.

“I can’t stop and close my eyes, because I will collapse, and then I won’t accomplish all the things I have to accomplish.” One participant’s reflection when we were doing a silent orientation practice that we practiced in every session. In this case, stopping meant silencing and doing an orientation practice, being present through focusing your breathing and what is happening in your inner space. This kind of stopping in the middle of the work seemed almost impossible, and also felt dangerous to some participants. Could it be so, because it can enable us to make space for different ways of seeing and acting? It can enable to ask challenging questions about what we are making really important here and becoming aware of how taken-for-granted ways of working feel and work. In this organisation, many people felt that they are under pressure to make results, and it seemed paradoxical to stop.

In OGE and many other public organisations, many actors are trying to encounter challenges what are narrated as the challenges of combining

well-being and productivity. Even these people started to question narrow result-oriented change work approaches and methods. They felt that this alone does not bring the change that is needed. Many participants told to me that the ways of controlling change and to make it happen feel frustrating and disempowering. Taken-for-granted way of (over)planning and implementing felt dead, as one participant from OGE expressed. This “*managing the change*” -talk seems to me to be a culturally-constructed illusion: the first aspect of the illusion is that we can control change and the second is that we are not participating in this changing but we are instead actors trying to make change. However, these kinds of managing practices do not seem to allow for anything different to emerge. Even many scholars have rethought the ways of speaking and doing change, it seemed to me that these efforts were not meeting everyday action in those organisations I have been working with. Thus, it is interesting to explore what happens when developing work centres to being present; what is emerging, not striving to make changes but allowing us to stop and see differently in this kind of expert organisation.

1.2 Researching by Doing Developmental Work

This action research includes co-inquiring with participants by doing developmental work. Thus I can say, that it is researching *through* developing or through change work (see also McNamee & Hosking 2012). However, in other phases of this research, it became also research *about* a particular kind of development work (see also Shotter 2006 aboutness-thinking and witnessing-thinking). Thus, I would like to visit some relevant studies about different kinds of development work. Hosking (2006b) uses both concepts, development work and change work, for similar purposes, and I have chosen to it this way too.

There are multiple different kinds of views and trends in developmental work that overlap with each other (Seppänen-Järvelä 1999). All these views and trends include many beliefs about development, change, learning and humans. Often these beliefs are not explicitly described. If you are interested in exploring some approaches more systematically, you can ask for example why developmental work is valuable, how it should be done and what kind of view of developing it includes (e.g. Seppänen-Järvelä 1999, 29). Many approaches seem to have similar purposes, which come from on-

going trends. For example combining work well-being and productivity has been for many years like a mantra in public sector renewals in Finland, partly because governmental financiers are asking for these kinds of projects. Many similarities in ways of working can also be seen, but often ways of doing are used for different purposes and possibly with different worldview.

Many practitioners have studied their own developmental practices or in some cases described systematically a particular kind of developmental approach. For example Seppälä-Järvinen (1999) has researched the character of developmental work in the social and health sector in Finland. Hicks (2010) has researched and developed an approach named co-constructive consulting in the context of business consulting in large companies. All these studies have taken different approaches to explore particular development work. These multiple ways of exploring show how important it is to choose the way of exploring or/and evaluating a particular approach that fits to this approach and context. I will give some examples here. Filander (2000) has explored how, in the 1990s, public-sector practitioners who participate in developmental work make sense of their relation to on-going public sector changes. Her perspective focused on how discursive power operates in people's lives. Thus, Filander (2000, 247) looks at developmental work as a process of negotiation and struggle between different kinds of discourses and as a script used by people in their talk. Seppänen-Järvelä (1999) has analysed the nature and characteristics of development work from the perspective of development work experts. The material is analysed according to grounded theory and presented as a new developmental approach, actor-centred process development. Kuula (2000) has analysed how action researchers view their work; she explicates their views through narrating tensions and conflicts in field work. On the other hand, there are practitioners who have explored their own practice from a relational constructionist view. Hicks (2010) has presented a co-constructive consultation as one kind of future-oriented approach, which is based on relational constructionism. He shares his own path on how his thinking changed through researching. Kavanagh (2008) has examined communities of practice from a relational constructionist view, focusing on power issues.

These researcher-practitioners use diverse frames to explore particular kinds of developmental work, in all of these they both distance themselves from it and go closer. In this research, I have chosen to explore developmental work by doing it with others. The movement between living and embodying it and looking at it from different distances has been important. For example Seppänen-Järvelä (1999) intentionally takes

distance to particular way of developing, and uses grounded theory to answer what kind of approach that is. It seems that building a suitable framework to researching particular developmental approaches means many difficult choices. One difficulty, but also its richness, is that every researcher-practitioner seems to develop, at the same time, a suitable frame for their approaches. Here, it seems important that research orientations and methods are somewhat congruent with developmental approach. Thus, it can describe it without being violent to it. On the other hand, it seems important that we can compare different approach, and discuss and develop them by using a somewhat shared vocabulary. I have chosen this kind of path, where I use a particular frame (Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010) to describe this emerging approach and compare it to other developmental approaches. This frame could serve as the way of doing a systematic description of a particular approach as a practical activity. Even the logics of development work is difficult to grasp and articulate (Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010, 3), it is valuable to articulate less coherent, on-going ways of doing this practical activity.

Thus, this thesis connects to the area of research where practitioners research their own practices or in some cases their developmental approach. I will explore a Co-Creative Process Inquiry as an emerging developmental approach. I would like to point out that the initial intention was not to describe and co-develop a new approach with participants. However, this project which based on working together and by being present at work brought this option. When we started, I already had a particular professional view towards developmental work (e.g. Takanen 2005), and it has undergone many subtle shifts in these five-six years of this research project. The most important shift has been to understand how reality-making happens *relationally*.

Personally, I view questions about what kind of developmental work we or I am doing, and more careful analysis about it, as an ethical matter: both a developer and other co-developers and participants (who are customers) should be capable to discuss these issues. Often in organisational life, some developmental view is taken-for-granted without any questioning in organisations: a reason to choose one is just because it is used in many organisations already or that it is new approach with big promise. In Finland, many governmental organisations also act as delivers of these new approaches and models and at same time try to check that these are evaluated well, and bring good results. This renewal project and co-inquiry also received a small part of its funding from these governmental financers. However, the participating organisation mostly paid for it by themselves.

1.3 The Research Task

How is it possible to develop different ways of being present at work? This research task includes questioning how it could become possible to be present in developmental work and also in doing action research as a whole, while also reporting, discussing outcomes and so on. By different ways I simply refer to ways that are multiple, different from each other. This means practically enlarging the ways that were felt to be dominating participant's everyday work. I use a word develop here to refer generally to developmental work. Developing is understood here as a particular way of doing developmental work that when we started I called the Co-Creative Process.

This research task invites opening up new possibilities of participating in relational reality-making in the here and now (e.g. Hosking 2010b). Here, being present in action means being present with what emerges while developing and also working in other ways. This means a special way by which 1) to focus on everyday activities and processes, and 2) to open up ways, and welcome whatever emerges in and between our bodies in a particular context in the here and now. Practicing being present in action means becoming open in each moment. It could mean that you become aware and observe how our experiences and realities are born from moment-to-moment. Thus, practicing being present could mean, for example, listening to bodily perception from moment-to-moment: what is happening to me and us – what kinds of thoughts, feelings, and sensing are coming and going? How is relating happening here and now? Where is the attention and what kind of reality /realities is being co-created right now? Concretely, I can ask myself and others in different situations, for example: what is this kind of listening or arguing inviting? What are these ways of working together creating just now?

I will explore this research task through five questions. First I ask how did we carry on developing in OGE? Second I ask: what kind of relating emerged in particular moments and then how was the soft self-other -relating invited in those moments? Third I ask how did we practiced being present in our developmental work? Fourth, I ask what kind of way of developing enabled different ways of being present at work? I describe this developmental approach and finally, I ask does this differ from other approaches and compare this approach to other similar kind of approaches.

1.4 Participating Organisation and Its Environment

Choosing how to paint a picture of this organisation and its environment was a difficult choice. I choose to paint first a bigger picture by looking from the perspective of governmental reforms. Then I describe this organisation and how we started together. I partly use their own official definitions (http://www.vm.fi/vm/en/12_government_as_employer/index.jsp), complemented with short personal discussions with one expert, Veli-Matti Lehtonen and the Director General, Teuvo Metsäpelto, and notions from my own research diary.

In many European and other countries, there has been an ideological movement, New Public Management (later NPM), which has strived for efficiency in the public sector (e.g. Dunleavy & Margetts 2006, Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). This movement has taken different forms in local movements by bringing private sector management ideas and business principles to public sector (e.g. Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). NPM includes an emphasis on performance, particularly through the measurement of outputs, a preference for small, specialised organisational forms over multi-functional forms, treating service users as customers, and using quality improvement techniques (Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) argue that there are also many other models in public sector reform with big statements. Since the late 1990s models and reforms have multiplied: these could be described with several key concepts such as, networks, partnership, joined up, transparency, and trust (Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). Recently many critical management scholars (e.g. Currie, Ford, Harding & Learmonth 2010) have set out alternative way to explore public managing, not from the managerial perspective as drive for efficiency, but from the perspective of power. They focus, for example, on tensions in this modernization agenda, such as the tension between centralization and decentralization. They argue that policy encourages flexibility, innovativeness and entrepreneurial actions, but at same time central government seeks to ensure standards and performance targets (Currie & co 2010, 4). These scholars also question why public services should be regarded as businesses.

The Finnish Ministry of Finance has for a long time had a strong role in Finnish society. One of their departments called the Human Resource Department, has a central role in building Finnish society's welfare as part of the Government and in many on-going reforms (e.g. Karhu 2006). It is also called the Government as Employer which is the name the people themselves prefer to use. In this organisation, the models from the business

world could be seen in many forms; for example, in result-oriented management and reinforced attention to developing management. OGE has a central role in implementing these initiatives in governmental organisations. The budgeting system of Finland was reformed by law in the early 1990s to a focus on result budgeting. This meant that there must be set goals and results for every organisation in the Government's budget proposal for Parliament (a personal discussion with Metsäpelto 2012). The Director General of OGE (a personal discussion with Metsäpelto 2012) views performance management followed from that approach. OGE takes a lead in result-oriented managing, for example, in the form of result-oriented development discussions. They have been and still are implementing the political programmes. Their customers are the other ministries and government organisations. It seems to me that this department has a complex role that is to listen to both political decision-makers and their customers (the state's operational units, such as other ministries), and work in many different roles. In some tasks, they can partner with their customers, and in others they give advice and legal rules. This action research project enabled them to rethink their role, and also their ways of work with other governmental organisations and other partners. They started to question their power over stance – knowing answers on behalf of others, and changed their ways of relating with others.

OGE aims that government *“agencies, which serve citizen's, enterprises and communities, are innovative and forerunners in their own task areas.”* (http://www.vm.fi/vm/en/12_government_as_employer/index.jsp). Even the primary responsibility for personnel and for good management of human resources lies in operational units, and this department supports this by making definitions of policy and the development of human resources. OGE also works as a party to collective agreements alongside other national central organisations. Some of these experts, who work in OGE, are trying to manage human resources in order to advance the service capacity and efficiency of operational units in their tasks. They prepare and implement State personnel policy, draft related legislation, evaluate personnel cost in the budget, and develop personnel administration information systems and statistics. One example of their multitude tasks is increasing Government's attractiveness as an employer. This is based on a belief of tightening competition in the labour force: *In order to attain competent personnel the Government tends to its image as employer by increasing the attractiveness of its tasks and assignments by modifying its salary systems into more encouraging forms, by investing in a positive working atmosphere and by increasing the personnel's development possibilities*

(http://www.vm.fi/vm/en/12_government_as_employer/index.jsp). These multiple tasks were carried out by three internal units; called the personnel policy unit, the collective agreement unit, and the research services unit.

Starting renewing as co-inquiry in OGE

“OGE started this internal renewal process in order to improve the well-being of its people in times of tightening budgets and to maintain OGE’s capability to deliver the services that were expected from it despite having less people for it” (Metsäpelto 24.2.2012). This project started from within the organisation; it was not ordered from above in the hierarchy. One of initiators was their in-house developer, Pilvi Pellikka. At that time, there were 44 people, and the Management of Ministry of Finance expected a reduction of ten positions over a few years. Most of these were high educated jurists, economists and other social scientists and well-educated assistants. I will speak of all of them as experts. This development work, which was conducted as an action research, was prepared as an emerging co-inquiry with open-ended intentions towards *“renewing an empowering culture”* as participants put it at that time. We started with a 1,5 year period co-inquiry, and thereafter, participants continued mostly themselves and I supported them when needed over the next 1,5 year period during which there were also communal co-inquiry sessions.

In our first meetings managing group described a need of new ways of acting with customers, some work well-being challenges and some dissatisfaction with management at the time we started this project. In this situation, the managing group was open to new ways of developing. This group was inspired by dialogical and participative ways, working as a learning organisation and, for example, U-theory which is expressed as an awareness-based social technology towards transformation (Scharmer 2007), and by enabling empowerment (later re-named Co-Creative Process, Takanen 2005). On the other hand, they wanted to start by making their work processes better. They knew that they had to reduce ten positions slowly through natural retiring processes within a few years period. Thus, the situation will be that they will have as much work as before, but less people to do it. Similar kinds of situations were found everywhere in governments organisations, derived from a productivity programmes which the Finnish Financial Ministry itself was promoting.

In this department, work well-being was self-evaluated to be quite low in that time, and there was some dissatisfaction towards managing and leading. Many people also expected that a manager group would solve these

problems in some way (the communal day 11/2006, a research diary). Some participants expressed that they “*are forced to find new ways of acting*” because through working in earlier ways, these situations no longer worked. I was asked to facilitate this cultural renewal whatever it could become. They believed that they could find these new ways by themselves if someone facilitated the process. So, I was not asked to bring any solution to productivity challenges or other managing challenges; they were not using that kind of language with me. They had made many developmental projects as a working community. They also saw these projects as a continuum where they intentionally left time to make this develop without consultants. I saw them as open-minded pioneers (the term that they used) in the public sector who struggled with their ways of acting which seem to me very hierarchical, even though they had had developed notion of the learning organisation for years.

It seemed to me that these experts in OGE planned and tried to implement many kinds of reforms in governmental organisations, but were not used to listening to their own experiences or even those of their customer’s if such were not in objective form, as they put it. Experiential views were not so respected, and starting from within was somewhat unknown to them. However, in 2007 when we started, they were starting to struggle with reducing personnel, which was the result of the productivity programme. From one point of view, this seemed to offer the possibility to start to listen to our everyday experiences, and rethink ways of acting. It seemed there was the possibility to get connected even more closely with the same every-day struggles that their customer organisations were experiencing.

1.5 Resonating with Co-operative Inquiry and a Relational Constructionist View

Emergence means that the questions may change, the relationships may change, the purposes may change, what is important may change. This means action research cannot be programmatic and cannot be defined in terms of hard and fast methods. (Reason 2006, 197)

Understanding action research as a process that grows, develops, shifts and changes over time seemed a good starting point to this research. At this moment, this research process could be described as a simplified 3-phase project where every phase overlaps with each other. However, this sounds

more intentional and linear than it felt to me and the other participants. The first phase is viewed as a co-inquiry in the organisational context (December 2006 to December 2009). The second phase is narrated as co-writing a story of this developmental process (in the years 2009-2010). The third phase is labelled as writing the thesis and constructing outcomes (2007-2012).

Reason and Bradbury (2006) describe that action research is a participatory and democratic process that develops practical knowing for meaningful practical purposes. The purpose of an emergent process is to empower individuals and communities who participate in it. As an evolving process, it could be seen as a process like coming to know, which is rooted in everyday experiences. Hence, knowledge is viewed as a verb – knowing – rather than a noun. But what forms could this kind of action research take? Let me look at this together with Peter Reason. I found his way of expressing what action research could be, very inviting. So, I took his written thoughts (Reason 2004) and started to discuss it with him.

Reason: *Sometimes, immediate practice is what is most important... But sometimes in action research what is most important is how we can help articulate voices that have been silenced. How do we draw people together in conversation when they did not before? How can we create space for people to articulate their world in the face of power structures, which silence them? (Reason 2006, 199).*

Terhi: *Yes, we (first I, and later we) started to make space for those voices by asking everyone to participate and share dialogue together about what they want to renew. But there were also other voices in everyone that seemed to be silenced: voices that have all kinds of feelings, from fears to enthusiasm. I didn't find it particularly needed to articulate power structures, but just to make space to create light, enabling structures (see also Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009) which are allowing everyone to participate. Thus, a power with stance became possible instead of some earlier power over structures.*

Reason: *Sometimes, action research will be about finding ways to open ourselves to different sorts of realities, or finding different ways of telling stories. The Western mind, it is often said, is hugely individualistic, and that individualism drives the frenzied consumerism that is Western capitalism, with terrible consequences for the majority of the human world and more than just the human world. Maybe action research could explore how the Western mind can open itself to a more relational, participatory experience. Sometimes action research will be more about, what is worthwhile here, what should we be attending to? (Reason 2006, 199-200).*

Terhi: *These words "finding ways to open ourselves to different realities" and "finding different ways of telling stories" touches me because they describe so well, what we have been doing. However, I would prefer not to use the word "finding", because there is something ready to be found. I would like to speak about constructing or co-creating by underlining that*

we are participating in it. For example, multiple ways of telling stories could be seen as an open invitation to co-create realities differently together. I also stopped to listen to your questions: “what is worthwhile here, what should we be attending to”. The first big question is very practical when you ask a question about “attending”. We (I and the other participants in the support group) have learned from our experiences that attention is very strongly shaping our realities, so it is important to be aware about what we are attending – for example, when we are formulating questions with participants.

Reason: *And sometimes action research will be about creating tentative beginnings of inquiry under very difficult circumstances, planting seeds that may emerge into large fruits. (Reason 2006, 200).*

Terhi: *That’s so beautifully said – it appreciates our incompleteness and meaning of small acts which embody what we value. It touches the spirit of this kind of inquiry which we have been trying to do. It felt often that we were just creating the beginning of inquiry and many participants reflected on our process by using metaphors like “planting” and “taking care of these seeds”.*

This short “dialogue” opens up here many ways of viewing how this particular kind of action research could be understood, and how I see this research. By appreciating this particular action research tradition, which is based participatory worldview (Reason & Bradbury 2006), and particularly Heron’s Co-operative Inquiry (Heron 1996, see also Reason 1999, 2003), this study also attempts to create a space for the possibility of participative change work by creating power with practices. By power with practices I refer to ways of working together relationally engaging in ways which invite everyone to participate as equals. Thus, they are not based on a power over stance, in the sense, that there are no expert knowledge producers, who exercise *power over* others through their expertise (e.g. Gaventa & Gornwall 2006, Park 2006, 74). This includes considering myself as one participant, and other participants as co-inquirers and co-subjects (see Heron 1996), and more broadly as co-creators who are making realities together (not just by themselves but with others in a particular context).

This co-inquiry started from participants and their ways of acting and thus participating in. As a co-inquirer, I have regarded all the people at the Office for the Government as Employer as co-inquirers. Before this action research project started we had worked one day together as a whole community. This helped to hear all participants’ voices and make the choice, does this way of working fit to this context. It gave me a picture of what kind of questions participants connected to organisational renewing and their work. As an action researcher I worked, at the same time, as a co-creative facilitator of renewal process. By facilitating or enabling I refer to making space for the participants (including myself) to participate, making

space for different ways of being present in action without emphasising my expertise. Speaking about “making space” is one way of describing open-way multiple, enabling practices that invite emergence and new ways of acting. Thus, it is not so much *making* in the sense of striving for, but allowing and inviting new possibilities. Making space could be viewed as one key skill of facilitation which could be carried out, for example, by stopping, orienting, attending, listening carefully and letting new ways of acting emerge, and so on.

Being present in inquiring meant suspending theorising and language dominance in the phase of co-inquiring. It felt important to release ourselves from *the dominance* of language and analysing. So I tried to make space for different knowing forms of the action research process (see also Heron 1996, Reason & Bradbury 2006), including embodied, experiential, intuitive and emotional ways of knowing. In this task, I have followed here Heron’s (1996) Co-operative Inquiry (see also Reason 1999, 2003). However, releasing myself from the dominance of language has been challenging work in writing, because I have to operate with some concepts telling this story. I have tried to balance this by bringing our experiential and presentational knowing here, which could make this story-making flow and on-going instead of being fixed, and inviting the reader to read not only in a conceptually-oriented way, but listening to the spirit behind the story.

“*How can we do inquiry and change work in relationally engaging ways here and now*” asks McNamee and Hosking (Hosking 2010b, McNamee & Hosking 2012). I found critical relational constructionism (Hosking 2005, 2007b, 2007c, 2010b) resonated with this participative stance because it also gives radical implications to change work that help to formulate and express the ways of working from within. Criticality has been reconstructed from a relational constructionist stance by opening up new ways of making inquiry as change work (see McNamee & Hosking 2012). Relational constructionism centres on processes in which relational realities are constructed rather than centring on mind and “real” reality (Hosking 2010b, 228). Thus it aims at transcending both objective–subjective–dualism and real–relativist dualism, seeing them as cultural–historical and local stories (Hosking 2010b, 228). A particular kind of inquiry could be seen as a process that (re)creates particular realities and relations (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 46). When inquiry is seen as an on-going process in which relational realities are (re)constructed it becomes possible to see that inquiry could be change work.

Even though this inquiry was not grounded explicitly in the relational constructionist view when we started co-inquiring in this organisation, I had many beliefs that could be understood as taking that kind of stance. Gergen and Hosking (2006) have described how social constructionism (and also relational constructionism) has been affected by many beliefs and practices which has roots in Buddhist philosophy and psychology. All three example of my beliefs, have been inspired by social constructionism and Buddhist philosophy. These views helped me to express my experiences of participating in this world. Later, you will discover how these beliefs were embedded in the ways I worked with others, for example in practicing being present in action. One strong belief that we are actually co-creating reality (at the time I spoke about one reality, which could be constructed in many ways) together from moment-to-moment. The second belief that resonated with this stance was the idea of relational responsibility (e.g. McNamee & Gergen 1999, McNamee 2009) without knowing this concept, just speaking about the responsibility of the process of on-going co-creation. The third belief, which also connected strongly with the practical theory of change work (Hosking 2010b), was underlining the here and now and in action and in time, which seems close to being present in action.

1.6 What Kind of Research Is Needed Here?

In this chapter, I have described how I have positioned this as an action research that is based on participatory ideas and in close relation with the critical relational constructionist approach. I have chosen to relate with action research, which underlines co-inquiry and participation. This choice enables doing research as an emergent process from the here and now where co-inquirers co-develop inquiry practices. On the other hand, relational constructionism as a metatheory and particular kind of research orientation works well here because it enables exploring being present as a relational processes in everyday action. It brings conceptual devices to analyse a different kind of encountering where different ways of being present emerge. The research task of this research is described as developing ways of being present at work. These relations to action research, particularly Co-operative Inquiry and relational constructionism, have helped me to express research orientations that I will next briefly bring together.

Let me next bring all these research orientations together, which could possibly enable co-creating multiple ways of being present in action as a research task. I have tried to create valuable research:

- a) by participating in reality-making where we focus on organisational, cultural renewing, which includes ourselves
- b) with participants who are considered as co-inquirers, and particularly co-creators
- c) not strongly separating inquiry and change work (see McNamee & Hosking 2012)
- d) and taking both as emerging processes (where there is no master plan first)
- e) with practical ways that resonate with being present in action, allowing and inviting different ways of knowing and appreciating local knowing.

In my way of participating this inquiry is connected to particular way of living by practicing being present in action. What follows from that is that this research task is not considered as a conceptually intriguing problem to analyse, but opening the possibilities to co-create realities together in our encounterings. Inquiry is viewed here as questioning and listening, which forms relations and realities (Hosking 2004, 15). Thus, questioning is not regarded as finding out about some pre-existing reality, but as forming potential, which could enlarge possible ways of being in a relationship (Hosking 2004, 15).

I have narrated this thesis as three movements underlining this story as a research journey that could be viewed as on-going relational processes of reality-making. These three movements are called: 1) Grounding and connecting to the field, 2) Co-creating through development work and co-inquiry, 3) Re-relating with. The first part of this dissertation (chapters 1-3) presents part one as a movement I call grounding and connecting to the field. In this first introductory chapter, I have described a research task and what kind of research is needed to developing different ways of being present. This inquiry has been presented as follows: 1) as a particular kind of action research which appreciates co-inquiry and participative knowing and 2) in relation to critical relational constructionism as a specific, radical form of social constructionism. Chapter 2 will explore participative and present-oriented approaches to change work and mindfulness studies in an organisational field. I prepared this chapter combining my own search and experiences to these theoretical ideas. In chapter 3 I will share my research journey and some important choices in the form of dialogue. Thus,

movement 1 grounds and connect this research to its many fields, and enables to then make a story about the co-inquiry phase when I was doing the development project in OGE.

Movement 2 "Co-creating through development work and co-inquiry", contains chapters 4 and 5. In chapter 4, I will represent (as a construction) the starting points of development project in OGE, what it was about, what kind of development arenas and practices were used or co-developed. I also tell what kind of research material it produced, and how I have used this to tell the story about this development project in chapter 5. In this chapter, I tell the story of our development work over a three-year period. I have structured afterwards this journey to four partly overlapping phases. In this work, I took strong support from our co-written story (Takanen & Petrow 2010). These four phases are seen here as particular processes of relational reality-making: becoming aware, letting go, attuning, and practicing. Thus, this story answers a research question: how did we carry on developmental work together in OGE? This way of structuring could make it sound more intentional and linear that it felt to me and participants, but in this form it became more readable. Movement 2 stories our development work, and thus makes possible to move on other outcomes of this study.

Movement 3, "Re-Relating with", continues where the story of development work ends. The story actually brought some hints to how our relating shifted, and I will continue with this theme from the relational constructionist stance. Thus, in chapter 6 I will describe what kind of relating emerged in particular moments in development work, and analyse how the soft self-other relating was invited in those moments. Then, chapter 7, I will focus on how did we practice being present in our developmental work which partly made these kinds of soft self-other relating possible. In Chapter 8, I will show that this way of development work was not only about few practices which made it possible to relate differently, but how there arises a new developmental approach. Thus I describe our way of working with change as an emerging present-oriented approach called as Co-Creative Process Inquiry. Then I continue by asking does this approach differ from other approaches and compare analysis with AI and CI. This new approach called CCPI is described here as one possible way of inviting different ways of being present here and now. In this work, I use what I have learned from my supervisor, Keijo Räsänen: how to elaborate developmental approaches by asking four questions: why, what, how, and who. These questions helped to reflect upon moral, political, tactical and personal stances of developmental approaches or any other

kinds of practical activity (Räsänen 2007, Räsänen 2010, Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010). This frame has offered a critical and concrete way to also rethink this way of working, and it has made me more aware of different aspects of it in relation to some other approaches. Finally, in chapter 9 I will discuss what kind of outcomes this research bring and what valuable insights this research brings to mindfulness studies in the field of change/development work, to studies of developmental work and what other openings become possible. This chapter is mostly based on dialogues which have happened between many people who have been closely interested in this research.

2 Exploring Mindful and Present-Oriented Approaches to Change Work

In this chapter, I will continue the story how my professional path, as one kind of developer, led me to rethink change work and start to wonder and explore how to develop ways of being present at work. I will review my readings about mindfulness studies in the change/developmental work field where being present at work seems to be scarcely researched. Relational everyday perspectives towards being present at work were also missing because mindfulness is mostly understood as an individual skill or a state of mind. This led me ask what could follow if we understand being present as relating in everyday encounterings in organisational contexts. This question became possible and meaningful from a relational constructionist stance, which offered a vocabulary to rethink change work as on-going reality-making in the here and now.

2.1 Reflecting My Way of Working as a Developer

In working with all these people rushing about doing their job in different organisations, often feeling dissatisfaction and powerlessness, I had started to ask how can we, together, stop to see what we are actually co-creating in these taken-for-granted ways? What if we need a moment to listen to what is valuable to us? Most of these people that I worked with were used to change (work) that comes from the outside as given. They are used to *“having well-being challenges, implementation problems when new ways of acting are needed, needing to produce more, needing to find different ways of working that fit better to on-going change in their operational environment”*. They often wanted something *“radically different”* as they expressed it, because they felt that earlier change programmes did not work so well, or only managers and HRD people saw them as working. Listening to these disappointments in change work convinced me even more that there could not be any universal model for doing change work. Actually, I started to ask: Do we need to *try to make* changes? And what if change is happening all the time? So how could we carrying on change work? What if we just let change happen by being present in action?

I have worked with many kinds of organisations for about thirteen years, learning with many different people, and I am still looking at myself as a learner – not as a knowing expert or consultant. These encounters with others have shifted and deepened my ways of working all the time. On the other hand, my Master's educational studies have also given me the resources to develop a practical approach to change work because I am used to reflecting on such work activities while participating within them and afterwards. But let me now tell how this professional path started and how it was connected to my life circumstances and the way of relating with this world. About 15 years ago, a particular study book had a great impact on my life: *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Berger & Luckmann 1966). At that time, I felt like I was losing connection to this seemingly ready-made and distancing world; a place where I could not find my place. Experts in the therapeutic field diagnosed this as depression, and I started to work with myself in cognitive therapy for three years. At the same time, I wondered how do I know what reality really is, could we even know anything about it, how are we actually making it, could it be that we are just fixing it by freezing it in our ways of seeing? Could it be possible to create another kind of reality? To me these felt like deep questions about possibilities to participate in this world more meaningfully and how I would like to relate to this world that seems to me to be ready-made. Could I see how my ways of thinking and acting are social-cultural? And a few years later, I saw these same questions in organisational life: how are people constructing their reality there? Would they have other possibilities? Could I help them make space to create together other possibilities? What is really meaningful for these people?

When I started my professional path as a developer, I saw myself as one kind of an adult educator who helps people to serve their customers in a dialogical way and to work together as learners and to develop a better working community together. I named myself a learning organisation consultant because I had the opportunity to work in an organisation with the aim of becoming a learning organisation. At that time, I was interested in reading about action science (e.g. Argyris & Schön 1992, Argyris 1997), adult learning, and learning organisation theories and models (Argyris 1997, Senge 1990). Experienced workers in public sector organisations helped me to see that the only way of working with them was through listening and appreciating their experiences and getting to know their ways of working, and making space for what they value as important because they know what works in their context. Slowly I reconstructed my position as a professional, and moved towards seeing myself as a facilitative co-creator with other participants. This positioning was an ethical question to me: how to

participate with others in everyday reality-making? Thus, I have never seen myself as an expert consultant, who should know answers or solutions. However, there were many subtle shifts from already knowing something – attitude towards opening up to what is emerging in the change process and giving more and more space to local knowing, participants' knowing.

In these years, I developed one kind of practical theory (see Hosking 2010b) of personal and organisational renewal process, which all these change projects and people who I met in different organisations influenced. I called this just simply empowering (Takanen 2005), then enabling empowerment, and little bit later the Co-Creative Process approach, which is based on beliefs such as we are co-creating our future here and now with our thoughts, emotions and ways of acting, and we are responsible for what kind of reality we are co-creating together. Behind this was a dialogue with some empowerment theories (e.g. Siitonen 1999), Buddhist philosophy (e.g. Nhat Hanh 1987), social constructionist ideas, and also the popular personal growth literature (e.g. Bennett-Goleman 2001). I described earlier this approach as follows (Takanen 2011):

In CCP work, I try to facilitate emergent processes of renewal both within and between individuals and the community/network and their customers. Such an approach challenges the dominant, rational-linear view of development and gives actors new roles – at the centre of their own renewal. This transcends taken-for-granted boundaries in work life – personal life. It also accords the facilitator a place as a human being and participant alongside other human beings, going through learning and growth processes with other participants. It disassembles the boundaries of the consultant/customer by taking the role of a partner in co-creation, so that the 'customer' means the entire organisation, not just those in charge. This approach is not top-down, but emerges from various centres. It expands in a linear way of thinking towards a cyclical, spiral process which embraces emergence. Its baseline differs from mainstream change theories in its worldview and in its perception of organisations, including the people who live in them, within a global environment. It challenges us to be aware of the responsibility of what kind of thoughts, emotions and actions we co-create.

At the same time as this research project started, I was challenged to express even more explicitly and systematically the way I worked from the perspective of practice theoretic framework (Räsänen 2007, Räsänen 2010, Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010). I wrote an essay about this practical activity that I started to call at that time enabling empowerment, and later re-

named Co- Creative Process (CCP). The term practical activity means here “*a specific set of material and embodied, social activities that make sense to participants in this activity set, and possibly to knowledgeable outsiders in terms of the four issues*”: How to do this? What to do? Why do this and in this way? Who? (Räsänen 2010, Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010). What I found special in this way of looking was that these questions were not set as mere analytic devices, but were set to make sense of practical ways of working. In this case, they served the self-reflective process which enabled me to make clearer what is this approach, and particularly what it is not. These questions helped me to reformulate this particular way of working many times in subsequent years.

At this time I was strongly engaged in the movement called Empowering Finland, which aimed to bring together practitioners who were working with empowerment issues mostly in organisational contexts. This open movement included many diverse participative approaches to working with others and oneself. In 2005, this became the empowerment movement, where practitioners shared their ideas, practices and wanted to enable a cultural shift in organisations towards participation. We also established an association that aims to empowering people and create cultural opportunities to enable these kinds of processes. We had a three years project called Empowering Work Cultures that was funded by The Finnish Workplace Development Programme TYKES, which also supported my research work for a short time. *TYKES is based on the view that the most effective way of generating new innovative solutions for working life is close cooperation and interaction between workplaces, researchers, consultants, public authorities and the social partners* (http://www.mol.fi/mol/en/01_ministry/05_tykes/index.jsp).

Working in this project, was not just a chance to work together, but to learn together and practice our ideals. When we worked with this framework with empowerment practitioners, I started to see how the Co-Creative Process approach was different to others’ ways of working in an empowering manner. Many practitioners in the empowerment movement in Finland underlined humanism and positivity in working with organisations, which aims at releasing or fostering individual potential. Positivity thinking originates from positive psychology. I appreciated this but found sometimes the ways of using these ideas somehow narrow in relation to complex everyday encounterings in organisations that often included frustration, criticalness and cynicism. How to bring to there positivity, and why? To me it felt important to accept everything that emerges in change processes, not judging it as positive or negative but

meaningful, and not only focusing on that what participant's value as positive. This respect for emerging, being present in what is emerging and how it is happening interested me, and it was at the heart of the CCP approach. I also started to rethink about how this way of working included many concepts (like inner growth) that have roots in the humanistic tradition; but I did not label this approach as humanistic: it did not focus so much on individuals but community.

At that same time, other emerging movement also started with partly the same participants. Many of the practitioners wanted to establish and became part of the emerging Co-Creative Process Community that no one had planned. This movement started because ten colleagues, mostly entrepreneurs working in the area of coaching, were interested to deepen their own ways of working with Co-Creative Process, particularly in area of personal and group coaching. There was also one participant from OGE. Thus, in 2006, I started to enable other practitioners to learn together this way of working, and co-develop this approach further together with them. After that, there have been two other groups, and in 2012 we started the Co-Creative Process Inquiry in Organisational Contexts group with ten experienced developers or coaches.

At this time, I also re-read the spectrum of transformative change theories. These can be divided into theories that emphasise individual or organisational change or both (Hendersson 2002, 186). Hendersson (2002) organises these change theories by separating whether the focus lies on the internal process, e.g. the transition, or whether the focus is on external change. It seems that theories emphasising transition focus on individual learning and development, whereas theories emphasising external change focus on organisational change. Some theories combine individual and organisational change. Transformative learning theorists view critical reflection as a key component of change. They examine change from the perspective of individual learning and development. To me as a practitioner, underlining critical reflection, even when combined with action, seemed too narrow if reflection was understood as a cognitive process without giving space to emotional processes. This reading enabled me to define that in CCP approach the focus is both on the "internal" transformation of individuals and communities without separating them, and "external" change. Later, I found the way to express this in relational constructionist language.

I also found Scharmer's papers (2001a, 2001b), which introduced ideas of "*leading from the future as it emerges*" speaking about change work that

could potentially overcome this individual–organisational separation, and bring attention to on-going reality-making. The book *“The Presence”* (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski & Flowers 2004) brought idea of presencing in organisational contexts, which felt somehow to resonate with the CCP approach. Actually, there were many concepts that were similar to the CCP approach, and that come from Buddhist ideas; such as letting go and are connected to the psycho-phenomenological approach (Depraz & co 2003). I personally met Scharmer several times in Finland at public sector seminars for managers, and appreciated his way of introducing some radical ideas about leading and making transformation. Many leading people in OGE were very interested in these ideas, and we borrowed from them some concepts, such as microcosm, but they were understood and co-developed differently in our change work.

However, the U-theory (Scharmer 2007), a theoretical frame, came from a very different theoretical background. This social field theory makes 21 propositions about social systems that are fine-tuned and complex. What felt most problematic for purposes of this study was that it did not reflect the role of an action researcher or facilitator, and there was the notion that this kind of theorising seems to reproduce power over others because it does not give space to people, and it requires an expert scholar to understand and plan interventions based on social technology. However, I feel that this is perhaps not what Scharmer is aiming at because he seems to appreciate participative ways of working and encourages social change in ourselves and communities (see also Senge & co 2004). In these 5 years since the publication of the U-theory (Scharmer 2007), to my knowledge there are no published academic articles that use this frame in empirical cases. However, they will probably appear soon because many practitioners in the Society of Organizational Learning and the Presencing Institute use this special work and co-developed it further.

2.2 Participative Ways of Doing Change/Development Work?

Participative ways of doing change/development work are flourishing in the organisational field at the same time as those approaches that consider making changes as controlled, rational aims that should be implemented. There are also many ways to do change/development work as a co-inquiry with people in organisational contexts. I have chosen to briefly introduce

here two approaches that have similarities with the Co-Creative Process Approach. I will come back to these approaches later. One, Appreciative Inquiry (later AI) is narrated as a way of liberating the creative and constructive potential of organisations and human communities. This is enabled by unseating existing reified patterns of discourse, creating space for new voices and new discoveries, and expanding circles of dialogue to provide a community of support for innovative action (e.g. Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros 2008). This kind of approach underlines the positive core in the organisation. It argues a significant shift from “*traditional*” problem-solving methodologies (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros 2008, 6). AI practitioners present this approach as an organisation development (OD) process and an approach for change management. Even this approach has interested me as a developer due to its participative ways of working, and there are some critical questions that I have wondered. How is a positive theme constructed? Who is valuing that it as positive? Why does there seem to be positive–negative dimensions? How could this approach answer whether people need to encounter challenging themes that they feel are negative? What if participants act out of cynicism or frustration? Should it be reformulated as positive, and how do they do it? Even AI practitioners have answers to some of these, it seems that critical questions concerning power issues are often neglected in their handbooks. It also seems to me that that kind of ways inquiry, which leaves more space to emerging and which could also take form of negativity, criticism and cynicism, is also needed because these attitudes are common in many organisations.

Another participative approach as a form of action research is Co-operative Inquiry (Heron 1996, Heron & Reason 2006). It also appreciates local knowing and is driven from the participative worldview. It is narrated as a way of working with other people who have similar concerns/interests in order to understand your world, make sense of your life and develop new ways of looking at things and learn how to act, change things you may want to change and find out how to do things better. It includes four phases of reflection and action participants 1) agreeing on the focus of inquiry and planning action and procedures 2) becoming co-subjects: engaging in the actions agreed and observing, documenting 3) co-subjects become fully engaged with their action and experience 4) sharing their knowing in both presentational and propositional forms. This includes possibly developing new ideas or reframing them or rejecting and posing new questions. This way of inquiry has affected strongly how we have done this inquiry by inviting different ways of knowing. Heron (1996) views being present and open as an important inquiry skill. It means practicing empathy, resonance and attunement (Heron 1996). This inquiry could be viewed as a special

way of relating with others and the environment. However, Co-operative Inquiry has not developed from the perspective of change work in organisations (e.g. Heron 1996). It has been used and developed further mostly in small groups of practitioners who inquire about specific themes. This could also occur in organisational context, but has rarely used in long-term change projects.

2.3 Looking for Studies of Being Present in Organisational Context

Participative approaches (like AI) have perspectives of how to support people to change their ways of acting, appreciating local knowing and at the same time opening space for new ways of acting. Co-operative Inquiry also pays attention to being present, mindfulness, or paying heed to the moment-to-moment, *“to our continuous, participatory, creative, ever-changing empathic and unrestricted perceptual transaction with the world”* (Heron 1996, 117). In Co-operative Inquiry being present is looked at from the perspective of inquiry skills. It does not specifically speak about practicing being present in the organisational context.

I have tried to find approaches and practical theories that highlight the significance of *being present in action* (mindfulness), particularly as relational processes in everyday work including change work. I have had many experiences of how practices that enable being present in change work/development work, could support people to participate in the here and now in their everyday practices. However, it seems that this is still a largely unexplored area in the organisational field even in, for example, the psychotherapy field these practices and theories of mindfulness have already establish their place in the last decades (e.g. Grepmaier & co 2007). Mindfulness studies and empirical implementations are well-known and established in many therapy fields (e.g. Kabat-Zinn, Williams, Teasdale & Segal 2007, Kwee 2010, Siegel, Germer & Olendzki 2009). There is a *“third wave”* in behavioural and cognitive therapy where new psychotherapies like acceptance and commitment therapy (Hayes & Smith 2004) and dialectical behavior therapy flourish. However, therapy field studies are not applied in this study because they focus on one-to-one and small group processes, which differ from organisational developmental work.

One of the most well-known scientific studies on mindfulness is Jon Kabat-Zinn's work, which can be seen as a modernist psychological empirical research. He and his colleagues have studied mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn & co 2007) for several decades for the practical purposes of health and stress-relieving. They have developed, for example, an eight-week mindfulness programme (MSRI), which has been studied empirically. They conceptualise mindfulness as "*moment-to-moment, nonreactive, nonjudgemental awareness*". Some practitioners have also written about mindfulness practices in action from a more or less individual-psychological perspective (e.g. Epstein 1999, Reid 2009, Silsbee 2008, Spence, Gavanagh & Grant 2008). For instance, Zeidan and his colleagues (2010) have explored how mindfulness meditation improves cognition. Chaskalson (2011) who has practiced mindfulness himself over 35 years, has recently tried the MSRI programme in some organisations, but is yet to published research about it. Moreover, some action researchers (Chandler & Torbert 2003, Heron 1996) have spoken about being present, in other words "*the presence in present*" but I have not found articles about how they have practiced it in organisational contexts, particularly in change work. However, the Presencing Institute (see <http://www.presencing.com/>) has started to bring together "*action researchers who use awareness-based social technologies*" that could be understood as practicing being present or mindfulness even if the way of putting it sounds instrumental or at least technical.

Mindfulness seems to be a relatively new but expanding issue in the context of organisational and management studies (Dane 2011, 997, Weick & Putnam 2006). Emerging theorising around mindfulness in organisational contexts has increased in the last few years and has suggested how mindfulness is connected to many practically interesting sensibilities and skills. As such, it appears to be a potentially interesting, but as yet underdeveloped, theme. So, I will next briefly review this area of mindfulness in the organisational context, mostly from the theoretical point of view given that empirical studies are almost absent.

Weick and Putnam (2006) have separated Eastern and Western notions of mindfulness, which could help to understand some possible differences in studies. They argue that Eastern thought pays more attention to internal processes of the mind rather than the contents of the mind. Western thought pays attention to external events and contents of the mind. They give the example of Ellen Langer's (1989) work as a representation of Western treatments of mindfulness (Weick & Putnam 2006). Langer describes mindfulness as 1) active differentiation and refinement of existing

distinctions, 2) creation of new discrete categories out of the continuous streams of events and 3) a more nuanced appreciation of context and of alternative ways to deal with it (Langer 1989, Weick & Putnam 2006, 276).

The original concept of mindfulness, which comes from Buddhist philosophy, seems to be neglected in many mindfulness studies. There it is understood as a very multidimensional concept, which has been interpreted differently in diverse Buddhist traditions. What is common to all these Buddhist interpretations is that *mindful* does not refer just to individual cognitive processes or states but to practicing or cultivating our capacity to focus on every moment (Kuan 2008 in Kwee 2011, 6). Kwee (2011, 6) interestingly shows how the original concept can also be translated as “*heartful*”, and how in this sense the mind and heart are not separated, which implies how cognitive processes are seen as emotional processes. Thus, what Weick and Putnam (2006) call Western conceptualisations appear very narrow when they underline conceptual differentiation and other cognitive processes. One more experientially focused example of content-oriented conceptualisation is as follows: *the subjective ‘feel’ of mindfulness is that of heightened state of involvement and wakefulness or being in the present* (Langer & Moldoveanu 2000b, 1-2). However, these conceptualisations also seem narrowing because they come from an individualistic perspective and underline active cognitive operations on perceptual inputs from the external environment (e.g. Langer 2000b, Brown & Ryan 2003). What follows from this kind of thinking are the applications that understand mindfulness as individual property that can be measured by the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (Brown & Ryan 2003, 822). There, mindfulness is assessed as a particular mind state over time that has individual differences.

Jordan, Messner and Becker (2009, 465) define mindfulness as “*a state of mind or mode of practice that permits the questioning of expectations, knowledge and the adequacy of routines in complex and not fully predictable...settings*”. They point out how reflection-in-action is closely linked to mindfulness: it is seen as a prerequisite to reflection-in-action. Even though they speak that mindfulness could be regarded as a collective or organisational phenomenon, it still takes an individual perspective: it is assumed to be grounded in individual mindful behavior (Jordan & co 2009, 469). The short history of this concept in organisational studies can partly explain this kind of view: mindfulness was first seen in the theoretical organisational literature as an individual learning process characterised by a heightened awareness of the specific circumstances in a given situation (Jordan, Messner and Becker 2009, 466). It has compared the state of

mindlessness to an individual state, where an individual refuses to acknowledge or attend to a thought, emotion, motive, or object of perception (Brown & Ryan 2003, 823). The Buddhist background to this concept and this kind of practice has been ignored in this view, where mindfulness is simply a mind state as opposed to a mindless state. Summarising the above, organisational literature tends to focus on mindfulness as content rather than mindfulness as a process (Weick & Putnam 2006, 280).

More interesting than theorising on what mindfulness is, can be how it shows up empirically. There are many notions of how mindfulness emerges in an organisational context. I will next bring together these practically interesting notions about mindfulness. They are connected to:

- sensitivity to action and consequences; less attention to plans and more attention to emergent outcomes (Weick & Putnam 2006)
- a greater sensitivity to one's environment (Langer & Moldoveanu 2000b, 2)
- more openness to new information (Langer & Moldoveanu 2000b, 2)
- enhanced awareness of multiple perspectives in problem-solving (Langer & Moldoveanu 2000b, 2)
- enhanced performance and well-being (Marianetti & Passmore 2010).

Hunter and McCormick (2008) have presented their exploratory study about mindfulness in the workplace. They have examined what kind of effects mindfulness has on people's work lives by interviewing eight managers and professionals. Their analysis suggests that people who practice mindfulness in the form of meditation practice have, for example, more external awareness at work, are more accepting of their work situations, and have a more internal locus of evaluation (Hunter & McCormick 2008).

Most of these mindfulness studies in organisational contexts also seem to be theoretically-oriented without a connection to everyday organisational life. However, how mindfulness is perceived to show up, gives us many possibilities to explore it further in action in organisational contexts. I close this short review by organising four kinds of unneeded separations from these theoretical constructions of mindfulness. First, there is some kind of mind-body separation. Often, mindfulness is taken purely as a cognitive action. Also the "*mind*" in this concept leads us to thinking that this is concerned with mind, but not with mind-body. This includes that embodiment has not been taken seriously. Second, an individual-social

dichotomy has been constructed. Mindfulness is mostly taken from an individualistic sense. However, there are a few exceptions, for example, discussions about collective mindfulness as the capacity of groups and individuals to be acutely aware of significant details (Weick, Sutcliffe & Obstet 2000, 34). Third, mindfulness is mostly understood as a substance (like a particular mind state) not as a relational process. Fourth, mindfulness is rarely researched in everyday working contexts. When it is researched, it is seen as a mindfulness programme where it is used as tool (e.g. Passmore 2009), which for example develops individuals' skills or leaders' capacity or efficacy. What appear to be missing, are relational everyday perspectives where it is studied as a relational phenomena in the middle of organisational life. My study could be considered as this kind of approach. Thus I will ask; could it lead to different consequences if mindfulness is seen instrumentally or as an appreciated way of living itself? Does it lead to different consequences if mindfulness practices are formal in form of pre-planned programme, or if participants are practicing it spontaneous ways in their every challenges?

In this research, I have chosen to speak of being present *in action* (which means here: at work) instead of mindfulness. That is because in academic mindfulness literature mindfulness as a theoretical concept is mostly seen as a noun (like an individual mind state or cognitive style). It also refers to mind, which seems confusing because it is not the only possibility to situate this phenomenon in the mind, which often is understood as brain (and thus separated from the whole body, and often also relational contexts). Here being present in action is reconstructed as a verb – as practical, being present, being mindful *in relational everyday action*. This includes that practicing being present is seen as being aware moment-to-moment, and thus it is situated in process. Being present in action is viewed as an intentional process, which is based on non-judgemental intention: it does not separate, for example, positive and negative. This comes close to Kabat-Zinn's definition (1990), but what is different is underlining it as a relational process in interaction. This choice serves the practical orientation to explore and co-develop together multiple ways of being present in action. Thus, it becomes meaningful to understand being present as a phenomenon that can take different ways. Different ways of being present are different ways of relating.

2.4 Present-Oriented Change Work from a Relational Constructionist View

In this research I have been asking how to develop different ways of being at work. Thus, it seemed important to focus on how to do change work in a present-oriented way in everyday encounters. Everyday encounters are viewed here as spaces where people are (re)making relational realities. If we pay attention to on-going encountering in open way, we are practicing being present in action. Thus, we became aware of how our thoughts, emotions and actions are emerging in these situations and co-constructing particular ways of seeing and acting in relations. How we relate to or with each other in these situations is connected to how we respond to ethical challenges (Pavlovich & Krahnke 2012, 131) in everyday action. For example, are we relating as equals and supporting everyone's participation? A particular kind of relating supports co-operation, sharing resources and helping others (Pavlovich & Krahnke 2012, 131). I will introduce this kind of relating later in this chapter as soft self-other ways of relating (Hosking 2010b). Hosking (2010b) has formulated this kind of relating as emerging, practical theory that enables building options where change work is not viewed as a planned, rational action to be implemented but is instead relational on-going reality-making (e.g. Hosking 2004, 2006a, 2010b).

Let me elaborate on what can follow from *practicing* this kind of relating in change/development work. It leads to a radically different way of doing change/development work (see also Hosking 2004). First, it can give power to participants by enabling starting from within. Second, soft self-other relating can invite people to see how they are re-constructing realities and thus reinforce their possibilities to participate in ways they find meaningful. Thus, this kind of relating can invite new ways of seeing and acting. It underlines meaning of acting from the here and now because it is the only moment when we can make a difference. Third, it can enable us to become more aware of how we are reconstructing not only relational realities *but at the same time ourselves* in action. Fourth, possibilities to relate differently mean the potential opportunities to participate differently in the sense of taking together more relational responsibility of our ways of acting.

Next, I will briefly elaborate on what relationality and relating means in relational constructionist discourse, and then introduce how change work can be viewed from a relational constructionist stance. As Hosking and McNamee (2006, 27) have underlined, relationality does not mean just common-sense e.g. "*you mean relationships are important*". Neither does it mean one person communicating with other(s) in the sense of inter-

personal processes between already known actors (Hosking 2006, 11). It is not about individual cognitions or mind operations, but co-ordination or co-construction of activities. If we locate meanings in the minds of individuals, we assume that the individual could control meanings. Thus, relating is not constructed as a relationship between two or more entities. *It is constructed as a process where all identities and realities are emerging together.* Modernist change work approaches embrace a very particular notion of the human subject as a bounded and separate existence possessing a singular Self with a knowing mind that relates to the world and re-presents it in language (Hosking 2011, 51). Practically, this can lead to change work approaches, where we think that we can *not* design the *right* organisational intervention (Hosking & McNamee 2007, 28).

But if we take this kind of relational stance, how can change work be seen? First at all, change is viewed as on-going processes of organising (Hosking 2004, 1). Hosking (2010b, 232) has outlined the ways of how change-work is necessarily reconstructed in the discourse of relational constructionism. From the relational constructionist stance, it means that 1) both stability and change are on-going, 2) inter-actions always construct, 3) constructing both both/and and either/or, 4) constructing is political (Hosking 2010b). Let me open these up further. When both stability and change are seen as on-going, change can be theorised as on-going (re)construction without a beginning or end. In this stance, inter-actions always construct. Inter-actions (which are not understood as happening between entities) are viewed as the locus of stability and change, and they are seen as the unit of analysis (Hosking 2010b). This also means the potential to reconstruct inquiry and intervention, not as separate processes, but a place where relational realities are potentially shifting. Constructing is seen both as “*both/and*” and “*either/or*”. Power aspects in relational processes are seen as demanding exploration. This means, for example, consideration to why some ways of acting and speaking gain stability and are not questioned. These kinds of strong subject-object relations and power over practices, like controlling and enrolling, are seen only as one possible construction here. From this view comes about the following question: what other possibilities can we create in change work?

2.5 Coming Home – Change Work and Soft Self-Other Relating

Finding the relational constructionist view of change work, which invites soft self-other relating (Hosking 2010b), felt like coming home. I found the meta-theoretic stance and a view of change work that resonated with this inquiry and its present-oriented orientations. It looked as if our way of working with change and inquiring can be fruitfully examined in terms of change work that invites soft self-other relating. This relation can not only take our work further, but potentially this study can also contribute to the practical theory, as I described above. I chose relational constructionism as meta-theoretical stance (figure 1) here because its vocabulary and practical orientations enable working in the here and now. It appreciates local realities and invites new possibilities/practices. This stance also resonates with action research, which centres on participation and the power with stance. By bringing inquiry and change work together, it helps to reconstruct change work in practically fruitful ways.

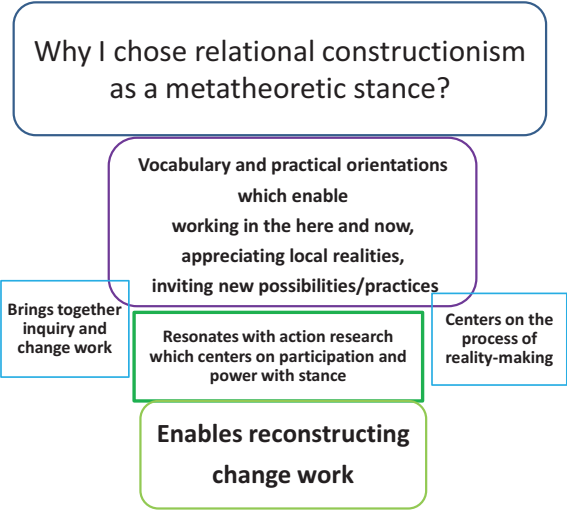


Figure 1. Why I chose relational constructionism as a metatheoretical stance

Hosking (2010b, 233) points out that in relational constructionism a critical interest requires bringing attention to inter-actions: “*what forms of life are invited, supported, or suppressed and how?*” Hosking (2010b) suggests that critical interest could mean here generating new possibilities and openings in the field of change work, not closing down by analysing problems or aiming for solutions. These generating possibilities can mean,

for example, supporting multiple local forms of life and change from within. Thus, change work can start within an organisation in relation with its customers and environment, and it can make space for what interests these people. In this kind of change work, critical interest is directed at how these processes might be reconstructed as soft self-other differentiations and a power within stance through appreciating participants' multiple local practices (Hosking 2010b). This can mean, for example, giving space to participants' ways of acting and their interests, and not trying to bring some change models from outside or knowing better than them what could work in their context.

So, what kind of change work engages people to work together? Hosking (2010b) has introduced a view of change work that invites soft self-other relating. It seems not to reproduce taken-for-granted change work practices: problematising and analysing, reproducing power over practices and up-to-down interventions. It produces the opportunity to see change work as a potentially transformative inquiry that engages participants and starts from within. Hosking (2010b, 234-235) has described five practical themes or orientations of non-self-other ways of relating, which she speaks elsewhere as soft self-other relating:

- 1) view all acts as potential contributions to influence,
- 2) accept multiple local rationalities in different but equal relation,
- 3) work in the present and with possibilities,
- 4) orient to transformation and
- 5) work with language and the senses.

In this kind of change work, "*sound qualities of processes*" are giving direction to how to work with others: a) in action and in time, b) in time here and now, c) in the middle of multiplicity and simultaneity, d) both being in and becoming, e) reciprocating–responsive relations (Hosking 2010b). But how can these kinds of practices be developed and what kind of practices can enable this kind of relating? There are many practical ways of organising where I and other are not separated strongly. Hosking and Kleisterlee (2009) speak, for example, about organising from openness and confidence in a particular context; a Buddhism inspired hospice. These are options to let go of instrumental relating that centres control, tries to reduce uncertainties and achieves some degree of closure (Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009, 8). Engaged organising means for example, dialogue and minimal structures, which are based on openness and compassion. Hosking and Kleisterlee (2009, 13-14) point to light structures, which provide enough but not too much structure. This means, "*providing a container*

that invites slow, open, coherent, in-the-present-moment performances to emerge”.

Hosking’s practical theory (Hosking 2010b) is not particularly a change work approach but a draft that invites other ways of relating other than strong subject-object relating, which opens possibilities to particular kinds of interaction that can be described as dialogical and relationally engaging. It does not define any fixed ways but opens up some themes, which are named practical orientations. That is understandable because, thus it can support and invite context-specific approaches that are starting from within. It does not suggest techniques, methods or particular steps. My participative research contributes to this discussion by describing how we did developmental work in a particular organisational context starting from within, and particularly analysing some moments of soft self-other relating and strong subject-object relating, and shifts between them. This study also brings many concrete examples of how being present in action can be invited in a particular context and how relating shifted. This describes one possible approach to this kind of change work that invites soft self-other relating by focusing on the here and now. This study also brings some openings to such ethical-practical concerns as: how to shift the power over stance towards a power to or power with stance; who should be considered as the (co)subjects in this way of working? And if they are people themselves in some organisations, how can they enable or invite this kind of change work? Is there a need for facilitating or how light structures are enabled? And, if outside facilitating is needed, how can this be done without a power over stance?

In this chapter, I first narrated my own professional path as a facilitator that led me rethink ways of doing change work and seeing the need of being present at work. Second, I summarised mindfulness studies in organisational and particularly change work literature with a conclusion that everyday perspectives are absent where being present is studied as relational phenomena in the middle of organisational life. Third, I have briefly visited two interesting ways of doing inquiry in organisations, AI and Co-operative Inquiry, which enable working from within. Lastly, I described the relational constructionist view, which enables reconstructing change work as relational processes and brings focus on relating here and now. I discussed why inviting soft-self-other-relating is needed in change work, and why I have chosen to use a relational constructionist frame to describe and analyse outcomes of this study. I have also set out further questions, which I will answer in the next chapters. These are a) what follows if mindfulness is regarded as a relational process in everyday change context

instead of understanding it an individual skill or a mind state which could be developed through mindfulness programme and b) how can being present at work be practiced in change work, and what consequences does it bring to relating.

3 Research Journey – a Dialogue with Niina Koivunen

This chapter describes my research journey and the choices that I have made. It is based on a dialogue with Niina Koivunen, who works as docent in department of Management at the University of Vaasa. We are research colleagues who share an interest to relational thinking. The dialogue takes place in a flowing way without pre-organised themes. It gives some glimpses of how this inquiry started, how I am seeing knowledge and knowing, and what I felt as important moments in this journey. We have worked on this text together, and later I partly organised it again and made some fine-tuning, for example, adding some references.

The purpose of a living dialogue is not capture the whole picture of this research journey, but complement the themes that will be partly presented in other chapters. This form enables me to make visible how this research journey formed in this particular relation. The form enables being present in doing research and doing it from the perspective of here and now.

By dialogue I refer that kind of discussion where there is an intention to listen to another without fixing your own opinions and trying to convince the other (see also Scharmer 2007). This kind of interaction could take the form of reflective or/and generative dialogue (Senge and co 2005, Scharmer 2007), where participants are not so strongly connecting their own views but open to new which could emerge through relating. The dialogue here is a kind of interview, where Niina is more asking questions and listening – not only by listening to my words, but the spirit and emotional tones. Thus, it has a spirit of dialogue, instead of, for example, a debate.

3.1 The Starting Point – Inviting a Colleague to Dialogue

T: It was so delightful to discuss with you about how I could construct outcomes. You said something like *“it is just re-organising your reflections”* which felt so simple. In the last weeks, my writing has been flowing, and when it is flowing – there is a spirit in it.

N: That's good to hear! I also got some new ideas after our dialogue, like how to bring more mindfulness to my work, like remembering to stop sometimes.

T: Oh, that sounds great...I called you again because I am wondering, how can I find the way of describing my research journey in a lively way that fits with this work as an action research dissertation. I would like to find other ways of telling this research journey, like by using dialogue.

N: Yes, it sounds good to think. I also tried to find unconventional ways of writing in my dissertation. In dialogue form the reader will see that you have really thought these things through.

T: Yes, and it is more readable, not so heavy. Actually, I got this idea from Hosking's texts; she is using dialogue there in the way that I found inviting and open. So, I am asking here could we write a dialogue about my research journey that could show how this started, what challenges and insights have come along and so on? I felt intuitively that I would like to do it with you...

N: Oh, that sounds exciting – let's do it...

T: I am so grateful and relieved. You know, I need a dialogue partner who somehow understands what I am doing but who doesn't know so much about this inquiry – and it is a plus that you come from the academic community and are interested in organisational issues and knowing. You know, when you are an outsider from this work, the dialogue will be more useful to readers, if you are really interested about this inquiry, but not knowing so much about it. Thus you can ask such questions that could be interesting to readers too.

N: But, how to do it practically? Are you thinking of speaking or writing together? Finnish or English?

T: One option is writing in English, because translating makes it something else. But because English is not our mother language, dialogue will be different. How about warming up with a dialogue by Skype in Finnish first – like starting, and then start writing in English in open document?

N: it sounds good to start in Finnish without writing and then continuing from there. We can write it at the same time, but also at different times and use our web cams to see each other in the moment. So when?

3.2 In Dialogue: Milestones of This Journey

N: Could you tell me the story of your research, how did it start and what happened throughout the process?

T: The starting point felt quite special and relationally engaging ;-) Some years ago, I had met the Director General, Teuvo from the Ministry of Finance, at a SOL meeting, you know the Society for Organizational Learning? I facilitated a Co-Creative Process workshop there where we started with participant's questions and worked for long periods in silence by looking at each other's questions and reformulating them again and again. Later, I heard that Teuvo had become strongly convinced of how important simple questioning together is – instead of simply answering. Then one or two years later, I met their in-house developer, Pilvi, at another workshop. I told her that I would like to find an organisation that is interested in this kind of cultural renewing process through participating in an action research project. In the break, Pilvi came to me looking in to my eyes with a warm smile: *“we could be the right organisation for your way of working and we are interested in research”*. So, somehow there were these two special encounterings, and then there was a third one with the managing group – and in all of these, there was some kind of resonating feeling, intuitive knowing that working together would be fruitful.

N: I really like this story, like this was meant to happen. I get a feeling of mutual importance in these encounterings.

T: Yes, I felt there some kind of warm mutual connection and shared enthusiasm. But later I also realised that we even started with a particular kind of spirit, and very soon I found myself in the middle of practices that felt very instrumental and not participative at all. They were not so used to really working in participative ways and without knowing what is coming next.

N: Well there was obviously work to be done. But they were intrigued by your approach and willing to take steps in that direction, right?

T: Yes, this is funny but I stuck to your words: I would not like to speak about steps or even direction...and let me say one important thing about my approach that was interesting to them. Actually, I don't feel that I had an approach as such, as a fixed thing, but more like I had and still have a way of living which is inviting them/us to co-develop it. So, this CCP approach which I had worked with for around five years at the time, was not a thing with specific features or just some model but was quite an open way to

engage together, to listen to what is here and now, so that participants could bring forward their important themes. This is somehow difficult to explain here but you will get some clue of it in our story that I will include in my dissertation. But I was saying that this approach started to develop and deepen – we were co-developing it in their context; but not like thinking that we are co-developing it but just co-creating better ways to work with whatever emerges in their context.

N: So, how did you start looking for methodological texts? Was there something in particular that seemed similar to what you had already done in your work?

T: Yes, actually I saw myself as a reflective practitioner and the participative way of working felt resonating. Well, I had started reading some action research books. The one that really felt interesting was Reason and Bradbury's book, which introduced to me the participatory view. Co-operative Inquiry felt familiar and interesting. There were many similarities, like seeing inquiry more from a practical perspective, and taking others as co-inquirers. By practical, I refer both to change work practices and participant's everyday working practices, which actually overlapped in our process. I was seeing them as co-creators who are co-creating realities together – but actually Heron was not speaking about co-creating in exactly the same sense, as a relational constructionist, but...

N: I mean how did you start relating to methodological texts, making links between your practice and the methodological texts? I see that as a relational process too.

T: Yes, I was reading them intensely from a practical view, but also searching for ways of doing inquiry that resonate with my values. I felt many interesting possibilities in qualitative research field like auto-ethnography. However, co-inquiry as a form of participative research seemed to most suitable in this case. One kind of resonance that I felt was taking others as partners, as co-inquirers who could also participate in forming suitable inquiry practices in this context.

N: Can you give examples of this?

T: Yes, you mean examples of co-inquiry? Yes, I felt that even when we started co-inquiry, it took time to really become co-inquirers. It is quite a high ideal to start as co-inquirers with 44 people. But actually one example was at the beginning when one day the whole community was working together and I asked them to tell what were their most important questions just now are in their work. They formed small groups and formulated one

question in every group. Then we started to work with these, but not like trying to analyse or find answers; but becoming aware of their ways of storing and emotions and the needs that were arising...(see subch. 5.1)

N: That is interesting. I'm just wondering here, whose knowledge are we talking about? You as a researcher have certain knowledge and the group members also know a lot of things, together you expand your knowing. Then you as a researcher write about your newly created knowledge and of this entire process of knowing together. Is this correct or how would you put it? Here, by the way, I notice how terrible the language is, how possessive or individualistic, like someone possesses knowledge, separate from others in the process, that is so artificial really.

T: That feels like a very important question...and difficult to answer briefly. Actually, I see here many questions. One that I hear, is the question of power (whose knowledge, or knowing matters) and how relations are constructed between an initial inquirer and others; then a second is what could be accepted as knowledge – what is relevant knowledge – what could be that kind of new knowledge that we have created together. Yes, like what you said “*speaking about knowledge and possessing it*”, is making these processes in to things, and knowing like something that you or someone could possess and that is clearly something, not a process as I would like to see it. I started with viewing knowing as a process, like many action researchers do. Later I recognised that this view about knowing resonated with the relational constructionist view where it is understood as a relational on-going process.

N: Indeed. Even I could not formulate the question in a relational fashion but was forced to use individualistic language. Perhaps this is exactly what Dian-Marie (Hosking) is talking about, knowing is relating, not possessing.

T: Yes, there is the same issue revolving around knowing in the participative view. As you probably know, some action researchers like Heron and Reason have also challenged the dominance of one way of knowing for more than two decades, and make space for other ways of knowing in their participative ways of doing research. It felt releasing to see that the dominance of propositional knowledge and knowing in the social sciences has been questioned in several, different directions: on the one hand feminist studies (Katila & Meriläinen 2006), relational constructionism (Hosking 2010b, McNamee & Hosking 2012) and bodily knowledge studies (Anttila 2007, Rouhiainen 2007) have underlined the need for other ways of knowing or knowledge, and make space for them in academic fields.

N: Yes, are there some differences between relational constructionist view and participative view?

T: Yes, let me start with similarities. These views include the expanded idea of experience which leads to the conclusion that the researcher's reflection of her own actions becomes essential as a part of the process of knowing. In the relational constructionist view knowing is seen as relational and realities are co-constructed. In this way, this view transcends the whole subjective-objective discourse which is still there in Reason's and Heron's view. I also view that the relational constructionist view embraces experiential knowing by giving space to the senses and many voices and in this way they are close each other.

Heron and Reason (2006) have compared the participatory view of knowledge and knowing to the constructionist view by arguing that they go further than constructionists. It seems unclear which kind of constructionist view they are meaning here. I found this somewhat confusing. They underline that experiential and all other ways of knowing are participative in the sense of how we are making worlds through our way of perceiving, so experiential reality is always subjective-objective. In the participatory view, practical and experiential, embodied knowing is centred together with other ways of knowing. So, I found that the participatory view and the relational constructionist view have similarities in appreciating on-going knowing and different ways of knowing. However there is this difference that in the participatory view, they speak about the subjective-objective, and in the relational constructionist view there is not that kind of separation. From the perspective of practical co-inquiring, it seemed to me that these differences don't matter because both underline on-going knowing and such inquiry practices where there is not power over stance. So everyone is participating in these knowing processes, and different voices are appreciated.

N: I am really interested in your way of knowing, when you work. How do you know in which direction to take the process? There must be hundreds of impulses you take in. How do you decide and choose?

T: Actually, I don't know which direction to take. It feels that the direction emerges in our working, I don't control it, but allow participants to see when it is time to make decisions together. It is practical knowing, perhaps. Often, I live with insecurity where I don't know the direction, but I know that what emerges is meaningful to participants. I have often tried to stop us, to see what is happening just now, what really matters to us – and learn together how we are working together, how we are co-creating realities

together. For example, we could stop to reflect on some different ways of seeing and learn how we are relating with each other here – are we listening openly or making judgements? I have written about these challenges in ch. 5, wherein I tell the story of our development work. But you know, facilitating and making inquiry in this kind of process, it is strongly coming from some kind of practical knowing, which is very intuitive and value-based. You can feel in your body what works, you know. Every choice is also connected to our intentions and values that we appreciate. Often, I am not thinking there all the time, but feeling what could work and relating with others in that way, and sometimes we are wondering together what are the best ways to work together?

N: I know it is very difficult to try to define intuition, gut feeling and such. Perhaps you could still try to elaborate on this? I think it is so central in your research, this particular way of knowing.

T: Yes. Actually, I am not speaking about intuitive knowing, but practical, presentational and experiential knowing which all include what we can call intuitive. First, I would like to say that I am in same line with all those scholars and practitioners who point out that all knowing is relational; it is connected to particular practices and communities. So, in this relational way, I see myself as an embodied, living research instrument that feels, senses etc in these relations with others. This view is inspired by Heron's way of thinking. I have tried to practice being present is what is emerging here and now, so this is a particular kind of knowing where I suspend my assumptions and observe how we are making realities together here and now without conceptual thinking. One way of naming is not-knowing (e.g. Anderson & Goolishian 1992), which doesn't mean that you are not knowing anything, but you are open to knowing differently. I am interested in how realities are constructed, and how I (and we) am/are taking part in this process. This also includes becoming aware of "my" way of doing inner dialogue silently, our ways of construction perception, our way of relating in these particular situations... Different ways of relating invite different kinds of knowing, I think.

N: This seems very similar to aesthetic ways of knowing that involve the senses, or bodily knowledge that also concerns emotions, feelings and intuition. You also said that different ways of knowing are very important. Can you give examples of these?

T: Yes, this comes near to aesthetic ways of knowing. Heron is speaking about these four different ways of knowing which he calls enlarged epistemology. Experiential knowing is through direct face-to-face

encountering with a person, place or thing; this means knowing through empathy and resonance, that kind of in-depth knowing which is almost impossible to put into words. An example could be the encountering that we had with Pilvi when she felt that this is right approach for them. Presentational knowing grows out of experiential knowing and provides the first form of expression through story, picture, sculpture, movement, dance, drawing on aesthetic imaginary. Our story book (Takanen & Petrow 2010) is full of these kinds of knowing. Propositional knowing draws on concepts and ideas (knowing about something, expressed in informative statements) like some change theory. And practical knowing could be expressed as skills, and it consummates the other forms of knowing in action in the world. You know, this is just one way of putting these intermingling ways of knowing. I have experienced that most important is the movement between these.

N: So, are you really able to find all of these four ways of knowing in our project?

T: Yes, these have slowly arisen over the years. There is a good example how these different ways of knowing were embodied in subchapter 5.4 where I tell a story about one communal day. It seems to me a very important ethical question about what kind of knowing is invited or suppressed. Is there only one accepted way of knowing, this propositional knowing, or other ways as well? I don't mean by this that propositional knowing is not important, but I find it problematic if it is the only way or the dominating way. Is a researcher bringing the "right" way to know or could we together inquire with different ways of knowing? It seems also that because we have searched for different ways of being present in action – how they could be enabled – that it is really necessary to invite different ways of knowing. Maybe it is already obvious that I didn't want to take a power over stance with my co-inquirers by saying there is only one appreciated way of knowing which is propositional. However, they actually had one very strong way of knowing, they appreciated distant, "objective" knowing in their work. I felt that appreciating that was needed, but I also felt that bringing other ways of knowing there was necessary because otherwise we would not be able to explore new ways of being. Actually, enabling these different ways of knowing there, like starting to listen to our experiences and share them, was very challenging to most of them.

N: Can you tell me more about listening experiences, what does it mean?

T: It felt that there was not so much space for our embodied experiences. So, it meant, very simply, that I started to ask how people were experiencing and I also shared my own experiences. When I listened to

someone, and felt there resonance, I spoke of the feelings, intuitions that arose and that probably helped others to start this kind of sharing too. Working with an enlarged epistemology means, to me, allowing and enabling multiple ways of knowing in action. This includes that which I as the co-inquirer am not defining as the “*right way to know*”, like using only propositional knowing, but appreciating other ways of knowing – even not knowing as one particular kind of knowing. This act also helped participants to see how they also had one dominant way of knowing, which often takes the form of debating. They were also appreciating objective knowledge, and so constructing this binary of the objective–subjective. But there are other ways too, like relational constructionism, where knowing is seen as relational, and local-cultural.

N: It seems to me that you are very keen to develop different ways of conducting research.

T: Yes, there has been a will to follow those action researchers and scholars who have challenged propositional, conceptually-oriented knowing that has been the scientific norm and institutionalised practice. This way of knowing ignores other ways of knowing. And it is always local-historical. Why limit knowing only to that kind of knowledge that is possible to be presented as propositions? It feels too narrow for researching human communities and their acting. This is not a question about the right and wrong ways, but is a question of making space for new ways of doing inquiry. Oh, I got so enthusiastic...but you know this feels so important.

N: Perhaps we could come back to the inquiry story, and take something a little lighter for a change...

T: Yes, that’s a good idea...

N: What were other meaningful and essential turning points in your research journey?

T: Let me think. There have been so many, like reflecting and writing about the Co-Creative Process Approach. There I found the practice-theoretical perspective helpful, which Keijo Räsänen, my supervisor introduced to me (see ch. 7 and 8). It made me rethink this approach, and find the ways of describing it more systematically and compare it to other ways of working with change. Another big turning point was last winter...one year ago. I had been working quite intensively for two to three years in the Ministry of Finance and feeling it to be important and fruitful. We also had co-written a book about our journey that felt like a very special way of bringing our work to others. Then came a phase in this journey that I

had to write alone and just sit all day in the university for months on end. Suddenly, I lost my voice both in the physical sense (even though I was not sick) – and the metaphorical sense: I couldn't find my own voice in this research work. It was connected to some critical feedback –which felt to me so overwhelming, even though I knew that there was a lot of goodwill behind it. And just in that month, I was to give a presentation about my research work – one in our department. And I didn't know what to do.

N: This losing of voice is very symbolic, and at the same time a great example of the unity of body and mind. A research process is not only an intellectual process but a bodily one as well: when you feel powerless and vulnerable in your research work, you may even lose your physical voice.

T: Yes, that is how I see it too – a researcher is not a separate intellectual mind... You know, I took this losing the voice thing as a sign to stop and really listen to what is happening within me. I was extremely anguished, not even breathing deeply but somehow resisting normal breathing. Why am I even doing this dissertation? What kind of inquiry am I willing to do? Could I do research which resonates with the way of living that I appreciate? I was also feeling a certain type of trust in stopping and listening to these questions and that what is behind them would help me to see what is essential. It took days or maybe even weeks, and then I had an idea to present what was happening in me at our seminar.

N: What happened then, how did you solve this issue?

T: Actually, I didn't try to solve it. But I just tried to practice being present, that what was happening in me – how I was co-constructing a particular reality in the here and now. And to accept my feelings. This was a way to take responsibility over how I am co-constructing this situation as a crisis where I have lost my voice. I tried to find a way of doing it that appreciates this particular inquiry orientation: being present in what is emerging. I felt that the purpose of the seminar was that this community should hear how this research was going, and only in the now could I truly answer what is the research question, or what I am doing. I could only give space to this inner process, where I was constructing different stories, thoughts, needs, and embodying strong feelings and sensing. I suddenly felt clear within myself that I would do it with my way of working, working with the Co-Creative Process, starting with the question "*Why have I lost my voice?*" In that moment, I felt empowered. I felt freedom throughout my whole body: I was breathing fully again – not suspending exhaling anymore. This way of doing it resonates with my values in doing inquiry and broadly in living my life practicing being present in what is emerging. Actually, this also enabled

the research community to participate in this inquiry process differently as one of my colleagues reflected.

N: What I find interesting is that you, the expert of co-creative methods, had slid into this lonely way of working and forgot to ask for help or for other people's input or co-creation. It seems like the university culture took you over.

T: Yeah, this phase felt to me quite lonely writing. As you can see I was feeling somehow separate at that moment. I was separating myself from my research colleagues who worked in the university, and not seeing how this community was supporting this work. I just felt that I was suddenly sitting in the university, no longer undertaking co-inquiry with other co-inquirers. Even though we met for lunch. Yes, that is really the power of cultural practices. I had also started to see myself as just a researcher, and somehow had forgotten my skills as a facilitator. But I would like to point out that I do not see myself as an *expert* of co-creative methods, but as a practitioner of a co-creative way of living.

N: So, you bring your resources as a facilitator back to your way of doing inquiry. What did these experiences, the losing of your voice and the seminar, make you realise about your research process?

T: In this process in the seminar, my question shifted to "*How and with whom this work could be born in an enabling environment?*" and in silent meditation I got insight from a supporting circle of people. That feeling of separateness, and working alone opened me to seeing relations that actually were there already. Pilvi – my co-inquirer said to me: I will help you in every way in this phase of inquiry. Seija said before the seminar about the way of working through my question: "*That sounds a very risky way, it is making you very vulnerable, are you sure*" and then "*yes, I know, that braveness is needed, and it is your way of being*". Susan Meriläinen, a professor from Lapland University, who was also working in our department, said to me that she will support me and maybe we could meet after in a coffee house. Actually a little bit later, she became my second supervisor which has felt important: she supported me in writing the whole first version. So many colleagues expressed their support and trust in my work. My eyes were opened to see how all these people were inviting me to find my voice again, and take my own stance. I don't remember what Keijo, my supervisor said, but to me the most important was that he was there seeing me working in this way, participating and supporting through his very presence.

N: Any other milestones after this incident?

T: This sounds funny – constructing a story out of all these *milestones*... Yes, there was one more: I got the book about relational practices from my supervisor, and found Dian Marie Hosking's work. This relational constructionist view felt immediately resonating. I felt very released: then I knew in what discussion I wanted to relate.

N: That must have felt like coming home, very comforting.

T: Yes, that was exactly my experience – coming home! I had been struggling all the time with the question of how I would relate this work to others' work in the field. I had felt more restricted than freed, but now it felt that relational constructionism would offer the kind of resource that would really resonate with this work and not constrict it.

N: I also would like to hear about your data collection or field work. What did you observe and what kinds of notes did you take? Further on, how did you analyse this research material? And what are your results like?

T: Ok, these are big questions and we have been writing this dialogue for many hours. What if we take a break, and I will think over these issues...

N: Yes, we can continue next Wednesday. Is that ok?

3.3 Continuing Dialogue: On-Going Data and Outcomes

T: I have been thinking these questions over and at the same time reading McNamee & Hosking's (2012) new book "*Research and Social Change*". It helped me to think these answers from a relational constructionist view, it really resonates with this research work and deepens my own skills as an action researcher to rethink these issues.

N: Ok, that is good.

T: I told of how we constructed data as part of our renewing process. Collecting is not fitting as a concept...I have plenty of material, actually I made a list of them for the readers (see subch. 4.4). All these working sessions have been videotaped, we have made many drawings, taken photos, systematically written self-reflections, and I have also written a research diary. Our co-written book is also one material. Actually, I have to count

everything that we have done and what has emerged from that as data. From a relational constructionist view, data is viewed as an on-going-process. That is why it feels weird to even speak about “data” because it is a living process. This research is not just analysing data, and saying something about ways of being present at work. This is practicing being present in action. In the co-inquiring phase, we developed these ways of being present.

So I would like to say that first at all, outcome from this research is the process itself. You know, that we have reconstructed this process as a co-written story, which is one result that is also useful to them/us and their environment. The story form underlines experiential knowing through presentational ways of knowing, like our drawings and photos. Actually, it has been a delight to see how much narratives and artful presentations are used in reporting in organisational studies. It has made these kinds of choices possible. A more academic result is a reconstruction where I have looked at our story and other data by asking what kind of ways of relating emerged and how did the ways of relating shift in some moments.

N: I do understand that in your approach the results and the process are intertwined. But even though the process and results are intertwined, you will need to say something about your results like you do here, and choose something and leave something out. So, are you saying that there are many different kinds of results?

T: First, there are outcomes of practical knowing in OGE, which the participants value and their customers also value. These are on-going-outcomes that cannot be fully captured here but which “*are living in our hearts and new ways of encounterings*” in OGE’s environment. These are new ways of being as we described it as participants, or, to use relational constructionist language, “*new ways of relating*”, which reflects multiple ways of knowing. Embodying and feeling these outcomes during our encounterings inspired me and another participant to co-write the outcome is a second kind; a presentation of our insights (Heron 1996, 104) that are illustrated (drawings, photos) in our book (Takanen & Petrow 2010). The story itself is based on presentational knowing, which includes our drawings, photos and other ways of expressing our experiential knowing. A third outcome is an analysis of particular moments where the ways of relating shifted towards soft self- other -relating and how movement between subject-object relating and soft self-other relating were happening. This analysis was carried out using relational constructionist concepts, and thus it could be interpreted as propositional knowing that emerges from

experiential knowing. The fourth outcome has taken the form of a description of Co-Creative Process Inquiry, the way of working with change. If you take that kind of developmental work as a skill, it is practical knowing and if you take it as a description of it, it could be also viewed as propositional knowing. So these outcomes are connected to each other, they overlap each other and to me these feel like a process where you can see movements between experiential, presentational, propositional and practical knowing. These are born out of each other, and here experiential knowing has taken the three other forms of knowing.

N: In other words, you have practical, theoretical and methodological results.

T: Yes, that is one working way of putting it but I would like to add that this kind of separation is just one way and it is good to hold on to it lightly. But probably it is a wise way...Thank you!

N: Yes, this is the way to put it for the academic audience to understand it. You did a lot of field work, to use my words, how was that? What did you do?

T: Yes, I see that the first phase of this research was co-inquiring, which was field work, the second was co-writing with one participant, and the third was analysing and reflecting on the outcomes. Thus, this co-inquiring was almost a three-year period of field work. In this phase we focused on questions and themes that matter to participants in their need for renewing their action. In this period, we had ten community days where we reflected on *“how our culture is living in the here and now”* (see ch. 4 and 5) and new ways of being/relating. Actually, I am thinking of making a table where these themes of communal days are presented (see subch. 4.4). I saw these sessions as evaluative sessions where we co-created realities at the same time. We used storytelling and different ways of knowing. There were four questions that we have asked again and again: What kind of thoughts, feelings and needs are coming, what can we let go, what kind of orientation could we re-relate to in this theme/question, how can we embody through this orientation in the here and now? These could be seen as four perspectives which invited present-oriented inquiry...

N: I find these questions really fascinating. How did people reply to the letting go question, for example?

T: This particular question has been very challenging, they have told that they have let go of knowing on behalf of others, let go of separating the work role and identity etc. There is also appendix where you can find how they have reflected on their *“letting go”*-accounts.

N: This knowing on behalf of others was very typical of this organisation and its culture, wasn't it?

T: Yes, and it connected strongly with their need to shift towards listening and asking, instead of having answers and knowing all the time. That was a key to them. In this kind of listening and asking, there is a feeling of spaciousness, as one participant told me. It is a particular way of listening.

N: So beautiful! Listening, it's my favourite topic.

T: Yes, there are so many ways of listening as you know. I sometimes organise listening into three types: first, listening to oneself, your inner dialogue, not only thoughts but feelings which are connected to them and your bodily reactions, and second, listening to others, and third what is happening in-between. Listening in these ways could bring us to the here and now.

N: One question still came to my mind. How to evaluate this kind of action research?

T: Yes, this is really important question which connects to the quality of this kind research. Actually many action researcher have solved this in slightly different ways. I resonate with Bradbury and Reason's (2006) view, where they present five perspectives to evaluation. I see that this research could be evaluated from these perspectives: 1) quality as relational praxis, 2) quality as enlargening ways of knowing, 3) quality as methodological congruence 4) quality as engaging in meaningful work and 5) quality as enduring consequences.

N: Could you give an example quality as relational praxis?

T: Yes, it could mean that the ways of doing inquiry are participative and everyone's voices are heard. This issue also concerns power in relating: what kind of relations enabled by these participative practices? As I have shown, I tried to enable power with stance and in first phase of the research participants were acting as co-subjects and co-inquirers. Slowly, our ways of relating shifted in some moments, and there were many moments where a particular kind of soft self-other -relating emerged... (see ch. 6). Somehow these perspectives have affected my work all the time. So it would be a good idea to look again at these perspectives in last chapter of the thesis.

N: Ok, great. Should we start wrapping up our dialogue?

T: Yes, how does this feel to you? And how do you think the reader will find this?

N: This was really interesting and a lot of fun too. Although towards the end I felt like I was torturing you while my part was really easy. I think this makes your research journey more accessible to the reader by illuminating the milestones, your choices and such.

T: I felt like this dialogue was in some parts very challenging, and deeply meaningful. I noticed that maybe I am thinking about these issues too seriously just now... But how were our ways of relating constructing this dialogue here?

N: I think our languages are very similar, which made the dialogue smooth. We are in different places though, you are very deep in your writing process while I as an outsider can very lightly ask all kinds of questions and also make suggestions.

T: Yes, this dialogue felt smooth and warm, and we share the same language – I even have the feeling that I have to be more precise in what I am saying. Also, there was a particular kind of academic context there all the time in your questions, and in my answers even when we made space for other kinds of relating too - sometimes I felt that you connected with my deeper meanings and the spirit of this work.

N: That sounds nice, I am glad to hear that. All in all, this was a very pleasant experience for me.

T: Hopefully, readers will find this an inviting way to get a view about this research journey! Maybe this also evokes interesting questions.

MOVEMENT 2

CO-CREATING THROUGH DEVELOPMENT WORK AND CO-INQUIRY

4 Starting Co-Inquiry in OGE as a Developmental Project

In this chapter I will represent (as construction) starting points of this development project, what it was about, and what kind of development arenas and practices were used or co-developed. I also tell about what kind of research material it produced, and how these have helped me to tell the story of the development project in the next chapter. In the end of this chapter I will reflect on writing the story of the developmental project.

This and the next chapter retell the three-year process from my perspective as a facilitator and co-inquirer. This development project was carried out as a particular kind of action research: we (I with the whole working community) were doing co-inquiry through development work in an organisational context from December 2006 to December 2009. The most intensive period regarding my participation as a facilitator-researcher was between March 2007 and the end of 2008 when we had a contracted a 1,5 years development project. As this project was an emergent process it feels somewhat artificial to say when it started or ended. However, I have chosen to focus on writing about the three core years of the process.

Let me start by explaining how I am using the concepts (development) project, (development) process and co-inquiry here. By development project I refer to a 3-year co-inquiry project. By process I mean this emerging development process which did not feel like a project with clear starting and ending points. Often I prefer to use the term speaking process than project because it sounds more organic, emerging and not planned, and thus it resonates with my way of doing facilitation and my research orientation to be present in what is/was emerging. Thus, I would like to point out that I view an inquiry and development work as going together here. As I have said earlier I regard myself as a professional practitioner in organisational development. In this project my work took the form of a reflective co-inquiry in an organisational context. In this kind of view, inquiry and development work are not separated, and I follow the relational constructionist approach, which does not see need to separate the two (see McNamee & Hosking 2012).

I would now like to open up on how I see the connection between development work, co-inquiry and the research task (figure 2). The development project had the aim of developing together an empowering

organisational culture (see more in subch. 4.1). The way of doing that was practicing being present in the here and now. From a relational constructionist view, doing transforming inquiry can be change work (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 61) and being present could be a research orientation. This kind of inquiry could enlarge possible worlds (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 61-63). In the same sense, this development work as co-inquiry could be regarded as transformative. I invited this kind of transformative process by on-going questioning of how (y)our culture is living in this moment, and what is happening in the here and now? This kind of questioning meant to me, how we are actually co-creating this reality/these realities that we can call “our culture”. Thus, culture is not something outside of us, but is a process of relational reality-making. After our co-inquiry, while writing this thesis, the research task evolved to “how is it possible to develop ways of being present at work”. This formulation takes a perspective of development work, and points to how this could be done by being present at work. This form seemed as emerging from my experience as a facilitator; that this question has been there in all the time with me.

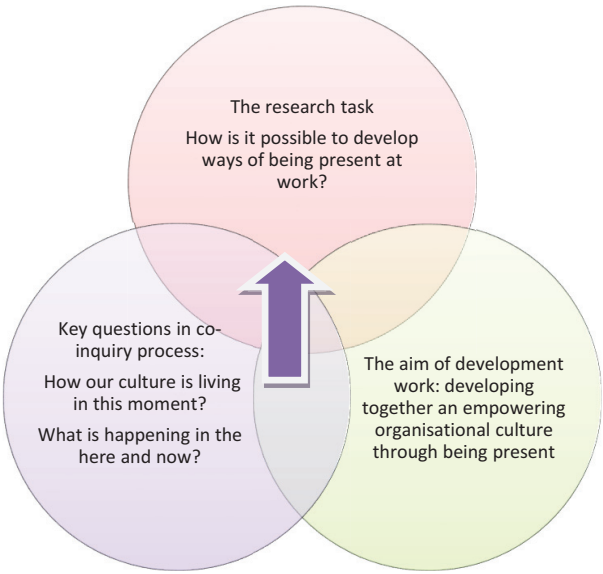


Figure 2. Connection between development work, co-inquiry and the research task

Both participatory co-inquiry (e.g. Heron 1996, Reason & Bradbury 2006) and the relational constructionist stance appreciate context-sensitivity and relational ways of inquiry and view methods as forms of practice (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 58). In this co-inquiry the focus was not on methods as

ways of producing knowledge but an attention was directed to the ways of relational realities are created (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 43) through developing together. In this kind research methodology, orientation and positioning become more important than any particular methods (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 58). Orientation means the way of relating with others, and here my orientation as researcher could be understood as openness to be present in what is emerging (see McNamee & Hosking 2012). By positioning, I refer to how I understand my role as an action researcher and how I am constructing myself and others. This means concretely, here, how I see myself, and others, as co-subjects and co-inquirers (see Heron 1996).

I would like to point that I am not reporting here the content of our co-inquiry, but how we were doing development work as a co-inquiry. Co-inquiry was a core phase in my research, and it helped me after the co-inquiry phase to crystallise and formulate the research task: how it is possible to develop ways of being present in work. Thus, it is logical to focus on how developmental work was going. Later, I will present outcomes of this research as new ways of relating (ch. 6), as the ways how we practiced being present at development work (ch. 7) and as a new developmental approach (ch. 8). Thus, constructing these contributions requires the context of how we were doing development work.

I will next present the structure and aims of whole 3-year project, my starting points as the co-creative facilitator and then expand on the arenas of development work and developmental practices. Thereafter, I represent the research materials that I have used to make the story about development project, and reflect on writing.

4.1 The Open Structure and Aims for Developmental Work Project

The initiative for development project came from a worker (Pilvi Pellikka) who was participating in the management group and worked also as an in-house-developer. This development project started at the end of 2006 by having a one-day experiment together with the whole community. This was two months before I made a written contract about developmental project with them. At that time, there was 44 people working in OGE, and ten positions were planned to be reduced over a few years, mostly through

natural retirement (see more about this context subch. 1.4). This concretely meant to the participants, in their words: less people, more work. The measured well-being was lower than in earlier years. There was also some dissatisfaction with management, according a survey that the managers gave me and told me about. Most participants felt that they were in situations where they had to find new ways of working. Starting development work in form of action research, was welcomed by the management group, which expected that the outcomes of the project would be more visible to all participants when we are doing a research rather than just a development project. I was paid for this development work as a facilitator-researcher. Thus, they were my customers and co-inquirers at same time.

The purpose of the development project was broadly defined as co-creating an empowering organisation culture through being present. This connects closely to what I have afterwards presented as a research task: how is it possible to develop different ways of being present at work. However, in this formulation for research I have intentionally left out unneeded concepts such as “empowering” and “organisation culture” because they come from different theoretical backgrounds that I did not understand at that time. The intentions for the developing work were formulated as follows (a written contract 3/2007, Takanen & Petrow 2010):

- 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.

These formulations seem to me to arise also from my interpretation about participants’ needs. Participants had shared their challenges and needs very openly in the first communal day before the official project, which helped me to do these formulations (see subch. 5.1). Now these formulations seem to me too complex, and they mirror my earlier way of speaking about development work.

The managing group and I defined the aims (we called them intentions) of this development project very broadly in the written contract without defining them clearly. We did not negotiate over any indicators for them, notwithstanding that it is customary to do so. I had a belief that if objectives, indicators and results are defined at the outset, there is no room for the organisational culture to renew itself. This belief connected my experience that renewing requires space where it is not predefined from ways of thinking in that moment, and its course cannot be predicted in advance.

The development project was carried on as an emerging process of co-inquiry. This meant that there were no pre-planned fixed aims or exact ways of working or particular methods before starting. I just trusted that giving space to shift themes and methods in a flexible way could work best. There was not some right method to use, but a particular orientation to practice: being present in what is emerging, being present in how we are co-creating realities in the here and now. Additionally, there were particular practices (I will tell about these later in this chapter) which were aligned with this orientation to start with.

Possibly, those intentions were most useful as my own guidelines which other participants were not thinking in this form through our development project. From the perspective of co-inquiry, these undefined intentions opened a possibility to co-inquire together about how they are co-creating their ways of working, which included ways of interacting, feeling and needing – and actually their relational realities. Thus, I constructed as the most essential “objective” of developing ourselves in action: how we are co-creating something which we call organisational culture in every moment. Thus I saw myself as also participating in that: if I am there in these moments, my way of being and doing my work is also connected to this process of co-creation.

The way of working – facilitating Co-Creative Process

At the start, I presented briefly to the participants both my way of working as a facilitator and as an action researcher who sees others as co-inquirers and co-creators. At that moment, I saw them both as ways of co-creating new realities – however, I used partly different concepts to describe facilitation (e.g. speaking about co-creating and empowerment) and co-inquiry (e.g. speaking about power with stance). In the core of this kind of “co-creative facilitating”, I saw four processes of reality-making: becoming aware, letting go, attuning, and practicing. I had an idea of these four processes (Takanen 2005) when we started, but the way these processes

could be worked on together, and invited and how to describe them changed in many ways in this journey (see ch. 9). I introduced this way of working through showing the cycle of four processes. Then I opened what kind of beliefs were connected to that (Takanen & Petrow 2010):

- 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.

Many of these beliefs were connected to some kind of social constructionist thinking, and they were formulated for the purposes of development work. Thus, they were quite simple in form, and conceptually not so clear. At this time, I had not yet developed deep insights with the capability to express them from the perspective of relational constructionism.

Practically, I had particular questions which connected to each four processes (see figure 3). Before these questions I asked participant's questions or themes, which formed the core of this way of working. These questions, which were connected to four processes, were in their simplest form (see in ch. 8 how these formulations changed):

- Becoming aware: what we/I can become aware of (like my thoughts, feelings and needs connected to situation or theme)?
- Letting go: What we/I can let go of?
- Attuning: What kind of quality/essence is arising in this moment?
- Practicing: How can I embody this quality/essence in the here and now?

At that time, I believed that the first process, becoming aware, was most connected to seeing our thoughts, making them visible, and the second (letting go) was most connected with our emotions because the process of letting go means encountering all kinds of feelings, such as fears. I connected the third process (attuning) to that kind of openness, where your

will could emerge from a new kind of orientation. Then fourth process (practicing) was most connected to action, even if I saw every process as different kind of action (like thinking, feeling, willing).

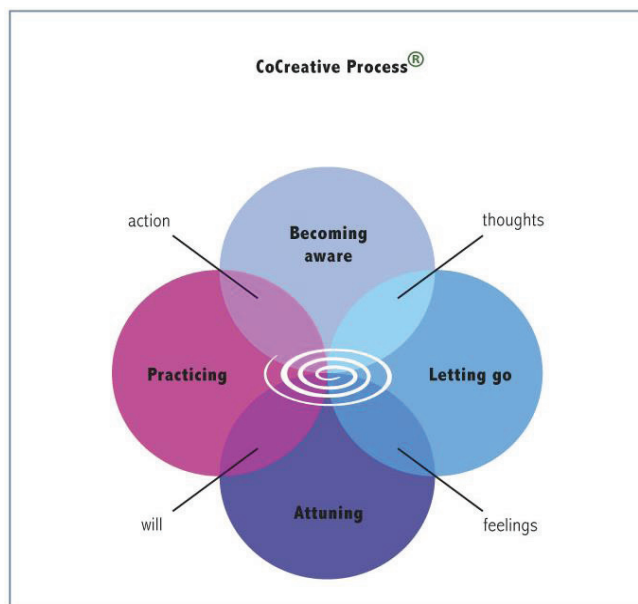


Figure 3. The Co-Creative Process cycle (Takanen 2005, 2012)

At this moment, I regard the way of how I used this Co-Creative Process cycle as a minimal structure (see Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009) without pre-planned contents: participants were free to bring their contents in the form of questions. Then I had some ideas how to work with them but also an openness to develop new ways together. Thus, also ways of working were open in the way that I wanted this to become an emerging process where we can try out what works and co-develop new ways to inquire and develop together. However, this way of working could enable focusing our attention those relational processes by inviting soft self-other relating (see ch. 6 & 9).

4.2 A Timeline and Arenas for Development Work

This developmental project started in December 2006, and ended in December 2009. This is the timespan that I have chosen to see as the first part of my research, and I regard it as co-inquiry. I have drawn this timeline afterwards, and structured it as four overlapping phases. There are three

arenas for development work: communal days, support group sessions, and small group sessions. There was also spontaneous arena which was organised by small group members themselves: independent group work sessions. Similarly, the support group also had independent sessions without my facilitation. I am not focusing on these independent sessions here because I was not participating in those. In figure 4, the timeline shows what kind of arenas we were doing development work. It also expresses how I see these phases of spiraling processes of becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing.

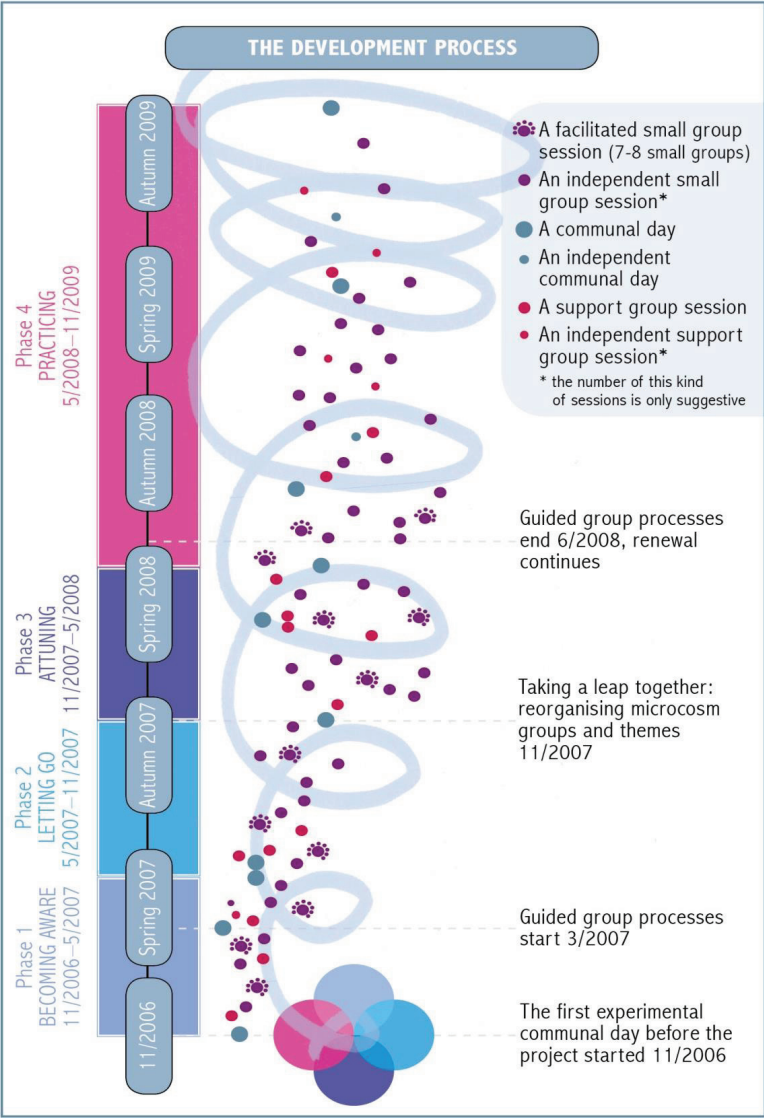


Figure 4. The timeline of the development project

When the development project started, I suggested three arenas for development work which we discussed with the manager group. 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 is needed and thus it was based on my experience as a facilitator. I thought that we can change these later flexibly and question these if needed with participants. Arenas were named as follows: communal days for the whole work community, support group sessions, and small group sessions. In table 1, I have presented their purposes, who participated, and how long the sessions/days were.

Communal days served as arenas for reflections on “how our culture is living now” through participant’s experiencing at that moment. It gave an opportunity to see how it is going in the whole community and to develop living stories (as emerging relational realities) together. Support group sessions were often held just before 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 new ways of working. The way of organising them changed in the middle of the project. Next I briefly tell more about these arenas and their purposes.

Table 1. Arenas for development work

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

Working with whole community in the communal days

The purpose of communal days was to offer a space where the whole community could form a living story with multiple different small stories about how their culture was and is changing. Actually, it meant: how it is happening just now through us in the sense how we are co-creating these realities. This comes near to Hosking and Pluut's (2010, 59) relational constructionist view where they reconstruct reflexivity as an on-going dialogue which is a) a local co-creative process, which is guided by the question of b) how "we are doing" this together, thus c) directing our attention towards co-creating realities and relations during the inquiry process, and which hence d) is interested in local pragmatic and ethical subjects. So, this case could also be regarded as a local co-creative process that was guided by questions such as: "how our culture is living now" and "how on-going renewing is happening in us". Thus, we directed our attention to co-creating realities in the here and now even if this was not the way of expressing it in the first years.

These days were meant to make space for many views and different views which could shift from moment-to-moment. It was not meant to produce one dominating story which we reinforce every time, like making a shared vision. Over these three years, the whole department worked for a total of ten days in the spirit of reflective dialogue, in addition to regular small group work. These ten days are represented in table 2 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 participants, "the renewing organisational culture is 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 (this practice came close to the methods of an Appreciative Inquiry). A few times I shared certain academic resources in our discussions to support self-reflections (e.g. Schein 1987, 1999: on the basic assumptions of organisational culture, Argyris 1992; recognising collective assumptions and ways of working).

Table 2. Communal co-inquiry days between years 2006-2009 in OGE

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-anymore 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 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 storytelling 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
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Small group sessions

At the start, participants worked in work process groups, and later in self-organised microcosm –groups. These two kinds of small group mostly had a different focus and different ways of working. They were also formed differently: work process groups were formed based on management group’s view, and then participants had an opportunity to change if they felt so. 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. My reflection is that doing an orientation practice and a reflection practice on interaction (see later in this chapter) brought space to move to other ways of working together and focus attention not only on work processes. To me, it seemed that these practices supported participative and dialogical co-inquiry, which concentrates on what is happening just now. These made it possible to shift from more stable kinds of structure to microcosms groups and co-develop them together (see more ch. 7.2). Microcosm groups served as experimental inquiry arenas which had more direct connections with their on-going work projects.

Support group sessions

Support group had members from every small group: five of the participants were personnel (experts), three were managers, and one was the Director. One of personnel was also an expert in in-house development who actually initiated the whole development project. I was also regarded as a member of this group, and I often had a strong feel of belonging in this group. There were eleven support group sessions (3-7hours each) that I or we (one in-house developer and me) were facilitating over these three years and many in which I was not participating. One special kind of support group session was a two days retreat, which was partly silent.

The support group was first named a 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 to be some kind of controlling group, which was wanted from participants because they were used to this kind of hierarchical ways of organising (a videotaped small group sessions in the spring 2007). However, that was not the intention, and thus “support group” sounded a softer way of supporting, enabling – not controlling. The support group days were meant to reinforce their own skills to facilitate the renewing process and create together 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 is going on, and how we can support it.

The support group members were not meant to represent the whole community, but act 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 others) and I also did same. This group’s role was central to the whole developmental process, but in many situations invisible because of an attitude of subtle facilitation. Support group members did not try to make strong interventions but to participate as others and became aware of their ways of interacting. However, their intention was the same time being 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.

Some Participants of This Story

The Support Group of OGE





4.3 Developmental Practices

These arenas made concrete development work possible, which was based on a few developmental practices. I will look next at four central developmental practices. These practices could be seen as embodying the particular research orientation, which I have named as “being present” (see ch. 1.6). These all could bring attention to what is happening in the here and now. Two of these practices, experimental inquiry and storytelling, could be seen at the same time as outcomes of this inquiry process, which we co-developed together with other participants. I consider here these inquiry practices as a resource for engagement, which could enable renewal and possibilities of new ways of acting (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 58). Many of these practices shifted and deepened in this process, and I have made these reflections in chapter 7 where I ask how we practiced being present in development work.

McNamee and Hosking (2012) ask for what kind of realities a particular kind of inquiry or development work invites or suppresses. This question points to the way *how* inquiry/development work is done. Our experiences in development work made me also aware that “finding answers” or constructing some results from co-inquiry were not so important as these different ways of being present that invite us from moment to moment to re-create our realities. This meant co-inquiring our ways of acting in the here and now with others. Thus, it became for me a very ethical question about to where attention is focused when we are making co-inquiry (see ch. 7). It seemed reasonable to believe that how attention is directed, shapes the outcomes. Thus, those orientations and practices made something possible, and something else impossible. In this sense, it is possible to look at how attention was focused in this inquiry in particular ways.

Two regular practices were reflecting our ways of interacting and orientation practice, which focused attention on how relational processes are happening at the very moment. Another way of focusing attention on reality-making happened by using the four questions and perspectives (Co-Creative Process cycle earlier in this chapter, and more in ch. 8), which bring focus to the here and now. Next, I present the four practices that seem now to be most central in our process: 1) reflection practice on our interaction, 2) orientation practice, 3) experimenting in small groups, and 4) storytelling and drawing.

Reflection practice on our interaction

One central inquiry practice in small group work, and occasionally also during the communal work communal days, was reflecting on “the quality of interaction” both afterwards and during the session (at this moment). As support for our reflection, we used a simple analysis of different conversations (figure 5, Scharmer 1998 in Isaacs 1999). It has four squares, which are labelled 1) politeness, 2) debate, 3) reflective dialogue, and 4) generative dialogue. Politeness refers to collectively held monologues that are often taken-for-granted views. Debate means contrasting views, where individuals are separating 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, therein could arise new views that are not someone’s views but created together. This way of analysing the ways of conversation felt practical and quite easy to participants. Naturally, participants quite often had different views and feelings about what kind of conversation was going on (see my reflections about this practice in ch. 7). What felt debate to someone, was considered as polite conversation by other. Thus, I regard that this kind of practice also helped participants 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.

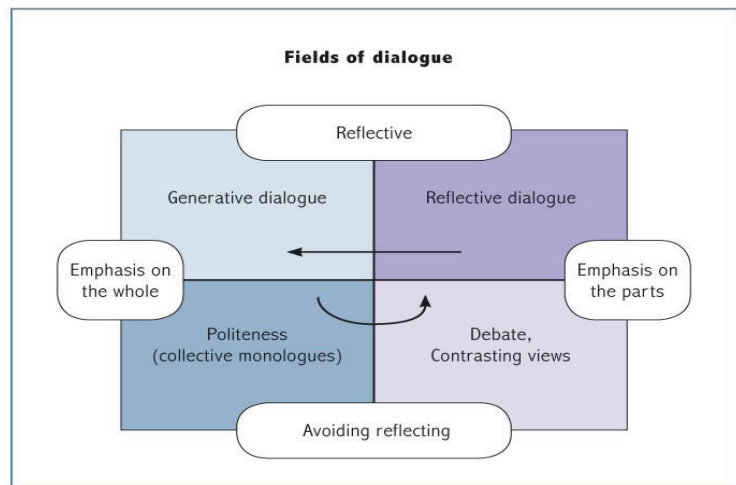


Figure 5. Scharmer’s fields of dialogue (Scharmer 1998 in Isaacs 1999)

In small group sessions, this self-reflective practice first occurred as a first-person practice (reflecting on one’s own experience in writing down), and then as a second-person practice (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 where the conversation was/moved to (how you felt it). Then everyone talked of their own observations and interpretations out loud.

In practice, both reflective dialogue and generative dialogue seemed to arise more often in small groups after the first half year (participant's self-reflection spring 2007 and autumn 2007). It meant looking at our own actions from some distance by speaking of our own experiences and interpreting, for example, what they revealed about the current organisational culture and its practices (self-explanatory suppositions, ways of experiencing etc.). Reflective dialogue often also created space for new interpretations and alternative ways of constructing realities.

Orientation practice

Another recurrent, regular inquiry 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 enable to observe "one's own space". We practised being present in the on-going moment by stopping, listening to our breathing and focusing on what is happening in "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 (first-person practice);
- 4) writing down or drawing our experiences after the orientation (first-person practice);
- 5) a collective round where we share our observations of our own space (second-person practice).

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 (/constructed) at that moment and

how they shaped our ability to be present in our current experiences. I have elaborated on some challenges with this practice and how this practice enabled us to shift from thinking-mode towards embodied sensing in subchapter 7.4.

Experimenting in small groups

Experimenting in small groups started when we moved from work process groups to 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 could open up possibilities to see 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 construct “a renewing culture” here and now in small actions and encounterings without planning ahead. The microcosm work was guided by principles that had been constructed 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 in the middle of our working together, for example: are we working dialogically, are we practicing power with our ways of relating etc. I have described the microcosm work and these principles in subchapter 5.3. I have also reflected upon how this shift from stable structures towards flexible and enabling structures, like microcosms, happened in subchapter 7.2.

Storytelling and drawing from the here and now

Producing stories, through telling and drawing, as an inquiry practice worked as a natural, dialogic way of reflecting together. This was used mostly in communal days, but also a few times in small group sessions. During the development project, 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 (the stories were produced so that the participants interviewed each other about the small successes they had observed – similar to Appreciative Inquiry practices);
- in Phase 2: Free visualisation stories on what the culture of the future could be like (with the help of guided group visualisation work); (see Takanen & Petrow 2010);
- in Phases 2, 3 and 4: Visual and verbal spontaneous reflections on what our organisational culture is like at the moment in story form; (see Takanen & Petrow 2010);
- 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 (see Takanen & Petrow 2010).

The narrative approach sees storytelling as a natural human action, through which we organise our experiences (e.g. Bruner 1991). In this sense, all speech can be thought of as producing stories. Bruner (1991) suggests that narrative knowing is a human being's typical way of perceiving reality. The relational constructionist view regards storytelling as a constitutive relational process of co-creating realities (e.g. McNamee & Hosking 2012, 50). This view comes near to my view, and thus I see stories as co-constructions, not as individual subjective realities (see also McNamee & Hosking 2012, 50). These are always situated in relation to multiple local-cultural-historical acts (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 50). However, I underline, that we did not start from any particular narrative methods or theories, but I and we (support group) "listened" to the ways of working that could bring out different views and help us reflect on *in the present moment*. The support group and I wanted to find ways that would not lead us to a one-dimensional kind of self-evaluation, where things are validated as being a certain way, but to a co-creative way of evaluating that would not feel like evaluation so much as just telling stories together that come from their every-day-working-experiences. In chapter 7, I have reflected upon this way of storytelling as an on-going co-creative way of self-evaluation. Here in figure 6, there is one example of how participants saw their culture at that moment, through metaphor of composting.

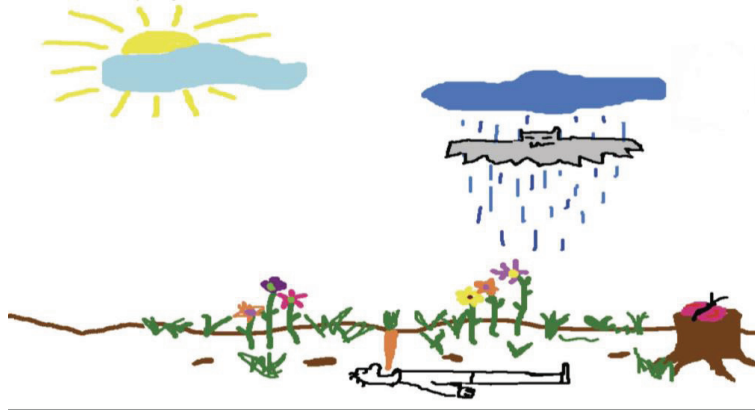


Figure 6. The organisational culture as a garden. Stretchylegs and the process of composting

4.4 Living Materials from Development Work

These four developmental practices served as our ways of engaging with co-inquiry that focused on how our culture is living now. All these produced on-going materials, such as stories and other kinds of self-reflections. All of these materials are listed in table 3. I viewed these materials as part of our on-going process of making relational realities. Every story was constituting, every art piece was constituting (see also McNamee & Hosking 2012): they were opening up something and closing up something in this context. To me it seemed that these practices were inviting that kind of reality-forming where participants could become aware about how every drawing, every word is inviting or suppressing particular realities. In the first part of the research, in this co-inquiry phase, these materials felt like living part of a process of reality-making to me. In later parts of the research, these became helpful research material to analyse and reflect on and write a new story about development work. Thus, in this kind of view, research writing is also seen as constitutive, relational reality-making which takes its own form of storytelling (see McNamee & Hosking 2012).

In this research the focus was not on methods as ways of producing knowledge and then interpreting these outcomes, but attention was directed to the ways that relational realities were created. Thus, the materials from development work could be regarded as artefacts in that they are kinds of relational reality-making which could enlarge possible

worlds. These materials have made it possible to also story our development work in a more lively way here. I have used these in telling the story of the development project: drawings, self-reflections from participants, video-taped sessions and particularly my own research journal. One important material for this story (ch. 5) has been a co-written story (Takanen & Petrow 2010): I have taken many parts from there; these have been translated and I have changed them to fit this structure better. Hence, I see the next story (ch. 5) as a co-construction, not as my individual view but a co-construction with my voice.

Table 3. Research materials

Material	Form	Who	Time
Self-reflections of "inner space" and interaction in sessions	Half-structured blankets 180 blankets from whole communal days 672 blankets from small groups (8+ 1 groups).	All participants	2007-2009
Support group sessions	Videotapes of 11 sessions (3h-7h), partly transcribed. Documents from these sessions, drawings and art-work.	The support group	2007-2011
Small group sessions	Videotapes of 3 h sessions 96 pieces, partly transcribed. Documents from these sessions, drawings.	All participants in small groups. First eight, later seven groups.	2007-2009
Customer workshops (includes a publishing seminar)	3 different workshops. Participative observations in research diary and 1 videotaped workshop. (Also one customer's written account of her experience.)	8-20 participants from OGE and their customers	2007-2011
Communal days	Videotapes of 6-7 hours sessions (9 days/the first day was not videotaped), other documents, drawings and art-works, written reflections about values, photos.	All participants	2007-2011

Research diary	Free form written reflections about some sessions and challenges in research.	Terhi Takanen	2006-2012
Personal discussions	Written notes from personal discussions (1-2h) with eleven participants before the project started.	Eleven participants from all units of OGE. (These participants were from different units, and different positions.)	2007
Kohtaamisten voima [The Power of Encounters. The first edition]	Co-written story of our renewal process in Finnish and English	Terhi Takanen & Seija Petrow, also Pilvi Pellikka and Teuvo Metsäpelto participated in, partly all participants as commentators and bringing suggestions	2010 (The first edition in Finnish)
The Power of Encountering [The second re-edited book will be published in the 2013.]			2013 (The second edition in English)

4.5 Some Reflections about Writing the Story

In this chapter, I have told how development work started, how it was practically organised and what kind of research materials it produced. In next chapter, I will retell the story of our development work through four overlapping phases. In this story, I also reflect on my participation and how it shifted, then later in chapter 6 I will analyse some moments where soft self-other relating became possible. I connect this soft self-other relating to practicing being present, and in chapter 7 continue from the perspective of how we practiced being present in developmental work. I regard all these aspects – participation, relating soft way, and being present as an orientation – to be closely connected, and mirroring that kind of co-creation of relational realities where participants are relationally responsible co-creators.

Before that, I want to make reflections about writing the story of development work and how to evaluate it. This story will serve as a presentational description of our development work, which works well as a way of reporting this co-inquiry process. It gives some space to experiential and presentational ways of knowing. As such it stands as a political act, which wants to break the dominance of conceptually-oriented propositional knowing (see also Reason & Bradbury 2006). The story could be read by asking: how does this account describe the facilitator's view of how development work was carried on. I had written "our story" once before with my co-inquirer, Seija Petrow from OGE, which has been an important part of this research – it made it possible to make sense of our process together. This story has published in 2010 (Takanen & Petrow 2010). The story is and was strongly living within me, and because of that re-storying the process again here felt both easy and challenging. I wanted to share this same story here in thesis also, but most of my academic readers (e.g. colleagues, supervisors) gave me feedback that it is too messy and unstructured. I appreciated their view finally, because this feedback helped me to see how it could be seen as written in an open-ended, jumpy and uncritical style, which may not be part of a thesis. Thus it seemed wise to try a more structured way to describe and re-story, and just use some parts of that earlier text in short stories about development work.

I have tried to fit this way of storying to relational constructionist writing, and the quality criteria of action research that also underlines different ways of knowing in reporting (Reason & Bradbury 2006). From a relational constructionist view there is no fixed reality, and past happenings are re-forming through the process of writing. Thus my writing could invite or suppress particular kinds of relational realities (e.g. McNamee & Hosking 2012). I cannot re-story this as it happened or even as I felt when I was living it with others. Therefore, I feel a responsibility in my interpretation and also freedom: it is not possible to write a story that captures the one truth. However, it could be possible to be truthful to my, and other participant's, experiences. Thus, I have asked for feedback from two participants – Seija Petrow and Pilvi Pellikka - how this new story feels to them, and they both said that there is still "the spirit of our work" even my voice is more distant. This feedback felt good to me because the spirit of co-creation seems most important. I have also tried to find a way in which it would not be dominated just by my voice or by an ideal picture of our change work story.

McNamee and Hosking (2012, 111) use Rhodes and Brown's view about responsible writing to give an example of what a relational constructionist

writing style could be. Five themes are offered: 1) a creative way of writing by blurring between fact and fiction, 2) being vulnerable, just as those who have participated in our inquiry, 3) seeing our inquiry as also an inquiry into our uniquely personal voice, 4) writing in a style that is accessible to the multiple communities connected with this research process, 5) understanding that our words and actions are not neutral and thus being aware of what sort of world we are inviting others into when we write in a particular way. These fit well to evaluating this writing experiment.

Now I have described some possibilities of how to evaluate this kind of writing from a relational constructionist perspective and from the criteria of inviting many ways of knowing. From a critical relational perspective, the story could be read by asking how it describes a particular kind of development work in action, which is a naturally incomplete effort, what the way of sharing of this story tells and how it embodies different ways of knowing.

But now is not the time for evaluating but just reading the story. I hope that reading this story opens up different ways of relating. So, I am not speaking about *relating by mostly thinking about content, but relating with it not only through language but also from your senses*. Reading could be felt in your body, and maybe it could evoke many emotions. This means practicing being present in what is happening when you read. I am inviting you to orient ourselves differently: not reading only through our beliefs and criteria but giving space to “just sensing” this story. Let me borrow some of Shotter’s (2003, 20) expressions: in the story we have not tried “*to picture*” our change process but “*express a sense of it in some way*”.

5 Story of Our Development Work – Co-Creating through Being Present at Work

In this chapter I will tell the story of our development work in the three-year period. When I story here this development project, this sounds more intentional and linear than it felt to me and other participants. However, I have structured this journey afterwards to four partly overlapping phases. The names of these phases describe particular processes of relational reality-making: becoming aware, letting go, attuning, and practicing (see also ch. 8). I chose this structure because we used this kind of structure also with participants, when we evaluated the whole process (the communal day 11/2009) and it expresses my experience of process well.

In order to give an impression of the whole development process, I chose to describe one day from every phase. Thus, there is one communal day in which the whole community participated in every session to give impressions of how we have worked. I chose these moments to share from because they seemed to be most meaningful to participants (including me): those moments were often re-told together in communal days because they had special meanings to participants.

I will also reflect on every phase, particularly from the perspective of participation, which I see as a relational phenomenon, co-construction. I as a person am not a separate entity but a relational being (e.g. Gergen 2009) formed in relational processes in particular contexts (see also McNamee & Hosking 2012). Thus, when I am speaking about what decision I made, I view decisions as relational constructs in particular situations. Hence, this does not refer to “I” as an independent, separate actor but as a sensitive relational being who was willing to enable co-inquiry from power with-stance (e.g. Gaventa & Gornwall 2006, Park 2006, 74). Of course, this was a big challenge in this context where participants were used to more hierarchical practices, as I will show you soon.

The Locations in This Story

Scene: Mariankatu 9

Date: 11/2006 – 12/2009





5.1 Phase 1: Becoming Aware – How is Our Culture Living Now?

This phase started in December 2006 and continued the whole of spring 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 to the whole community, other communal day (3/2007), three small group sessions for every (7) process groups and three support group sessions.

By becoming aware as a process I mean focusing particularly on how relational realities are made in the here and now in the middle of our everyday actions. At that time, I did not speak so much about reality-making but I was inviting this by asking from participants in the middle of working: What questions are important to you? How are we interacting in this moment? How are you/we feeling? How are we storying in our work processes and ways of acting? What are our taken-for-granted ways of acting and thinking? The way I asked these questions invited becoming aware of what is happening in us and our environment, and how these intertwine with each other.

In this phase, the action research project started with an aim to enable empowering organisational culture. The aim was intentionally open and undefined because I wanted to make space for new ways of thinking, and acting. Thus, fixing the aims and ways of measuring felt not a good solution even they had been used to that kind of developing work. Instead, I spoke about open intentions, in written form they were my interpretations from participant's questions/themes and discussions with manager group. They were written in our contract, and discussed with the whole working community in the so-called information session. As one participant reflected later (11/2009 communal day), the starting point and the project as whole: *"We've constantly been preparing for fewer and fewer people and maybe a bit less work too, but people will be cut more than work, so we need to learn how to work in a better way."*

In the start, before the contracted project started, I had private conversations with eleven participants to get to know their work and themselves. This helped me to listen to their local ways of constructing realities (e.g. Hosking 2010b, McNamee & Hosking 2012), and learn about their ways of speaking. I discussed with a manager group how to start: they had some ideas but also openness to new ways of developing. They had a feeling that focusing on work processes could be a good way to start, because this kind of working was fitting the ways they were used to work:

“rationally” as they put it. It practically enabled to divide people to small groups in the way that was connected to their work, and felt this way as natural division.

In this phase, there was some kind of belief that working with work processes could enable new work practices and new ways of thinking. At the same time, I pointed out that “renewing culture” is not just about developing work processes, but it needs space for an emergent process: it doesn’t happen only through focusing our ways of working but ourselves in action. It is not something to develop but become aware of how we are creating it every moment. At that time, I expressed it this way: *“The process will certainly be significant and we will learn a lot – but what, that I do not know.”*(3/2007 research diary).

The Director General asked, whether their work community could have more good questions than answers in the future. This felt like a question that could open up new possibilities and new local realities. I reflected later that this simple question took the shape of many reflective questions later in support group discussions: 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 in the past and create new ways of working?

In this phase participants recognised how differently they interpret their work processes. There were many views about purposes of their work and their customers. Through reflecting the on-going interaction in small group sessions participants became aware that they were often debating and stating their own opinions strongly, but there was not what could be called a reflective and generative dialogue (see Scharmer 1998 in Isaacs 1999, Gunnlaugson 2007).

I have chosen here as an example the day that we had together before the contract was made and the official project started. This was a day when all participants had an opportunity to bring up what is important to them.

Starting day in December 2006

It is nine o’clock in the morning. The whole work community has gathered after a nice breakfast to work together. There are almost forty people in the room; not everyone from the work community, but almost all of them. People choose their places from an array of small tables, at every table there are five to eight participants. 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, the Director, says welcome to everyone, and introduces

me as facilitator. Then I introduce myself, tell why I am in the here and now with them. I tell that I have been working for many years in the public sector and am feeling that it is important to renew ourselves and our working cultures by means of co-creative ways that allow all of us to participate. I continue that we will work with their questions the whole day, and that I am just facilitating the process, not bringing 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, to listen to what is important to them right now and invite them to work around these important issues. Today we will experience, for first time, how it feels to work together.

I ask participants to listen themselves and ask what the most important question is to them if they look from the perspective of an organisational renewal. Everyone writes it down. Then I ask if they can listen to each other's questions and then form shared questions that come from their dialogue. They write them 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 but simply listening to it. It could be reformulated, or it could change or possibly not. I will ask you to observe it. There are three kinds of ways how we work: having 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 that I call becoming aware. I give time to participants 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 them 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) that 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 starts letting go -practice by asking; *"what would you like to let go – what ways of thinking or acting?"*

Some hours later all the groups share their work with the whole group. In the same groups they name strong emotions like frustration and speak about that. I give space to all voices without trying to make anything like analyse, comment or find solutions. I feel a fearful voice within myself, feel 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 it looks now to these people.

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

- *What is my role and what are possibilities to participate in this community now and in the future?*
- *Why it is not yet solved how resources and tasks are fitted together?*
- *Am I aware and do I interact myself and as a 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 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?*

Reflections about this day

First, I will continue briefly on how one small group worked with their question on this day because this makes it possible to see what participative meant in this phase. This group started with the following question: *“Why are tasks and resources not solved 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? Are they daring to change the tasks in our department? Are they daring to leave out some tasks? Is the issue identified as a problem?* Then 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 disregardness (from those who are in charge), fatigue, powerless, confusion, curiosity, compassion, childishness, frustration, disbelief and feeling of aimlessness.* In the letting go phase they opened up to letting go of *“not saying what you think”* and called this *“let go of immoderate conventionalism”* and let go of *“speaking (about difficult issues) only in results conversations”* with your boss. They also opened up to letting go of *continuing flexibility*. As a result of attuning practices, they attuned to *braveness*, which connects to an active orientation to carry 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 has shifted to *“Could we have an effect on our personnel plan?”* It seems that they had shifted from being emotionally stuck and frustrated to relating towards a more hopeful one. They had first located others: the Director and executives being the

ones only responsible for that, and later they opened up to the possibility that maybe they can also affect it.

This example shows what participative way of working meant at the starting point: participants had an opportunity to choose themes by making a question and then having a dialogue together in small groups in a structured way. We worked on what the participants saw as significant from the viewpoint of the on-going situation in their organisation. In practice, I view that this kind of working from “within” (Hosking 2010b) meant appreciating the participants’ ways of constructing their experiences. For instance, the participants had the opportunity to bring up central questions relating to the culture of the future and inquire about these together by becoming aware of their underlying suppositions, feelings, and needs. We also listened out for possible opportunities for letting go of some of those suppositions and ways of working. These questions and workings set the tune for the rest of renewal work and remained in the background. This preliminary work occurred months before the start of the actual project, and I saw it as an experiment that gave the participants and me an opportunity to see how this way of co-inquiring would work in their context. People worked actively in small groups and were ready to discuss challenging themes and their own feelings. This assured me that we would be able to start the process together because participants seemed to feel that this way of working was meaningful. I also saw that managers were capable of giving space to everyone participating, and this was accepted even if participants brought up challenging questions and feelings.

Reflections about this phase

I had two personal questions when we started: how could I practice being present by welcoming everything? How could I let go of judging our acts from a perspective of successes or failures – just being there and appreciating possibilities to grow together? These questions reflected my orientation as a researcher-facilitator: I was willing to invite openness, emerging and a non-judgmental presence where new possibilities could open up. At same time, I had a feeling that I do not know how exactly to do that. My attitude to these kinds of questions was to be aware of them; an inquiry about what kind of beliefs and feelings were connected. Thus, I was not trying to find answers to them quickly, but looking at them through questions that formed a co-creative process cycle.

My role as a facilitator and an action researcher was aimed at a power with stance (e.g. Gaventa & Gornwall 2006, Park 2006, 74). This meant

that all participants had possibilities to contribute and no expert or manager is having a dominating view to bring to others. I told this to others openly; it was a new perspective to them. All acts, even with power with stance could be considered as constituting realities, and thus being less or more interventional. Every question, every act of bringing attention, every gesture, the ways of speaking and listening are constructing relational realities (e.g. Hosking 2010b).

In this phase, the development work was only partly participative: participants had an opportunity to effect contents of co-inquiry and partly their ways of developing. Heron (1996, 22) has suggested that participation could be reflected as involvement in research decisions and involvement in experience and action. These could be full or partial. However, the division to small groups happened in the manager group and there was a possibility for people to change group if they felt so. Also, an idea about starting with process work came from a few workers and the manager group. I saw this as a simple way to start, because process groups were somehow already established and this way was natural for the organisational structure. At that time, I also thought that starting with process work could, for participants, feel a safe enough and logical way of starting. No one was questioning that when I told about process work and invited other views I was opening up my own critical beliefs about this way of working.

At this starting phase, my role felt more central than later. I felt that this was very relational: participants were strongly forming my role with their ways of acting and expecting. Slowly, I enabled them to form the group of in-house facilitators who later started to carry on the process with other participants. This support group had members from every small group: some were experts and some were management level staff, all as equal participants. I was discussing almost every decision in this group, but this was not the group to make decisions. Important issues concerning the whole process were decided together with all participants in communal days, like what kind of groups are needed, in which everyone wants to participate and be a part, and what kind of themes they are willing to work together. However, every small choice also felt meaningful and I was doing many of these with managers or just by myself in the first months (like how we will work in the groups at the beginning). It was a practical need: we had to get started, and knowing that we can change decisions later together felt justifying this not so participative starting approach. In this kind of communal process, where over forty people are participating, it is needed to make it work in the short time period. Thinking every choice together felt not possible or even preferred by participants at the start. Participants

could trust that the ways we are working could be reconsidered and changed if many feel this way.

In small group work I became aware that participants were not used at work in participative ways, where they can contribute as equals. It felt to me a real challenge to invite them as co-subjects (e.g. Heron 1996). It seemed that we had to first co-create this path where everyone felt that it is possible to really participate. It requires that participants became willing to do that because it also means a different kind of responsibility than just following the Director's view. I also noticed that often only experts were talking, and assistants were quieter. Thus, I saw that as giving space to everyone was used to not talking so equally, and I started to ask everyone's view. In addition, the orientation practice and reflecting interaction was always done so that everyone's experience became heard.

Participative and dialogical ways of working could enable seeing every view as valuable, and also taking different views and challenges as part of the process. Many of my ways of facilitating and relating with others were somewhat different from their everyday ways of relating. For example, once a participant said that this three hours dialogical practice could be done in 5 minutes in that way that one is just making a list (video-taped small group session in spring 2007). The belief was that it could be more efficient.

At this starting point, and also later the way we worked was not so task-oriented but process-oriented. This was unexpected from participants who were used to task-orientation: focusing on content. I wanted to enable participants to see how they are working together, how they are thinking, how they are interacting. In my view, this is connected to the capability to see how we are co-creating realities in every moment. Thus, I saw the role of orientation practice and reflection about interaction as meaningful as our work with work processes. The content felt to me to be not so important as the way participants were trying to develop their culture. In this phase, the manager group was still having as strong a role as it has had in the past. Thus, participants were thinking first of the support group as enlarged manager group. I was trying to find ways to enable everyone to see themselves as equal contributors who share responsibility for their ways of working.

We even focused on work processes in small group sessions; the content (work processes) was not the only thing to co-inquire. I asked participants to stop at the start, in the middle and at the end to become aware of our ways of interacting together, and what kind of feelings and inner sensing participants felt at the moment. Sometimes, I also asked what we could let

go of. In many of these small group sessions, I felt that participants were dealing with themselves and others in separate ways. It seemed to me that they were all just doing what they are asked to do by managers and leaders. And as such, they could not really participate as co-subjects in change work: they waited for a clear vision about what they should do. What amazed me was the quite strong attitude where they were narrowing themselves and acting from professional roles and hierarchical positions. They were often speaking as they knew the answers on behalf of others/customers. In these sessions they seemed to have a very tough way of relating to themselves. They were “expecting hardcore expertise” (small group session 3/2007), being self-critical and sometimes cynical. They were judging some their own ways of doing strong ways: *“Here (in our work) is a bit pointless hassle and duplicated to do, things are right and we are experts, but when we do together as yet, so there are hell hardcore experts”* (small group session 3/2007). This reminds me of when I asked participants on the second communal day to describe a good worker/expert, they described this by adjectives such as *“effective, productive and thorough”*.

These ways of working together that I introduced to them like dialogical practices, orientation practices, and self-reflection concerning our ways of interacting were not only new to them, but are also based on different values (such as appreciating your feelings and intuitions) than they took-for-granted, for example, effectiveness and productivity. There were many moments in small group sessions (in spring 2007) where participants expected concrete results quickly and efficiency was required. This took the form of some doubts and skepticism, which was directed at a slower pace and new development practices such as an orientation practice. Most participants were also expecting that the managers and I were leading this project, and knowing where to aim. When participants slowly started to see that this was not the case, confusion came stronger. This showed up as some frustration and a quest for clarification in some groups.

5.2 Phase 2: Letting Go – from Box-Thinking towards Drawing and Storying Together

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.

I have labelled this phase the letting go phase because participants (including me) started to let go of some their earlier ways of working and the need for control. Afterwards, I also become aware of how I and other participants had a challenge of letting go of (illusion about) controlling which meant making changes instead of making space for them (see later subch. 7.1). Afterwards, I started to understand letting go as a process of re-relating with ourselves and others, and with our ways of acting.

In this phase, working in small groups continued with the focus on ways of working and interacting. It seemed that participants let go of waiting for an assignment and looking for the director or facilitator to give direction. Many fears, pessimism, over-criticality, and cynicism were encountered, but were also let go in the sense that they no longer dominating our change work. These letting go's were reflected and named later in communal day (9/2009, see appendix, column "letting go"). Let me point out that participants situated these letting go - reflections to the whole project time without naming when it happened.

In many groups people felt that they were progressing with development work: however this seemed to me to be small but important fixings in work processes. However, these kinds of fixings were not enough for renewing culture. I felt sometimes that participants were just "playing at doing development work" as they had used to. This feeling connected my interpretation that most participants were not yet opening up to look at their own ways of co-creating realities. In other groups it seemed that some things in work processes were fixed but that seemed to come to its end. At this time, I started to see how everyone was participating, not only those who were an expert in particular work processes. This seemed to be a very remarkable process of letting go of thinking hierarchically, which some participants reflected on as letting go of "*the hierarchy of different personnel groups*" and letting go of "*connecting certain background factors like age, education and (personal) background to an inability to renew*" (the communal day 11/2009, see appendix).

Communal days in Tallinn

I am waiting for these two communal days in Tallinn. It seems special to be two days together; also many other participants are feeling happy about this little trip. People are smiling and looking more relaxed than normally. We meet in the harbour and enter the ship, which take a few hours to get to Tallinn. This ship is more than full, and my idea of having a support group

seems challenged. However, we find a meeting place in a corridor in the middle of other corridor discussions. I ask if the support group members could help me to facilitate these days partly. There is still open question from small groups: how work processes are connected to each other. Their effort to make a model of it did not work out. I suggest that maybe we could let go of models and boxes from now. What if we try to picture this by drawing together in a more spontaneous way? Group members get excited about this unexpected quest. We prepare ourselves by discussing how to just start drawing, and how everyone could participate in it in a flowing way. I suggest that I only take the role of starting this briefly by introducing an idea of drawing and storying together.

The meeting room in the hotel is smaller than I expected but cosy and nice. At 11.00 we are finally ready to start together. The day starts with orientation practice. Participants share their orientations in small groups. Then I welcome everyone to participate in these dialogical days together. I briefly share my own feelings and observations about how the project has started. I don't want to be too formal: I hope there opens up space for learning together. I share how this process seems to me at this point: both process thinking and communal growing seems to be new areas to participants. Some are making gestures which accept my interpretation. I continue that we are really in an area of chaos where confusion arises and many ways of reacting. Our challenge is to encounter development challenges and open ourselves to question, inquire and re-see. There is no model or plan because this is a process of growing and learning together. Thus, one question is how we find new ways to interact with each other.

Soon it is time to start working together. I ask participants to have a dialogue in their small group about what they have become aware and learned in their small group sessions. Then starts one kind of learning café where people move from table to table to learn more about other work processes. After that we reflect on insights about work processes. After a nice lunch together we continue looking at how processes were connected to each other. I am as excited as the support group members: are they ready to let go of controlling and possibly looking naïvely at this way of working? Spontaneous storytelling about how we could see work processes as a flower starts. The Director starts by drawing one circle and telling what it could symbolise, then other support group members continue. This is surprising to participants. There is excitement in the air, and in a small room the atmosphere feels very intensive. I am breathing differently: taking breath in, and then waiting what happens... Soon other participants also start to continue the story with playful ways: like seeing a customer as the sun, and drawing bees and flowers to symbolizing the working environment. My breathing is normal again.

Next day, we reflect on these two days together. One reflection, which stops me strongly, is that an in-progress way of storying felt important. It feels to me like a new opening: openness to not knowing, willingness to let go of strong controlling and planning.

Reflections about this day

This was the first time when support group members were co-facilitating the days. Even if it was a short moment, it asked from them the courage to work differently. I think that also seeing managers putting themselves to

this was important for many participants. Not knowing the answers but opening up to co-create them by storying together happened for the first time on these days.

On these two communal days, it seemed that a big shift took place from waiting for answers to participating in on-going storying, which makes sense of how people see their processes in their environment. Many participants remembered this day many years afterwards (a videotaped communal day 11/2009). They were speaking about “*the flower of Tallinn*” which became a symbol of the shift from box-thinking towards an organic way of seeing their work and the connectedness between different work processes.

Reflections about this phase

This was a time when I felt the pressure of crystallising the big picture; later I saw that this came from that kind of change work where controlling takes the forms of visions and planning steps. My question “how to crystallise a bigger picture” was connected to a pressure co-created with participants who wanted to see what the bigger picture is and how work processes are connected to each other. There was an effort to make a clear matrix of processes or some kind of box-picture. This ended with frustration and confusion (I will share this story in a more detailed way in ch. 7). In these months, I started to see how this question arose from our fears of losing control. Thus, my own question suddenly shifted: what could I and we let go of, and how could we let go without knowing where we will direct?

However, even if I felt this pressure of control and crystallising a big picture, I did not react to it by making things more clear or asking others to do so. Maybe this undoing enabled a shift from box-thinking (linear, controlling thinking) towards more open and spontaneous ways of co-creating. At that time, I saw this situation as an opportunity for me and others (the support group) to let go of controlling by making changes (see subch. 7.1).

In this phase, there came an opportunity to learn together – or actually to let go of some earlier ways of doing change work. This challenge was as well “my own” as it was a challenge for others. In this phase, I also started to become more aware of how I can “grow” with others. The support group took a step to enable others to participate in open storytelling. We were no longer thinking of these issues in the manager group. I did not feel that I had to check everything from the Director anymore. I have written to my research diary how, for the first time, I really started to trust this as an

emergent process, and acting from there. It felt to me enlightening and releasing, not trying to control but just to allow. I realised at that time that I had taken too much responsibility over how this project goes and also worrying about how it looks as action research: is every decision made in a reasonable way and documented well. I had struggled with my own and other's needs of getting results and controlling what will come out. I tried to enable the support group to find new way of working, which is not anymore so controlling. In the support group, we had discussed what my role was as a researcher-facilitator, what was the role of a support group member and the process owner.

5.3 Phase 3: Attuning to What is Emerging – a Birth of Microcosms

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

By attuning as a process I mean listening to what is emerging, and how participant's (/our) values could emerge/are embodied in the way we act. As members of one microcosm put in their orientation: *“At the heart of our future organisational culture there are collaboration, human's faces, listening and equality.”* This seems to me as an act of attuning our future in the here and now: seeing and feeling how particular orientation or values, like listening, are embodied in our action. Thus, I am seeing this as a process of attuning our orientations: it is about becoming present in what kind of orientation is arising in the here and now and how this is embodied in our actions. In the attuning phase, we reorganised our groups according to the themes that we felt were important at that moment. Participants started to listen to what was arising from our encounterings, what kinds of values and beliefs were living in these encounterings, what the purpose of our organisation was.

In this phase, I had also an interesting short conversation with the process owner, Seija and Director, Teuvo. The meeting was scheduled to

look at where we are now (meaning how the project is going) and how is the budget and intentions. This meeting suddenly shifted to a warm dialogue: Teuvo, the Director asked: how we can practice being present and whether we could arrange a silent retreat to support that. Seija was also very excited. Afterwards, this moment seems to show how they – actually we – were capable of attuning the future, what is emerging and acting from this orientation: they were not thinking about money and targets, but how we can open ourselves to practice of being present. I was also let go of an illusion that I or we could control this emergent process.

Conventional process work had come to its end, and in some small groups group divisions dictated from above questioned. Participants reflected that divisions seemed artificial in the way that some work process felt to be divided to two groups. I will soon share how the leap to the unknown happened, and participants reorganised new groups and themes.

Slowly, there opened up more space to feelings and intuitions through regular orientation practice. Participants also started to recognise how we were relating with each other in group work. Participants made experiments in microcosms, and relationships to and with customers/our environment and others became essential (see figure 7, participant's reflections about their customer relations). They reflected that their role has shifted, almost from dictator to supporter and partner. This connected to letting go of attitude of knowing on behalf of others.

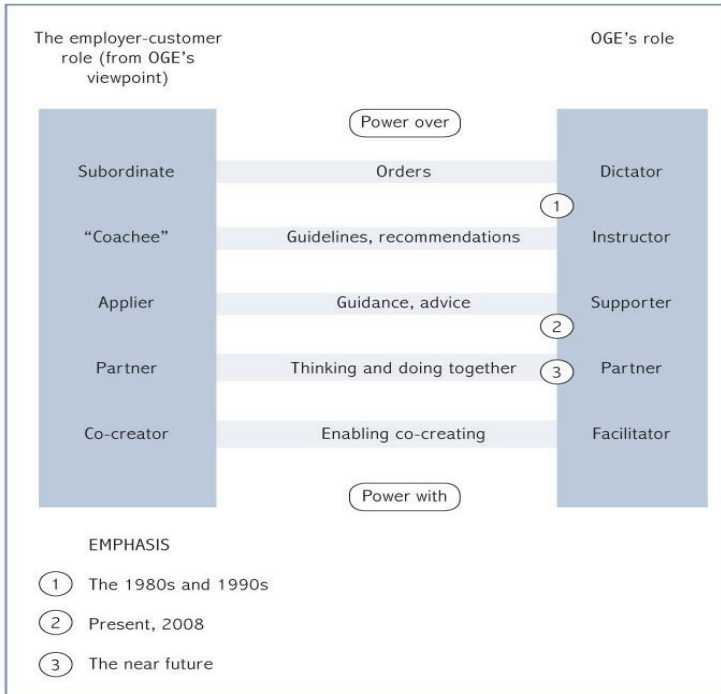


Figure 7. The role changes of the customer and OGE (self-evaluation in 2008)
 [Modified from the original idea of the role evaluation from Scharmer 2007]

The leap to the unknown – reorganising groups and themes together

I start the communal day by telling how participants had answered a short questionnaire concerning small group work. We had made a decision in the support group to make a short questionnaire because I and many support group members had a feeling that working with work processes was maybe coming to its end. This feeling came from our experiences in small groups.

A communal day starts with a silent orientation practice, and participants seem to be used to it. The purpose of the day is reorganising our development work, which surprises and energises the participants. I tell first what kind of answers participants had given to small questionnaire about how group work was going on. Then everyone is able to propose important themes for renewal and renewing work from the standpoint of the future. From the work community emerge many microcosms connected to customer relations, but also microcosms related to renewing the inner culture in the workplace. There are many of these: Happy Customer, Collective Memory, Financial and Travel Administration, Tasotu, and so forth (see figure 8). The earlier groups are also given the chance to continue, and the communications group wants to continue. Everyone can choose how many groups they want to participate and engage in. Some choose one group, some choose two or three groups. The choices are guided by enthusiasm, and from these themes emerges organisational culture for the future.



Figure 8. Themes of the microcosms

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. At this phase, seven microcosms were created. It felt essential to move from speculation and intellectual talking towards more dialogical and experimental modes of action. *“The world of microcosms is not thoroughly organised”*, reflected one of the participants later (communal day 11/2009). Microcosms seemed to be especially inspiring because this way of working did not include planning everything completely, but instead was based on experimental action. So if participants had some kind of intuition what they could try out, they could experiment in a spontaneous way and learn by doing. 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.* (A research diary).

After the communal day, in small groups we formed a set of 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 “that embodies renewing culture” were

- Supports open, inquisitive and mindful dialogue
- Enables opportunities for influence and encourages participation within the work communal
- Strengthens new forms of collaboration and networking

- Is built on enabling leadership and power with stance
- Can enable multi-skilled employees and the sharing of skills
- Improves success 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

Thus the way of working in small groups changed, when new microcosm groups were started. There were mostly talking in work process groups that aimed at reflecting on-going ways of working. I interpreted that reorganising groups together, made it concrete how all can participate, contribute and take shared responsibility.

Reflections from this phase

Here responsibility for development work started to become more shared with participants. They had a real possibility to reorganise the whole development work, and listen what themes are really important to them at that moment. In this phase, I and other support group members crystallised our roles again: what is the role of support group, what is your role as a member of that group, and what is my role as an outside facilitator. This also made me feel that we are really sharing responsibility. I was no longer that *“small young woman who could amazingly carry on the whole process by herself”* as one participant had reflected. I had tried to make choices in the direction of our overall intentions, and often I discussed also with Seija Petrow, who worked as my pair in the process and a support group member. Many decisions that were made at the start in management group, were made now in the support group. Small groups themselves had possibilities to organise their way of doing free way, they had also chosen their own themes. The ways of doing, so-called microcosm criteria were formed in discussions in every small group, but in the last phase, I formulated them, and then asked everyone to comment, and we made some small changes.

In this phase, I encountered a new kind of vulnerability in my relations with other participants. I was more sensitive to what my ways of being with them invited. I stepped more in to the background in many ways, and started to suspend my taken-for-granted ways of storying on-going happenings. I felt this vulnerability specially when I did not make an interpretation about where we are now, and how this is going, but let this open up feeling together in the small groups or support group. One of my

questions in this phase took the form: who I am – how I am becoming in these happenings with others? The other more practical question was: what is emerging in the here and now – and how to listen what is emerging without expectations?

Thus, I became even more sensitive to seeing how my acts and orientations are forming relational realities with other's ways of acting. I learned to suspend my own views and interpretations in collective situations and share them, if needed, in very open-ended ways that gave space to other voices. I also stayed open without doing my interpretations before shared dialogues in the support group. Here is an example of how I once participated in storytelling with my observations (see figure 9). I gave this as supporting and humorous feedback when my active time there was ending. I was using the way of speaking that we had co-developed in these first years. I drew a new kind of civil servant who had a big warm heart with HC – the idea of Happy Customer.

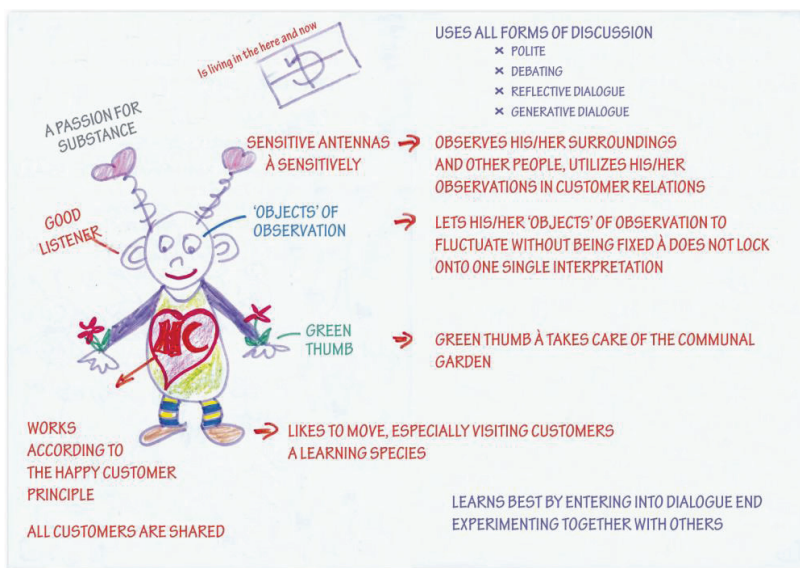


Figure 9. My observations of civil servant of the future in OGE

5.4 Phase 4: Practicing, Practicing and Practicing

This phase started soon after re-organising small group working, in May 2008. Actually it could be seen to have started already in January and

overlapping with the Attuning Phase. If we take as the start May 2008, this not-overlapping phase included four communal days (and few others that they held themselves), self-organised and in-house facilitated small group sessions, 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 came more visible, and enlarged to new areas of their work.

By practicing as a process I mean embodying new ways of relating in action. This has nothing to do with implementing, which refers to an effort of implement something. Neither does this mean planning some steps, and then taking them. Instead, in this way of working every encountering and situation in working life is a possibility to practice our values and a particular kind of orientation which is based on becoming present in the here and now. As a concept, “practicing” refers to a process that is never finished, and where your intention to practice is important. This includes accepting our incompleteness and our on-going nature. Thus, practicing needs a patient attitude to continue it again. Practicing also consists of all other processes: becoming aware, letting go and attuning.

In the practicing phase, participants worked intensively in microcosms. In communal days they re-told how their shifting guiding principles were living in their ways of working. Participants directed their attention to values as collective processes that happen in our everyday actions. One participant said in a small group session with a warm, appreciative voice that “...*the cleverness of the client gives us something to work on and appreciate... I feel truly grateful, gifts just keep coming.*”

For example, the Collective Memory microcosm reflected on a communal day (2009) that “*We have got 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.*” They are describing a shift from judging and inspecting to openness to new things.

In-house facilitator and support group were enabling this process of focusing values. At the time we spoke about practicing “qualities of our future” in every encountering, for example, by asking, listening, being open, and appreciating each other. They also practiced through storying their realities again and again together, and thus participating in co-creating it together in multiple forms and flavours.

The microcosm groups had met during the spring 2008 both under the guidance of the facilitator and independently. Some groups met independently quite often, others did not. The idea was that groups could flexibly work in the rhythm that feels to be working. In-house facilitators guided the first meeting, where the theme and ways of working were co-developed further together on the basis of the microcosm criteria. I attended the second meetings of every group as an external facilitator, and the groups got to ponder on the foundation of the work independently. We also obtained an idea of how the experiment could be started rapidly and in a more spontaneous way without too much planning and analysing. The challenge was to encounter and accept the insecurity of not-knowing ourselves.

In this phase the support group members had a new role as in-house facilitators. They became so excited that they also 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 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.

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.

In microcosms, there were three simple enabling practices: orientation, questioning, and reflection. Orientation meant stopping. At the beginning, a suitable method of orientation was selected, for instance, by attuning the purpose and intentions of the work and spending a moment in silence so that everyone could mindfully choose an orientation 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 what was happening in their so called 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.

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.

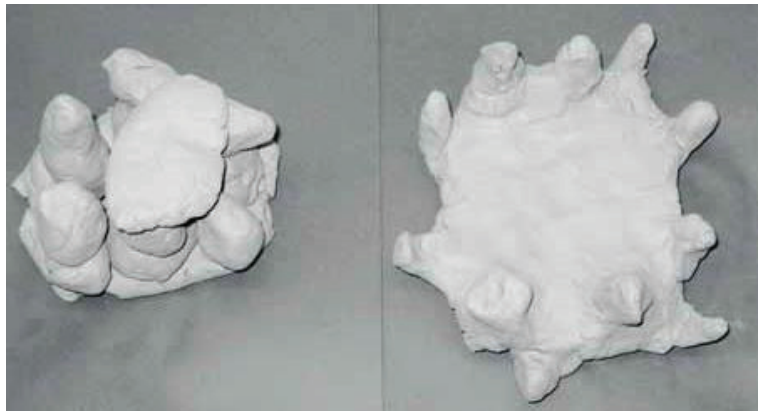
Scharmer (2007) has introduced an idea of microcosm which is a prototype, not a pilot. A pilot has to be a success, while a prototype is about maximising learning. Thus, this kind of microcosm is regarded as a strategic platform for the future. Microcosms form small entities that reflect the bigger totality. These emerge from ideas that are not thoroughly elaborated. They are formed in action when they come into contact with the people in their surroundings. This view inspired the support group in many ways, however our way of working in microcosms and forming them differed from Scharmer's (2007) view. In his view, for example, these kinds of groups are formed by selecting key people. In our case, one important choice was to enable free participation, where everyone can choose themselves to which groups they want to create and participate. Another difference is that in our case a microcosm is regarded as an experiment where the future as unknown possibilities is emerging in our action in the here and now, and participants are consciously co-creating the future through their ways of relating with themselves and others.

At the same time with microcosm work, the support group started to focus on their strategy work. This meant, for example, listening to what kinds of values (as orientations) are living in everyday work. At this time OGE was part of a learning network, where they were asked to present their so-called guiding principles: values, purpose and vision to other organisations. This gave an opportunity to create together a new way of working with these tools and concepts of conventional strategy work. The support group took the task, and soon they found out that writing slogans or making a nice

power point from their purpose and values was not the way. The in-house developer Pilvi contacted me, and asked if I could partly facilitate the support group's working. Pilvi and I preplanned the way of working with values, which was not based on thinking, but feeling and embodying them. We co-develop that in the support group by experimenting. I asked the support group members to listen to what values are living in their everyday work, and then meditate on these values. Meditating meant stopping to feel how some value (e.g. trust) was feeling in your body. After that, pairs started spontaneous talking with this value and forming it in a symbolic way from clay. Here is one example of art work, which embodies value appreciating diversity (a videotaped support group session 3/2009).

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.



Later, the whole community concentrated on listening to “how our values are living”, and the in-house developer, Pilvi was enabling many weeks practice where they concentrated on how these values are living in their work. All participants were asked to be aware of how they are or are not embodying these values. They were not asked to change anything but just focus their attention on how these values are living in their own action. This could be regarded as practicing being present without trying to change something. Here are two different participants reflections on how trust as a value was living in their everyday work (a value book, reflections from participants, spring 2009).

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.

Next, I tell about a communal day that occurred in November 2009. The work community has been working without me for one year then.

A communal day: co-creating our story through self-evaluating

In November 2009, the work community inquires what our story is now. The actual renewal project has ended a year and a half previously but we still feel that we are on the same journey. The first version of "our story" written by Seija and me has circulated in the department and prepared participants for the renewal day.

During the day, people describe their own meaningful experiences from along the journey in different ways. We surprisingly bring together our three years' renewal work by various methods. The in-house facilitator, Pilvi and I have prepared the day with many others. At the end of this day, we craft a table of outcomes (see appendix) in the wall, which includes our self-evaluations of what has happened during the three years in customer relations, communications, leadership, our identity, and our ways of knowing.

The in-house facilitator and I are facilitating the day together. We are smiling to each other, and feeling good for this special day together with all participants. The day begins with a generous home-made breakfast and organising the space with the participants. Then we continue with a small exercise opening up body awareness. After that, everyone has the opportunity to start producing a story of the renewal work by pictures and words. We have some photos ready from the journey, and there is space for drawing or making new ones. Pilvi and I have drafted an outline beforehand on the wall, which shows the four phases of the process: becoming aware, letting go, attuning, and practicing. People are able to describe in their own words how they experience these phases. One participant reflects that the memories do not appear to be in a linear order but are interwoven into an altogether different story. Visual work raises memories, feelings and moods. We move on to bodily and vocal expression: how could we describe our journey through movement and sound? This method produces an interesting series of short film clips. One group describes the change that has occurred in customer relations: a genuine interest and getting near the customer. Another group presents 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 offers Darwinist evolution development as an alternative metaphor. The message is that there is 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. This is a

reflection from other small group. 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 brings up a flower on a person's palm and says: "Actually this crystallises our whole life and work – we are remembering that flower in Tallinn." The presentation is incomplete but it includes a tremendous amount of sensitivity and humanity. So much so that someone says: "This was a good presentation but it lacked the pain of preparation." The group answers: "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 create 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 are a lot of ideas and they describe the spirit of our story in many ways. Here are two examples of these.

1+1 can also equal 11

One group presents 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 accumulate. 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 spiraling 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 is 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 come up with change, customers, people... collaborating and we try to depict them with symbols. Immediately we think of a phrase... like from squares to circles – this graph where there could be one square that 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 don’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 emerges 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, which allows plurality and diversity. It seems a shift from one single truth towards various truths, which is repeated later in the discussion.

In our self-reflective session, I ask participants to silence themselves. In this guided “mini retreat” we silence ourselves and listen to breathing and embodied feelings in this moment. Next I ask in silence what feels most remarkable as a personal experience in this journey. This “silent retreat” feels somewhat similar to that orientation practice but includes a different section which is open to looking at our story and how it feels to us just now. Before this, we made some simple bodily practices, which probably enable different kinds of being in the here and now in our bodies with others in the room. The silent retreat takes about ten minutes, and then ten minutes for silent writing down. Afterwards, everyone shares her/his experiences to the question: “what was most meaningful for you in this journey?” Here are most of these, which I have taken from the book Power of Encountering (Takanen & Petrow 2013):

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 stressed that they might notice my lack of knowledge.

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

Even from incompleteness and questioning we have managed to gather “strength” to carry on, but it has all come from the facilitator.

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’.

The most important thing for me has been to get to know my colleagues, their personalities 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.

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

(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.

Our way of working together on the change exercises has been significant. We have achieved the most productivity in the process groups 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.

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 for 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.

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

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-centered 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 communal 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.

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.

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!

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.

Along the journey, the most meaningful thing for me has been being together, getting to know each other, the occasional open and frank moments when roles have been stripped away, the feeling of togetherness. WE are here, in this together. WE are the OGE, WE are negotiating, WE are legislating. WE together!

The journey is just 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.

Is there human feeling and a genuine desire for development behind the bureaucracy?

We should actively strive for change! Difference in opinions is not criticism but creating a permissive atmosphere. Focus and being present are important.

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

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.

To always be myself, to tolerate others as they are, and carry out collective tasks together and give my best from the viewpoint of the organisation – and inspire myself to work in a way that makes the work not feel like work.

I have learned to ask more questions. I still give too many “answers” (the rush mode that I need to let go of). I have learned to sometimes recognise my influence on why the dialogue is not working. To some extent, I have learned to seize the emerging way of working by changing my practices immediately.

In the work, we've enabled our personal growth, listened to diversity and gained understanding that helps us listen or just be present.

Our ways of working have been made more visible so that they can and should be changed.

It is significant that the objective has been recognised – but not nearly achieved.

I really hope that the ways of working that we have been “practising” will stay as a new model of working.

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 for development work and renewal.

It was a joy to notice that in favourable conditions, I can still bring out innovations from my empty-feeling head. In group work, an idea is developed like a snowball.

Reflections about this day

These reflections are mostly based on my writings in the book *Power of Encountering* (Takanen & Petrow 2010, Takanen & Petrow 2013). As the facilitator, this day felt to me embodying those orientations that had become central during these years: being present, openness to what is emerging and appreciation of many ways of knowing. I regarded this as practicing: the group work, presentations and cover suggestions embodied courage, joint effort, trust and an appreciation for diversity – those values which participants appreciated. 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 those that were not happening when we started three years earlier. It struck me that there was now space for incompleteness.

Many participants told that they have 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 work 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 who were relating with themselves and others in softer ways. Even the table of outcomes (see appendix) that we made felt alive – I saw our whole process crystallised in it in a lively way. To me it seemed not just an intellectual reflection.

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 was acceptable to even admit embarrassing situations. One participant reflected: *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!*

Afterwards, I revisited this communal day by looking at the video tape of the session (a videotape, communal day 11/2009). I focused particularly on our ways of interacting. Interaction seemed very open: participants gave much spontaneous feedback to each other, they were listening to each other, and sometimes some continued others' ideas in other ways of interpreting in an appreciative way. Participants were often laughing together. In some moments the atmosphere shifts when someone was communicating one-dimensionally by stating a strong opinion, there was a short silent moment where everyone waits what will happen next. However, this particular moment does not change the atmosphere and there was an acceptance for that too.

There were many different voices in this day. Many those personal accounts could be regarded as we-speak without separating you and other. In this situation, I sensed a new kind of soft we-speak without a strong construction to I and you, or you and them. This could be interpreted in a way that participants were not relating so strongly to constructing separate individual stances, which happened often when we started, but they were constructing more relational stances. Many accounts felt to me very personal, first-person accounts where people are willing to be open their feelings and also show their vulnerability. I regard these as the new ways of relating more personally, which actually brings people close to each other. There were many who spoke openly about their personal experiences – this was not the case when we started. I heard in these comments an acceptance of incompleteness and the sharing of feelings and, honest self-reflection. This had expanded each of our capabilities to be present, in the here and now: in our incompleteness, in many voices, in all kind of feelings.

Reflections from this phase

In this phase, my role was no longer central, in-house facilitators were capable of supporting their renewing. However, I really enjoyed it when

they asked me to participate in facilitating. My question was often in these situations: how we are practicing now or how we are embodying the future in this moment?

In this phase, the support group was organising and facilitating their development sessions themselves. A few times I was asked to participate and support their work. This example day shows how all participants were participating in co-creative ways: we were doing a story with many stories on the wall using photos, drawings and other materials. The support group had prepared the day in many ways and other participants were also participating in this preparing, like making a beautiful space with home-made breakfast (not ordered from restaurant as conventionally).

Working in small groups, they continued by themselves. There was freedom to continue and freedom to stop when participants felt so. Some microcosms wanted to end their working, and consciously stopped. This was made by reflecting on what we have learnt and by speaking about “the funeral” of this microcosm. Other microcosms continued. Some participants told me that the way of working in microcosms affected new work projects: they felt more dialogical, reflective and spontaneous.

Drawing together

In this chapter, I have storied this development project in a more structured way than it felt at that time when we were working together in OGE. Let me now reflect briefly on this writing. This story is told through my voice and I have tried to use some of the participant’s stories, drawings and reflections. In this writing, I have seen and felt myself as a relational being who co-constructs realities with others. Actually, I had often the feeling of “we” as a subject but this could sound dominating in the way that I am speaking on behalf of others. I made an effort to allow many voices picking up the stories and artwork that participants made. I also received warm support from two participants who have been all the time willing to read my every version about this story.

One challenge with storying our development project was that I felt that the way of doing it was more important than what we did. However, it seemed impossible to say something about how, if you do not tell about what. Thus, I solved this structuring in this chapter telling about “what” and “how” briefly and in chapter 6 I will focus on “how” we actually practiced being present in developmental work. Another challenge has been how to give enough space for reader to make her/his own interpretation and at same time crystallise what I have seen as most essential to tell. Thus, this is

a strong but hopefully open-ended interpretation of what seemed important from a particular perspective. This can bring only one story among many other possibilities to re-story this. I have also wanted to show my own vulnerability in the process by sharing what I had learnt and my difficulties to not try control the process even with some soft ways. Hence, I included also my own process through particular questions that emerged in every phase.

In the next chapter, I will ask what kind of relating emerged in particular moments in our development work, and how the soft self-other relating was invited in those moments.

MOVEMENT 3

RE-RELATING WITH...

6 Relating Differently

The story of development work gave many hints about how our interaction and the ways of relating shifted through this project. In this chapter, I will continue by asking 1) what kind of relating emerged in particular moments and 2) how was the soft self-other relating invited in those moments? I have organised this chapter as follows. At the start, I describe how I have chosen the particular moments to be described and analysed from the relational constructionist perspective. Then in subsection 6.1, I will describe how the participant's relate to/with their customers and themselves and analyse how the soft self-other relating emerged in those moments. In subsection 6.2, I will make some notions about how our facilitator-client relation was slowly viewed differently through relating as co-creative partners. Describing this last relation seemed a sound solution from a relational perspective and as a co-inquirer, not only to describe other participants' ways of relating differently, but also our ways of relating together. Finally, I will conclude these notions on the ways of relating how they connect to being present at work.

I have used here Hosking's (2005, 2010b) concepts subject-object relating and soft self-other relating to describe two very different ways of relating. In everyday action in organisations, relating is happening in the many different ways of talking, listening, gesturing and thinking. Hosking and Kleisterlee (2009, 3) have pointed out that often simultaneous occasions of coming together involve, for example, sayings, nonverbal gestures, voice tone, and artifacts. I will explore our documented experiences from a relational constructionist perspective.

I have used videotaped materials from our sessions and my accounts from my research diary. Descriptions from those moments are re-written in the present tense because I try to invite the reader to imagine and feel the situations as on-going happening. When I watched particular moments on videotapes, I sensed these situations again in my body in the here and now: this enabled me to feel how past, present and future are overlapping in the here and now (see also Hosking 2010b).

Let me next describe how I have chosen those moments and the relatings that I have described and analysed. The one central choice was to select in what relations shifts happened, and I whether have enough material to analyse. Because I had participated in this process closely, I had already

some thoughts that connected reflections with other participants. Seija and I had already picked up some moments for the story book on the basis of experiences. We had mostly chosen moments that were meaningful to many participants, these were stories of moments that were re-told many times and participant's came back to them as one kind of anchoring point on our journeys. In whole community days and some other situations, participants had pointed out many times the difference in their relationship with customers, and customer satisfaction scores were also making remarkable progress. This seemed interesting to explore closer. I chose OGE's partnership relation with me because it seemed to fit this co-inquiry and relational constructionist stance. I supposed that the relations with customers and our relation where connected to relation with oneself. Thus, I chose this relation too even if it seemed difficult to analyse separately because it happened in situations where others are like colleagues and/or customers too. Other options I considered were their relations to their environment, such as their own ministry, negotiation partners and their relating with their in-house colleagues. However, I had insufficient material concerning these.

When I started describing and analysing these relations separately, it became problematic in many ways. I had separated, 1) participant's way of relating with themselves, 2) participant's way of relating with their customers and, 3) their way of relating with me in facilitator-client relation. This seemed to be a very artificial separation because in all those situation I was analysing these three relations were intervening with each other. I felt that describing and analysing moments of soft self-other relating could not be done in a sound way by making such separations. Thus I considered it a questionable choice to make these three separate categorisations from the relational constructionist view. So, I chose again to continue describing and analysing these relations in not so separating way.

I had chosen to look at some of those moments that participants described as meaningful moments where soft self-other relating happened. First, I tried to take situations from different phases of our process: I selected particular moments from the start, the middle and the end of our project, and moments that were one or two years after that. In this way, I could make some contrast because there were more moments of soft self-other relating in the middle and the end, and after than in first year. Second, I tried to find moments in which the whole community participated, in which the Happy Customer group worked with both me and themselves and some other moments in which there participated just a few people. These three kinds of groupings were spaces where we done developing work.

Third, in this selecting process, I also considered what kind of whole picture the story of development work (ch. 5) gives to the reader, and should I complement it with other moments that are not described therein. I added, for example, moments from a publication seminar of the co-written story book (Takanen & Petrow 2010) because many participants there felt another kind of relating. I found it problematic to analyse how soft self-other relating only invited picking some short moment because often it seemed to be a longer process of preparing differently. Thus, I also took some three sequential sessions where the Happy Customer group worked. These sessions were used to give more detailed analysis of how relating with the customer differently was invited. Overall, I had more interesting situations to describe and analyse than what was possible to achieve. I was also aware that this selecting, and bringing attention to something are acts that invite and close particular kinds of realities. Similarly, the way of describing and analysing was inviting particular kinds of realities. I chose to participate by making those relational realities that open up possibilities to re-relating in soft ways.

I also used these selected moments in diverse ways to give examples to the reader of how relating were invited in those moments. The way of describing those moments, which I have done as a participative action researcher, is strongly connected to my relationships with these people and the embodied feelings and notions that are only possible because I have participated there. I suggest that when you have participated in these situations, you can feel the difference between two ways of relating that can be conceptualised as strong subject-object relating and as soft self-other relating. Actually, there are not only two ways; but they are used as conceptual devices that help us to examine these ways more closely.

So, next I will elaborate briefly on how subject-object relating or soft self-other relating can be noticed. Hosking (2005, 611-612) has elaborated five key features in subject-object construction of relations, where things are represented as unified, bounded and separate (see also Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009, 6). Subject-object discourses construct an active-passive binary where lies subject and object. Second, actions, relationships and outcomes are explained by the characteristics of entities. Third, knowledge is seen as an individual possession. Fourth, the subject is seen to exercise her/his knowing mind in order to influence the Other. Fifth, relating is instrumental; the Subject achieves power over the Other.

In strong subject-object relating, people clearly separate themselves and others. They also objectify themselves and/or others by ways that stabilise

their experiences and often make them look more fixed than they are. This could be done, for example, by underlining one's own opinions, making very clear statements, trying to control. This could be also done in more subtle ways, like understanding other from your own stance, perceiving ourselves and environment as separate entities. In soft self-other relating, there forms only soft or minimal separation between oneself and other. Imagine, for example, a dialogue where you no longer feel whose ideas are those which you co-construct. In these moments, there are no debating and separate opinions, but interaction is more dialogical in the sense that there self and the other can co-emerge (Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009, 11). Hosking and Kleisterlee (2009, 1) have suggested that the soft self-other differentiation can be understood as four orientations in the case of a Buddhism inspired hospice: organising from openness, organising from confidence, organising from the heart, and organising that is good in the beginning, good in the middle and good in the end. As I view these notions, they are described partly metaphorically and in poetical ways, and thus they open up many possible directions. There are many concrete examples of what is meant by these. Organising from openness is connected to dialogue in the sense of a very special kind of talk and listening where there is a willingness to suspend one's own assumptions and certainties (Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009, 11). Organising from confidence means light structures, ways of being in the now. Organising from nowness connects to listening and feeling. To me these all seem to be intermingled, in their text (which is dialogue between them), and not strongly separated as different categories.

6.1 Relating with Customers – and Oneself

This first section starts by describing moments where participants relate differently with their customers and how soft self-other relating were invited in those moments. I have done this 1) based on their own self-reflections in three community days, 2) by my explorations made from one group's (Happy Customer group) three sessions and one customer situation that this group organised by themselves and, 3) in a publication seminar for OGE's customers and partners after our project where participants met their customers differently, and from its preparation. I explore these as situated encounterings in a verbal way here, and also using my own, bodily nonverbal felt observations in these encounterings.

Ways of relating to/with customer through participant's self-evaluations

In one of our first community days, all the participants told and drew stories about how customer relationships have changed over the last few decades. There were many ways of telling stories about the customer relationship: a linear timeline with so-called facts by year and who was the Head of Office at that time, dry humorous pictures about shifts in customer relationship, a cartoon story about how they did not even answer the phone when customers called. However, there was one strong dominating linear time-driven ploy from a hierarchical, one-way communication towards finding customers, as they put it. They told of how some decades ago there was no talk about customers. At that time, customers were constructed as subservients who they told what to do and how. Only a decade or two previously they started to speak of customers. This history was living in their attitudes as *"we know better than they (about) what is needed"*, even though they now had more customer-talk. Three years later (a videotaped session 11/2009) in other community day, one participant reflected that they were *"not seeing customers, or even each other, just living their own life, as we have always lived then we started to open up..."* Another participant reflected in a similar direction by saying that: *"...(now) we are listening to our customers without an agenda, in an open way"* and continued *"we are not planning or trying to control, but encountering our customers as partners – doing together"*.

These accounts remind me of how Koivunen (2003, 176) has described a similar way of acting very accurately: *We sometimes begin an encountering absolutely certain of our knowledge and understanding, absolutely convinced that we have nothing to learn from the encounter itself: we enter the situation totally under the spell of our stereotype, our preconceptions. We can hear only what we want to hear, or what we already know and believe; we can hear nothing different, nothing new.* She connects this description to Levin's (1989, 19 in Koivunen 2003, 176) view that our minds have often already been set, our course of action fixed, and our experience predetermined. In OGE participants have spoken in a self-reflective manner about this similar kind way of acting as the culture of being right and a habit of already knowing answers. These notions can be understood as indicating this and that thinking, strong subject-object relating, which includes the power over stance.

Next, I will continue with accounts from other whole community's self-reflective evaluation about change work outcomes (appendix) that all

participants created together almost three years after starting. These self-reflective accounts help to describe how they were constructing customer relations, and what kind of shifts they were experiencing in that moment. They were asked also to reflect on “*what they have let go in these relations*” and I will focus on this aspect here. Letting go accounts (appendix, last column) can seem to be like just a list of “*which ways of thinking and acting have been let go of*”, but I suggest that letting go can be read as re-relating, not just an act where you let go of something. In a similar sense, these letting go -accounts were not described by participants as some type of truths or fixed things, but as on-going notions.

One small group remarked that they did not think on behalf of others like they did earlier and there is no necessity to be right. They felt that they were no longer constructing “*an independent and narrow definition of our work’s additional value to the customer*”. I suggest that many of these self-reflections can be considered as indicators of softer self-other relations. If participants felt that they were not determining, it seems to me that they were not viewing customers as objects (to whom they give services) and themselves as subjects, but were instead viewing each other as co-subjects. Participants also described that they have let go of the fear of making mistakes, the “*necessity of being right*” and the necessity having a solution that seems to be connected to the image of a knowing expert. To me these self-reflections point to a shift in the way of relating with customers: relating sounds to me to be more open, and softly relating. These “letting go” -accounts seem to show that rationally-oriented, narrowly determined, one-way communication that connects power over practices was no longer the only way of working.

In the same evaluation situation, some participants reflected very cautiously that “*customer satisfaction seems promising*”. This way of putting it seems very prudent because customer satisfaction figures had increased remarkably over these years in all eleven indicators. Here, their way of expressing is as self-critical and careful, as it also was when we started, but there was space for amazement too. This shift in customer satisfaction felt amazing to some of them. A participant who calculated these results said that she checked them again and again, because “*the shift looked so amazing that there had to be some mistake*”.

Taking a three-year perspective, I view that the relation with customers received more space in everyday practices and discourses, as participants ways of reflecting seem to show, and participants themselves brought customer relations to the centre of our change work. I will give a particular

example of this next section where the Happy Customer group organised a new kind of customer session that they organised by themselves while our project was on going.

Constructing “happy customer” in action

Let me describe this customer session, which I wrote about in my research diary as a participative observer:

The space is organised in a very open and dialogue inviting way for small groups; and there are around thirty participants. Pentti, one participant from the Happy Customer group, stands there smiling warmly, and I go to hug him. He feels very satisfied with this special customer event that their Happy Customer group has organised. I can see other people from the Happy Customer group at different tables, and also others from OGE. All participants are sitting at small group tables and waiting. I take a place at one table where many of their customers that I have never met are sitting. They say hello to me very politely by shaking my hand. I feel more like an observer than an active participant. Today I am not facilitating but just being a participative researcher. I take my notebook from the table, and feel some curiosity as energetic feelings in my body.

Now, the head of the office, Teuvo, starts a customer session by saying “*we are organising this as a conversational session*” and “*my colleagues are making notes from your talking*”. He asks a customer from a small organisation to start. (Later I heard that this was exceptional; normally they focused on bigger organisations). This customer had prepared a speech, and he speaks ironically in a very polite way to the audience, and reflects on what has worked and what that has not worked in their relation with OGE because they asked for it. Teuvo seems satisfied with this critical speech, and encourages all to give open feedback – and also be critical. I am impressed in how naturally and in such an inviting way he says this. Later, a different customer gives “*bloody feedback*” that sometimes OGE is saying something but acting differently concerning negotiated solutions. I can feel excitement in my body as a warm tickling in the stomach and I am thinking how will they take to this? Teuvo surprises me again, and maybe some others too, by looking at him directly and saying warmly: “*This feels like very bloody feedback, but this is what we want to hear – honest feedback...*” Little later, I feel some kind of proudness when Teuvo answers a participant’s question in this fashion: “*we have not thought about this, we don’t have any answer yet, but my colleagues are writing this down...*” They no longer know all the answers, I think silently and continue: it is actually amazing how the Happy Customer group has also engaged many other people in their organisation to this new way of acting. How did they do this? Later, all participants go together for a nice warm-spirited lunch, and the atmosphere feels special.

In this account, my surprise and the feeling of being proud, reflect how I have seen their earlier ways of acting as different, and in these moments I felt the difference. I elaborated four special features of these ways of relating that, in this situation, do not make subject-object separations come from a power over stance: 1) They are inviting open as well as critical feedback, 2) there is not only one group, but many people participating in

this new way of encountering customers 3) the Head of Office was speaking about colleagues and working with them as equals, 4) there is also an acceptance of not-yet-knowing answers.

This account shows new ways of relating, but it does not tell a lot of how these soft self-other ways of relating were invited. So, the next exploration gives a description of how the Happy Customer-group were working “*to encounter the customer in a new way*” as they put it. Through describing these sessions, I can analyse how they were preparing themselves to act in more spontaneous ways with customers and giving space to what emerges in the here and now in relations. I made this analysis using videotapes of three 3-hours sessions, and also re-reading transcribed texts of these sessions several times.

How softer ways of relating were invited?

Let me next move from a description to ask how this kind of relating was invited in this situation. I use the passive (was invited) to point that it was not just the outcome of our intentional acts but the many features of the situation and participants’ ways of acting that invited it together. This kind of analysis is only opening some possible views of what invited soft relating in those situations.

I focused on two different layers: participant’s ways of relating to/with customer in their ways of speaking and also their ways of relating to/with themselves in these sessions. I selected these particular three working sessions that happened in the same spring as it is a continuing process of learning together. This material also enabled me to explore their preparing for relating customers differently. I participated in two sessions as facilitator-researcher, and in one they were working together by themselves. At that time, we had already worked one year together, but in different groups. This group had worked only a few times together before these sessions. However, dialogical practices were practiced already for more than one year in the small groups, and participants had noticed that interaction was more open and many of those participants who were silent at the beginning had started to participate. In this phase, there was an intention to move the focus to more to experimenting and dialoguing at the same time.

Here I have written a description of these sessions in the present tense. I describe how group members prepare themselves to meet customers differently and how they at the same time relate to/with each other and themselves differently.

In the first session, the group members work by themselves and try to create a shared view of how to encounter customers openly. They think again and again about how encounterings with customers could happen. In this process of re-thinking, they are re-constructing their reality in dialogue with each other. This way of encountering customers, is connected to letting go of many taken-for-granted ways of acting and thinking. For example, the first one suggests that their Head of Office should participate if they are meeting customers' upper managers. However, they come to a conclusion that it is not a good idea because it could possibly create rigidity. In this way, this group is also co-creating new values in their internal dialogue session. The other example of their accepted ways of thinking comes up when they think about whether they should ask an outsider to interview customers, because then the experiment and knowledge could be more objective. However, this view shifted quickly to the other perspective: they see that it is important to go there as themselves with an open orientation, and not try to be objective.

The group's second session starts with a conversation about the break in information in their group, and I try to help them to reflect on this. After that participants start to discuss how their work is going. They are reflecting also on what they named "*the weaknesses*" of their own thinking, and acting, their own action in the group. There emerges an openness to reflect on their ways of taking roles, avoidance of negative feedback, and acts of saving face. The third session is organised with some specific but open issues that I as a facilitator partly introduce: what experimenting could mean in their action, what has happened in the group and how new ways of acting can live in everyday encountering. In this session, there is a very light and delightful atmosphere, which shows up as many brave expressions and ideas, and a warm sense of humour. Dialogue is flowing and taking new directions creatively.

Their key idea in their three sessions was to find ways "*to meet customers with an empty board*" as they put it. This meant not having a strict agenda, not having fixed plans, but being open to listening to what customers want to say without having planned an agenda in their own environment. Concretely, they contacted customers through a very warm and inviting e-mail, and then arranged a meeting in the customers' office, rather than in their own. They went to these situations as pairs who were mixed: sometimes both were experts, sometimes one was an executive or an assistant. They were from all three units of OGE: the personnel policy unit, the collective agreement unit, and the research services unit. "*New way of encountering*" as participant's put it, meant to them the way of meeting

customers with openness. This openness meant concretely letting go of agendas and an attitude of knowing on behalf customers.

So, how was relating differently invited? Let me look at this. When the Happy Customer group were discussing these three sessions, sometimes they were debating, sometimes dialoguing, which includes reflecting in action. They were not just making their own separate opinions to be heard but were starting to think together (Isaacs 1999) and creating new ways of thinking and acting. People were continuing each other's comments. However, there were also strong opinions that culminated sometimes too. I suggest that these ways of relating with oneself and with their colleagues invites and supports constructing new ways of relating with customer.

Even though a participant's idea of "*encountering the customer in a new way*" sounds very simple, acting this way needed preparing processes in the group where people were organising their taken-for-granted everyday practices again one-by-one. Actually, it seemed not at all simple to construct together in a group what "*to meet the customer from with an empty slate*" could mean practically. All kinds of earlier ways of working with customers were present in their discussions around the issue. "*Did this mean that we just go in and tell: open your bags?*" asks one. Later, one participant tries to conclude: *We can't go there by asking: what are you doing here (with an authoritative voice), but what is your situation here (with a softer voice), (then) they could share naturally what are the challenges, expectations and in this way this discussion will go on fluently...we are ambassadors of the (whole) department...they (customers) tell truly their points....* After these encounterings with customers, one of them reflected: "*We don't need to think on behalf of the customers... they look at holistic ways, better than we could even dream of.*"

I analysed their relating with their customer and also relating with themselves in dialogical action in these three sessions. This meant how they were speaking about customers, how they were working together and rethinking their relations. I mostly used their own metaphors to describe these themes:

- The way of meeting customer: "*open listening without ready answers*"
- Encountering difficult issues and feedback: "*not closing ears anymore*"
- "*Recovering from all knowing*"
- "*Seeing customer as common*"
- Encountering uncertainty and letting go of controlling
- "*We are in a learning process*"

Let me describe these briefly. The first theme is one kind of a plot of their whole story: they are experimenting with a new way of meeting by listening without already knowing solutions or answers, which I have described earlier. This connects to suspending answers and to the too strict agendas which they have got used to. The second theme connects to the way of handling *“difficult issues and feedback”*. Here some of them describe how earlier they had closed their ears to negative feedback, and tried to encounter only customers who think in a similar way as they do. As I showed before, they overcome this in their special customer session. The third theme connects to these two others: *“recovering from all knowing”*. What is interesting is that they see it like a healing process. The fourth theme brings the idea that they have not always seen their customers as common from the whole organisation’s perspective, but through their unit’s work and aims. This separating way of action was now questioned. The fifth theme deepens others by bringing a need to encounter uncertainty and to let go of controlling. The sixth theme seems to me to connect to all-knowing because there is a self-reflective notion that *“we are in a learning process”*. They are seeing themselves as learners, not as all-knowing experts.

Let me continue with further notions of how they were relating differently in these three sessions and their experiments with the customers afterwards. These notions also answer how these ways of relating were invited. I have organised these into five notions that seem to me to be a subtle shift from subject-object relating towards softer relating. First, they were suspending their own views and in this way preparing to open up more to the moment. Second, they were giving space to customers’ views. Third, they were placing themselves in a situation that they could not control. Fourth, they were breaking hierarchical and positional rules by a) going to customer’s places (not asking them to come to visit), b) going as unexpected pairs that were not normally working as pairs and not taking a role of departmental representatives and c) meeting the Head of Offices (who are higher in the hierarchy) of customer organisations without the presence of their Head of Office. Fifth, they were critically self-reflecting and seeing themselves as learners and open to different ways of working.

I suggest that the way how this group worked together partly invited new ways of seeing their relations with the customer. It seemed to me that the guiding principles of these groups, (called microcosm criteria, see subch. 5.3), invited participants to practice in a more dialogical and spontaneous way of working together, where they not only did re-relating with their customers but themselves.

Relating soft ways: surrendering to vulnerability

Next, I want to move to different moments that occurred after our project. I describe some particular moments from a publication seminar of the story (Takanen&Petrow 2010) where I felt soft self-other relating with OGE's participant's and their customers. These accounts are from my research diary. With these I will show how this kind of soft self-other relating makes us vulnerable when we surrender to what emerges in the here and now.

“How does it feel that this story is now getting published?” I ask curiously. *“It feels like standing naked in front of our customers”*, Teuvo starts. *“Vulnerability is there”*. The whole group discusses how sharing the story is like bringing possibilities to a new organisational identity, here: customers can start to see and connect them differently. Suddenly, I remember one of our first meeting years ago, when Teuvo said to me *“it would be good to publish some kind of research-based change model, which could be implemented in the whole governmental public sector and help in change situations”*. Now this hope for a general model and delivering it has disappeared. Instead of it a will for sharing our story is meaningful to us, and re-relating with others with open dialogue and possibilities – would they like to become active partners in this continuing story?

Some weeks later...

It is a sunny day, and it takes some time to go by a little boat to a beautiful island called Unisaari near Helsinki. The publishing seminar of the book *Kohtaamisen voima* (the Power of Encountering) is starting. The hall is open and there were some chairs in a circle, no place for any speakers or power points. It starts with an orientation, silent listening to yourself in this situation. Then people from OGE started to tell their story about the renewing process with drawings. In the break, one of their customers/partners, Rauni Mannila comes to me smiling warmly and saying something like *“this kind encountering deeply – it is love”*. I did not know her well before but I feel a strong connection from where this way of speaking comes. I felt warm love and deep relating happening – not in me, but in the here and now, in the space between all participants.

Early autumn sun is shining through the windows, participants are welcomed in with handshakes. I am waited, peacefully without any hurry we gather together to a dark but warm space and sit in a circle. Participants from OGE told honestly their own experiences. In official situations, I have met most of them before. What stops me now and touches me: these people tell about their own feelings and thoughts in a totally different way and different context than I had expected. Suddenly I am participating in something different. We are clearly in the world of

work life but in a new perspective, these officials reveal their dreams by becoming visible as themselves. In the break, I feel palpable discussions. This event feels well-prepared: the place, the space, the time, feeling of giving time, catering and the surrounding landscape. This islet landscape fills me with specific images, memories. I feel the uniqueness of this moment. (Rauni's written account)

By these three short accounts I would like to make alive again some moments where participants from OGE prepare a publication seminar and encounter their customers and partners through soft self-other relating. The first account, our preparing discussion before publishing seminar, gives an opportunity to see how this different relating is experienced as personal, where you are not there in a narrow sense in some role. Soft self-other relating (Hosking 2010b) connected strongly with becoming vulnerable and becoming personally involved. The second and third account tries to make both visible and sensible how relating without strong subject-object separations are invited in this particular situation. To some of us, it felt a moment where we were no longer feeling separate. In this flowing moment of relating that was just happening; there were not a feeling of separate actors, acting and some result.

How these ways of relating were invited?

What makes this particular situation interesting to analyse, is that it could be seen as a special moment of on-going reality-making and identity-making (Hosking 2010b), where new arises. There, both OGE as an organisation and these people as persons are taking brave steps coming out with this living story, which is not conventional at all in this kind of working environment. It does not follow the logic of acting as experts who separate their feelings and other personal processes from their work, and still it feels a working context as Rauni has written her account. This is a moment of encountering wherein they are meeting their customers and relating differently, and *“like standing naked”* as Teuvo put it. This could be understood as both strong reality and identity-making encountering, which makes a difference to their usual ways of relating. In this moment, they can be seen differently and they can connect personally with their customers. Let me show how they were aware of this and in what way they/we made preparations for this situation. Descriptions of preparing sessions give one answer how soft self-other relating were invited.

This particular example is also interesting in the way that these people take responsibility for creating together a seminar that is resonating with new ways of being. This event is after our project, and so I was there as just one participant (not as facilitator), and partly participating in these

preparations, but not as one who was taking responsibility for facilitation. There was also one participant from the publisher, the Finnish Innovation Fund (later FIF), at the first preparation meeting. Before this meeting they had also asked me to start the seminar with an orientation practice because they felt that this particular practice could give everyone some experience about what kind of process we had lived through. They also thought that this practice could enable everyone to open up in this particular moment and being present.

The question of *“how to make it with a new spirit”* comes at the core of dialogues in preparation meetings. Two participants from OGE start this issue with the idea that they want *“to embody renewing ways of being and acting”* as they put it, in this seminar. This means to them, for example, finding a physical setting that is cozy, open and light. The space will be organised in an open way where people can sit in a semi-circle, which could enable dialogical interaction. The in-house developer does not want to make a reservation by calling, but wants to arrive *“to sense how it feels and what it makes possible”*. Next, is another unique idea from them. They want to give participants hand-made bookmarks, which their people have made themselves. To them this gesture embodies a new spirit. It could be seen also to be very personal relating. Their partner from FIF understood this idea differently because it is probably so surprising to what she expects. She suggests that she can take prototypes of bookmarks and copy them in some professional copying company. She cannot imagine that they really are thinking about making all 50 by themselves. I am also surprised, and strongly touched by this. There is a warm and enlarging feeling in my chest. I feel releasing happiness that they do not need me any more in their still-on-going renewal work; they can embody this new spirit themselves.

In the last preparation session OGE participants get the insight that a story should not be told by the most active participants, but instead through many voices. They want to bring to a seminar sketches of story covers that everyone has made together in small groups. These six different pictures could be seen as artefacts that embody experiential knowing in a presentational form. They are telling stories of what kind of journey this renewing process, has felt. These sketches of story covers have been done to describe what was most important to participants. They asked one participant from every book cover group to come to participate in telling our story together by starting with their group’s drawing. The idea is that participants are not telling it exact the same as earlier but telling how they experience it now in this situation.

Let me now analyse these particular ways of soft self-other relating. The way of making preparations includes four specific features 1) people who are doing it are enthusiastic about it without the normal commission, 2) the way of doing is co-creating together, 3) they leave space for the unknown and the spontaneous and 4) relating with the customer is more important than a book. To me all these features seem to show a particular way of relating without strong subject-object separations. Comparing this to earlier ways of acting this is almost in complete contrast a) it is not a strict commission from the Head of Office, however the support/mandate is there (actually he is participating like the others) b) nobody is preparing it alone, as they often were doing c) there is no planning that is closing d) it is not substance-oriented but open encountering, e) many voices are invited when they ask different participants to share what they feel to be meaningful in that situation.

The new way of relating in the preparations and publishing seminar seems to me to include three other interesting features that invite soft relating. The first is putting oneself there in a way that makes you vulnerable and also possibly ridiculed. If we look at the gesture of giving hand-made bookmarks, it is easy to see that this makes them vulnerable. They are doing something that is not considered their job, they could be skillful or not at it, but that is not the question. They want to give bookmarks that maybe are seen as looking silly or even naïve. Second, this way of relating is not-closed in the ways that they are preparing, it is not planning a strict agenda. Third, this way of relating seems to invite others to participate differently, and makes space for that. It is connected to allowing yourself to find an orientation where you can, in a spontaneous way, relate with people there by telling stories. These stories do not sound closed, but open-ending and actually on-going in this particular moment. People can even imagine themselves as a part of the stories.

Drawing together: relating with customers and oneself

I suggest that there is one specific feature connected to all of these other features that invited soft self-other relating in these moments I have described and analysed. Being present in the here and now seems to be at the base of it. Hosking (2010, 234) describes how a shift to the present and possibilities invites improvising, which can also be seen in these examples. In the publication seminar participants give space to what is emerging when most of them are not saying what they have pre-planned but what feels important to them in that moment in relating. This shows how they no longer act like there is no one truth or that it is needed to tell the truth, but

that it could emerge in this moment, in a living way. But this does not happen without some kind of preparing, as I have shown. This preparing is not something to do, but to be oriented in moment-to-moment-encounterings, giving yourself towards spontaneous relating. Hosking and Kleisterlee (2009, 15) underline that organising from now-ness means listening and feeling instead of already knowing. They (Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009, 6) speak of relating in ways that are not knowing in the sense of *“being fully in-the-moment and open to what the situation might call for”*.

We can also look at these soft ways of relating with Garfinkel’s (1967, 9 in Shotter 2009, 161) concept of another first time by which he means seeing every moment as new. Here, in these accounts, participants are not simply saying what is planned but open to this moment with these participants. Here we could also see a *“readiness to respond in a particular way, spontaneously, to a unique and particular circumstance”* (Shotter 2009, 161). Many participants expressed that they felt co-creative moments wherein something absolutely new and unrepeatable emerged, not some planned talk or show. I felt it this way. I asked other participants (their customers) how it felt to listen to these stories, and some of them answered that it sounded as if people were having fun in this process. Customers sensed it: they could feel something in their way of speaking and gesturing – they could relate to it as something living. One of them, Rauni, said to me later: *“I felt being heard, even though I didn’t say anything, you know? It is possible to become heard without any words”*. Hosking and Kleisterlee (2009, 11) use the term dialogue in a very particular sense, and underline that not all talk is dialogue – and indeed – not all dialogue is talk. Customer’s experience sounds to me like that kind of nonverbal dialogue that is not talk.

Soft self-other relating also meant here relating with our senses, giving space to experiencing and sensing. Ong (in Hosking 2010b, 236) has explored the aural/oral cultural, where senses guide our experiencing and cultures dominated by the alphabet. He speaks particularly of a *“transformation of the sensorium”*, which Hosking (2010, 236-237) describes with her concepts as follows: a holistic sense of participation where the differentiation of self and other was minimal or soft. Rauni’s experience sounds like a holistic sense of participation: she felt being heard without any words. My own experience was similar in that I just felt this flowing feeling where co-creation was happening in ways where there was no me and them, but just participative happening.

6.2 From Consultant-Client Relating towards Co-Creative Partnership

In this second section, I make notions of how first just I and later also other participants tried to create a co-creative partnership. Even though I saw OGE's participants and my relation as a facilitator–client and co-inquirer–partnership, they viewed it at first more as a consultant–client relationship. I will describe three particular moments as those breaking moments where subject-object relating was opening towards other possibilities.

Earlier I have described how I view myself as a co-creative facilitator of change work, and at the same time as a vulnerable research instrument connecting with this environment and other participants. I tried to work with others by not taking a strong professional role as an expert, but by enabling a power with stance. This meant that I invited others to become conscious co-creators of realities, and they responded to it in many ways that sometimes felt to me as separating. But what did this mean in the concrete situation? I will reflect on this with my research diary accounts.

In 2006 before we started, we had a conversation with the manager group where they and I evaluated if we could start working together. In these situations, I tried to ensure that kind of start which could support our project's purposes. I felt responsible to make sure that they knew somewhat what this kind of emerging way of working could mean. However, most important to me was that they already had experiences of how to work in this way, and these two persons (Director General and in-house developer) both felt enthusiasm for this. I underlined to them that we cannot know what results will come, and this can be viewed a meaningful learning process together where the intention is *“cultural renewal which includes ourselves as actors”* as I put it at that time. I also asked whether managers and leaders were ready to put themselves in this process, and renew themselves because if that was not the case, it was not wise to start at all. I pointed out that there have to be real possibilities for everyone that participates, otherwise it does not work. I suggested that we should have a one day working with the whole community before making a decision so they and I could experience how these ways of working feel to them, and how I feel working with them. It worked well in the sense that everyone was participating in and sharing their views. So the Director and I made a written contract of our renewing project.

This written contract was not a conventional kind of contract in the sense that there were any specific expected results with particular measures but

instead open intentions towards cultural renewing. My role as a facilitator or enabler, and their responsibility as participants who can make outcomes were written explicitly there. Our research-contract was even more open: it stated that I could use these experiences and accounts in ways that look purposeful and ethical. Every session was accepted to be video-taped by participants, and they were used in the last change project. All our doings were totally open to research purposes and other discussions. So, it can be seen that there was exceptional trust between us.

However, in the first year there were some moments when I felt that my work was seen as conventional expert-consultant work: someone who is paid for their expertise, and who is expected to direct the process by her knowing. Next, I will reflect on my experiences of both subject-object and soft self-other relating in our relationship.

A pantomime – “*we never mean what we say*”

“How could we learn to ask questions instead of knowing everything?” Teuvo asked by continuing that they could have more good questions than answers in the future. This was one question that Teuvo, the Director General, asked at the beginning when he tried to describe to me what kind of cultural renewing is needed. If we look closely, we can see that behind this is a deep listening for what could be needed in a performance-oriented organisation. It can also be understood as a larger question about how to shift from one kind of relating with another. Thus, it invites another kind of relating. One possible perspective is seeing that this is a question of shifting towards an auditative culture (Ong in Hosking 2010b), where listening practices are central. The way of relating is very different, if you take a stance where you already know answers or if you are open to asking questions and listening. The way of relating also differs strongly, if you are narrowing yourself to do just what is expected and play a role without personally engaging or if you work as a professional personally relating with others. Next, I revisit a moment where frustration pops up, because it feels *“just playing that we are developing, but nothing is happening”* as I wrote my research diary at that time.

At some point during the first year I felt like everything was just a facade and no true renewal would occur; as if people were just discussing development in a sophisticated manner. I felt really bad and was sometimes utterly distressed until someone said at the beginning of a meeting: ‘Couldn’t we present this as a pantomime?’ and the Director General spontaneously replied, ‘Hasn’t our normal way of working been a pantomime the whole time – we never mean what we say.’ In that moment my soul began to celebrate – a crack had appeared – something genuine had burst out from the depths and a light had been brought out. I knew

that we would now be able to encounter each other more openly. (Takanen & Petrow 2010, 70).

Let me re-tell this account with some further details here, and then reconstruct one possible way of understanding this from a relational perspective. *“Couldn’t we present this as a pantomime?”* one participant asked me, when I was setting up the video recording equipment for our session. I felt that there was some frustration, and sarcasm in the sound of that person’s voice and her way of saying it without looking at me directly. *“Isn’t it so, that we are always involved in pantomimes without really meaning what we are saying?”* answered Teuvo who was standing nearby. I felt suddenly in my body a releasing and a lightness, and started to smile. I felt in my body suddenly a different way of relating without conceptualising that which was more open, and I felt that I was no longer in some play where people are just playing their roles but are playing what they are developing together.

This short encountering and particularly Teuvo’s spontaneous answer could be seen as self-critical reflection about their ways of relating, and at the same time it opens up the possibility of relating differently because of this surprisingly open comment. *“Playing pantomimes without really meaning what we are saying”* points to that he sees their way of relating as playing roles without really standing behind what they say. It sounds to me like one particular kind of subject-object relating, an instrumental way of relating both to oneself (as being narrowly just in your own role which is needed in this game) and the other (saying something that you are not really meaning). This is only one possible perspective, but to me it sounded like breaking a taken-for-granted way of speaking and acting, and having an insightful critical sound that revealed something that felt like a light in the darkness.

A challenge of taking responsibility together

The last example and the story of development work in this thesis give many hints of how I tried to start our relationship with a not-as-usual way of relating wherein a consultant is a knowing one (see also Hicks 2010). To me this was an ethical question of working from the power with stance instead of power over stance. I wanted to start the relationship were we could see each other as co-creators in reality-making. However, there were strong taken-for-granted expectations that emerged in many situations when they were having an intensive negotiation period with their customers. Let me describe one moment (an account from my research diary that I have partly re-written):

I feel worried about who is really carrying out this process with me, when the in-house developer is on pregnancy leave. I believe that this project could only bring something valuable that is relatively enduring, if they themselves engage in it so that they take responsibility for it and develop some facilitating skills. I meet with the Director General and some others from the support group. I start by asking for the kind of supporting structure that one of them could work with me as a pair looking from an inside perspective at how the process is going. We have already a so-called support group who wanted to carry on the process but I feel that it is not enough. The Director General, is seeing that their people are having a lot to do in the middle of negotiations. *“But is it not your task?”* he says, feeling that this was too much to ask of them as it is my job to carry out this process. He seems slightly frustrated and tense. I ask: *“Are you frustrated?”* Everyone reacts, and I feel that I have done something unexpected, and maybe also unwanted. He continues: *“so write the list of what she/he should do, so I can check what we can do”*. I answer that it is not possible to make that kind of list because I don't know the tasks beforehand. I feel in my body a kind of uncomfortable calmness and separation. I am sensing something freezing and uncomfortable in the air. Later, it feels to me that we are opposite parties negotiating our written contract whose task is what. I am expecting that I can relate to the whole renewing process like an internal sensing organ. I do not want that everything that we had created together will collapse that on the day I would no longer be there. This is a question of enduring results. That is not something that could be done by writing a list. I feel that I am in the middle of some kind of a tough negotiation practice that I did not understand fully. I am not knowing or following their rules but looking at it differently and trying to connect with them not as separate individuals or parties but as humans with the same purpose.

Next I will make a few reflections on this account. Teuvo's way of relating, how he tried to solve the situation here, felt to me separating. It could be constructed as mostly instrumental and rational, where work can be seen as an object to be done, like a list. This includes strong subject-object relating. However, at the same time I view there is a manager who is taking care of his staff not giving too much work at a pressuring time. However, you could imagine the difference if the Director was to interpret this as a task to control by writing a list and doing it there or a task that could not be preplanned because it is an emergent process. I suggest that the first is an instrumental way of interpreting, which includes subject-object relating, and the second is more adjacent to soft self-other relating. This shows how difficult it is to invite soft self-other relating when taken-for-granted practices are going on in the middle of highly stressing work situations.

Shotter (2009, 145) gives an interesting, somewhat similar example about a leader who first thinks that energising people can be considered as an account of what tasks make up the relevant achievements. He constructs this as thinking in terms of a picture or a representation. In this kind of representative thinking people can also argue whose picture/representation is right. I will connect this issue further by relating it to subject-object

constructing. Here in our example Teuvo seems to think that my idea should be a clear representation of what is needed. He wants to understand (control) it by making it an object, like a list. At the same time he probably supposes, that we can rationalise this to controllable doings. As we all know, this is the normal kind of thinking in many organisations and it comes from our cultural heritage, which can also be labelled as Cartesian thinking. The difficulty here is that a holistic, felt sense could not be captured in a single, simple definition (Shotter 2009, 146). If we do it, we will come back to Cartesian thinking where living dies. In line with Shotter's (2009, 146) view, I was feeling there at that moment and I am agreeing here that all living, dynamic phenomena have an emergent nature that cannot be captured in a single static representation.

Reflections about co-creative partnership

These struggles, which questioned subject-object relating as taken-for-granted ways, made space for this shift towards a co-creative partnership. In some moments, surprising questions invited us to relate differently. Seija Petrow, who became my partner in this change work process, reflected years later that *"we made a difference not only because of these co-creative practices which were not just methods but also a specific kind of relationship"*. She pointed to our emerging co-creative companionship and practicing being present in action. This spontaneous notion also seems to me a very key notion, because our companionship developed from a somewhat traditional expectation of the consultant–client relationship to moment-to-moment based, flowing relations that we called a growth-partnership in our book (Takanen & Petrow 2010).

In the co-written book of our development work (Takanen & Petrow 2010, 101-110) Seija Petrow and I describe our growing experiences in our change work context in these particular relations. I describe there how my identity was constructed in some of our encounterings in a more flowing way, and how I felt in those moments some values to become living and embodied. I felt that co-creation was happening in the ways that could be called minimal self-other relating. These included moments where other people and I myself were not constructing each other as some fixed identity, but as flowing, changing. Actually, it is a very paradoxical feeling because when I actually felt who I really am in action, I felt emptiness and a flow and non-I – this could be called participation in co-creation of realities without making a subject or object, with minimal separation. However, when writing about it, the I is there again. It seems that making objects and subjects by our ways of perceiving and interpreting are natural parts of our

ways of relating. However, there is a difference if we are fixing these constructions and taking them as truths or we are slightly holding them as seeing them only as one possible way of constructing. The last option makes space to that kind of co-creation where agency is not only human or not-human but includes both. This kind of co-creation is not something that we can make look like what we want or control. But it felt like surrendering to the process of co-creation being at the same time active and passive. Activeness was surrendering to emerging, which could be considered at the same time as a passive act. In the relational constructionist view, there is no self or other, but rather it is on-going relational processes that make them so (Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009, 3). This can be viewed as agency wherein co-creation is happening. This comes near to the idea of agency from the relational as opposed to the substantial view. There agency is viewed as inseparable from the unfolding dynamics of situations (e.g. Ketokivi 2010, 61).

6.3 Conclusions on Relating Differently

In this chapter, I have described and analysed what kind of relating emerged in particular moments and how did the soft self-other relating invite those moments? I used here two different ways of relating – subject-object relating and soft self-other relating as conceptual devices to analyse the particular moment. I have interpreted that participants' way of relating with their customers shifted in many moments to ways of soft self-other relating. Relating with a customer softly seemed to reflect the participant's new ways of re-relating with oneself. Both these relations were in close relation to how our consultant-client relation was slowly constructed differently, not as separate entities like a consultant and a client, but as relating as co-creative partners.

As I have described, the participants' way of relating to themselves, to their customers and to me were somewhat dominated by subject-object relating when we started. In particular, they shifted in some moments from one dominating way of relating (subject-object relating) towards different ways of relating, which could be called soft self-other relating. I speak here of one dominating way in the sense that all these seemingly different ways of acting were embedded in subject-object relating, like knowing on behalf of others, constructing an expert stance and so on. I point out that these

possible shifts are not interpreted as some new stable stage, which these people are in every situation relating with in this new way. So this should not be constructed as moving from situation A to situation B, or from a level 1 to level 2. I view that different ways of relating are shifting from moment-to-moment, and thus it is viewed as on-going process of relational reality-making.

Hosking (2010b) has suggested that self-other relating as a contrast to subject-object relating is based on moment-to-moment perceiving, which brings attention to the here and now in a particular situation. I suggest that in these moments when soft relating emerged, relating was not strongly pre-conceptualised and pre-framed and so past-oriented, but participants are also giving attention to more flowing and on-going processes (a present-oriented way). Also in many of those moments propositional knowing, which is based on differentiations, was suspended by giving space to other ways of knowing that connect to experiential knowing first. Subject-object relating can be regarded, in these situations, as conceptually-oriented and thus past-driven. It does not enable to new to emerge. These ways were dominating in this context when we started. Soft self-other relating can be regarded as the more flowing way of relating, which was in these moments strongly present-oriented, and thus inviting to open what is happening in the here and now.

I suggest that it is possible to also bring this present-oriented way of relating to the middle of power over practices and subject-object relating, and let these potentially shift because of this softer self-other way of being in action. On the basis of analysis of these moments, I suggest that subject-object relating and soft self-other relating should not be viewed as opposites. This can be done by looking at the subtle shifts and movements from one to the other.

But how was soft self-other relating invited? In all of these moments it was somehow invited by participants (including me). It seems to me that it was not just emerging by accident but it needed to be supported by present-oriented practices or preparings. For example, the publication seminar account describes how these participants embodied this present-oriented way of relating, and how they orient themselves in an open way, which invited others to participate. It seems that the way of relating is strongly connected to different ways of perceiving and knowing, which are viewed as active processes that are not happening in the individual mind but in relational processes that could be felt in our bodies. Sometimes, soft

relating was invited unintentionally and sometimes it was invited by enabling it. In many moments, there were both aspects at the same time.

The new ways of relating seemed to need some inviting acts, for example surprising questions or enabling structures such as microcosms in this case. Practicing being present in the here and now invited soft self-other relating. This particular way of preparing ourselves meant preparing oneself and orienting differently: re-relating with ourselves, others and the environment in the here and now. All present-oriented practices, such as reflecting dialogue can open up possibilities to shift our normal taken-for-granted orientation towards moment-to-moment-perceiving. I suggest that these kinds of re-relatings are not just happening and *continuing* because of some particular methods or practices but they need some kind of shared praxis that is not just a change project that starts and ends. This leads me to next look more carefully at how did we practice being present in development work, which seems to enable soft self-other-relating. Later, I will describe this as a possible developmental approach and show how it is a special way of developing that differs from other approaches.

7 Practicing Being Present in Development Work

In the last chapter, I described and analysed many moments when soft self-other relating were emerging. In this and the next chapter, I will go further, to suggest that a particular kind of development work partly enabled these different ways of soft self-other relating. Thus, in this chapter I will reflect on how did we practiced being present in development work. This could be regarded as a developer's self-reflective account of particular development work as practical activity (see Räsänen 2007).

Räsänen (2007, 5-6) has elaborated three useful concepts: practical activity (e.g. development work), practice (e.g. an orientation practice), and praxis (e.g. developmental approach). I will use these to reflect on this particular development work as a practical activity, which includes only few relatively enduring practices. In the next chapter, I will ask if this practical activity could be also understood as an emerging praxis. Being present at work is viewed as one kind of practical activity, which could enabled with particular practices (such as an orientation practice), but which is in most situations shown up as a particular kind of orientation towards what is emerging in the here and now. Most of these emerging ways are not regarded as practices, because they change in every situation. I will also speak about *practicing being present* wherein practicing refers to a conscious but often imperfect effort to become present from moment-to-moment.

When developing is carried out as a conventional consultation project without any kind of research perspective, taken-for-granted views of developing are not necessarily expressed in a reflective manner and questioned. Instead, the outside consultant could just bring his/her own taken-for-granted view or sometimes start with participants' views without making explicit these starting points. In my case, I as a reflective developer-researcher started by opening my own beliefs and values and inviting people from OGE to participate in a co-inquiry process that could also change our (including me) views of developing. We challenged ourselves to become more present in what is emerging in the here and now, rather than already knowing the steps or possible solutions.

Next, I reflect upon, how did we practice being present in development work? I have organised my reflections as follows: 1) from making changes towards giving space and letting go, 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 a thinking-mode towards embodied sensing, 5) from result-oriented evaluating towards on-going storytelling in the here and now.

7.1 From Making Changes towards Giving Space and Letting Go

Let me start with the most obvious features of our change work, which I have described in the story (ch. 5) and starting points of development project (ch. 4):

- there is no problem-finding/constructing
- no fixed targets and measures
- no big plan
- very open intentions without clear-cut definitions
- focus more on process itself than end.

These features suggest that there were more enabling possibilities than closing downs through problem identification, solutions and fixed change problems (Hosking 2010b, 233). There was no pre-planned change-programme with fixed targets or a hidden agenda. These features could enable soft differentiations instead of strong separations. All these could invite work from within, and be based more on a transformation view than intervention thinking. In this kind relational constructionist transformation view, *“future searching is present making in the here and now”* (Hosking 2010b, 234). If change is understood as controllable, it leads to intervention thinking: planning how to control it and efforts at controlling. This means that the focus is to make something of the kind that someone (a consultant or a manager) has already known and planned. Thus, it does not allow being present in what is emerging. It leads to looking at future solutions about how to make changes and at same time focuses on the past: some solutions that are already known. The big challenge in this case was the way that change/development work was understood as something controllable, which did not allow being present in developing. As in this organisation, change work has taken forms like developing operational processes, changing structures, developing organisational culture or leadership/management and thus it was considered as managing change. Change was understood as something that someone(s) has to make: the leader or manager or in a more participative way, the workers. Hosking has

described this kind of view as entity-thinking or this and that-thinking (Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009). The underlining premise is that change has to be managed or controlled. There is understanding that someone could tell or more softly coach or motivate others to make changes, to take the next steps, to implement new organisations, or whatever. When we started, this view about the organisation as a fixed entity was taken-for-granted in this context. Thus, change work was understood as a controllable project where organisational culture could be an object. It meant making an intervention by focusing on taken-for-granted principles, rules and conventions (see also Shotter 2003, 6) that could be measured or evaluated from the outside.

In OGE, we focused first on work processes, but at the same time I tried to bring some questions that invite self-reflections about how we are actually working together just now, how we are interacting, how differently or similarly we are constructing our ways of perceiving, for example some work process, customer, or purpose of this process. This was an effort to invite people to see how we are constructing realities in the here and now and what becomes possible or impossible with this way of working. The process work was started by the organisation themselves by doing descriptions of their work processes in small groups. The decision could be regarded as an act of appreciating the local knowing and the local ways of doing (see also Hosking 2010b). It was a good way to start because they felt it meaningful to them. In this kind of process work, participants (are forced to) construct themselves as having particular work roles (which some others could replace if they have the same knowledge, as this was expressed by participants), and present their doings as separate acts in boxes that are connected to each other in mostly linear ways. To me this way of doing change work seemed to work partly well, because participants learned quickly how difficult it was to define any process, its purposes or customers. However, this kind of change work could also reduce living, relational processes to predictable, linear lines that make them look fixed. It says that we are separate entities whose actions could be seen as linear processes and developed. Of course, these models are seen as presentations that are not the same as so-called reality but are more like a map. However, these models are narrowing living encounterings in complex situations through entity-thinking, which is a subject-object way of thinking, where there is no space for emerging but where something has to be fixed. These are not inviting any surprises, incompleteness, richness which encounters us in everyday work. This way could be viewed as an intervention in contrast to transformation (Hosking 2010b).

From this shift from conventional process intervention towards working in small, flexible theme groups called microcosms (subch. 5.3), I learned that even process work could be seen as strong subject-object relating, it could be done in that way which opens towards softer relating. Slowly, some participants started to speak about change work as cultural renewing, which could be viewed as an orientation towards working in the present. This meant that it was under on-going construction all the time. In the middle of this process, the support group reflected that we were no longer speaking so often about developing, but were preferring the term renewing as an on-going process where actors are seen as being both active and passive at the same time. At that time, I re-defined organisational culture as a living processes (Takanen & Petrow 2010, 120), thus I understood it not as a fixed entity but a living, on-going process that was not outside of the participants. So, change work was slowly reconsidered as allowing it to happen without making strong efforts to change, particularly in the support group. There emerged many organic metaphors to work in this way, which we created in different moments of working together. These ways of using organic metaphors invited bringing attention to living, moving processes that cannot be controlled. Let me next look at this shift closer. Here I viewed change work as a living process of reality-making which I have later re-interpreted as a relational constructionist view (e.g. Hosking 2010b), because change is present all the time; and change work is not understood as intervention but participating in reality-making.

“I have learned that flowers, just like us, grow in their own natural rhythm. It cannot be sped up. It is important not to give up, or you lose those sprouts that have not yet emerged on the surface.” Here in one participant’s reflection, a change is viewed as an organic process that is on-going, which is not possible to make faster. There is a spirit of letting it happen, not giving up, not making any effort to make it happen but just making space for it to happen. I connect this to the shift from developing towards allowing things to happen; change work is introduced as a not-planned open process that could be described with organic metaphors. Some other participants described organisational culture in this moment with an organic metaphor; as a composting process where old will give nurturing soil wherein the new starts to grow (figure 6 in subch. 4.3, see also Takanen 2011, Takanen & Petrow 2010). There is a sense of on-going change and letting go – change work was not some separate process but was on-going processes which we spoke of as a culture. Participants started to see that there is actually no new and old culture as some separated things but simply new ways of acting emerging from earlier ways that have transformed. They also reflected that *“old is not bad, and new better”* and

that this way transcends this kind of black–white thinking where change work is always driving for something better that is in the future but not in the here and now. Metaphors acted as enabling ways of speaking and thinking, which opened new ways to experience and participate.

7.2 From Stable Structures towards Enabling Structures Called Microcosms

After one year, being present in development work led us to let go of the stable structures that participants were used to. This seemed to be needed because already-made fixed structures such as work process groups did not enable being present in what is emerging and flexible ways of developing. 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) needed more flexible, diverse and enabling structures. These were created together with the whole working community. Hosking and Kleisterlee (2009) have a similar kind of view when they speak of light structures that enable soft self-other relating.

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 in small actions and encounterings without planning ahead. The microcosm work was guided by principles that had been constructed in group sessions, and that 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 which we can ask in the middle of our working together, for example: are we working dialogically, are we practicing power with our ways of relating etc. I have described the microcosm work and these principles in the story (ch. 5). A microcosm could be seen as an example of a metaphor that invites new ways of acting. I suggested this term microcosm to our way of working in small groups, because it could open possibilities to see how these small groups could be like a macrocosm, our new embodied living culture in the here and now. Earlier I had called these simply practical experiments, but more metaphorical naming brought new dimensions: seeing these kinds of groups as small cosmoses, as arenas where the future could emerge in a present-oriented way (see also Scharmer 2007). I view the practical move from process groups to so-called microcosms as a radical shift towards

more participative change work where we are seeing each other as co-creators. *“The world of microcosms is not organising by closing”*, said one participant. This quote points to the multiple ways of organising: microcosms could be said to be enabling multiple local rationalities in different but equal relations. These embody what Hosking (2010, 238) calls simultaneity and multiplicity, as sound qualities of processes.

I think that working first in the work process groups was needed in order to shift towards other ways of working. All this struggling and the need for controlling enabled to learn together how we are doing change work and what it enables and what becomes not possible through this way. At that time, we also learned to work together in dialogical ways and slowly all participants were participating in their own ways. The other challenge that emerged in our ways of working was that participants had been used to closing things quickly: making decisions and plans as soon as possible. The way of working in the microcosm was not about planning and closing things quickly. Not closing or suspending could actually be seen as a different way of organising, which is closely connected to the softer way of relating. Dialogical ways of acting are not based on quick closing, but listening and giving space to new possibilities in the here and now.

7.3 From Visioning and Planning Future to Embodying It in the Here and Now

Practicing being present in development work without moving to planning or visioning the future felt very challenging in all these years. There were already established practices of strategy work, which included expressing the vision, the purpose and values. Both conventional and even more participative change work approaches that participants were used to included planning better ways of working and/or visioning a better future that could be then implemented by planning small steps. In this work, we did not start from rethinking a vision or purpose, because I viewed them as leading us to look at the future instead of this moment, and the need to find some steps to that future. I felt that this suspending helped us to focus more on the present, on-going processes in the here and now. Later, when we learned in some moments to see the future in this moment in the here and now, in our ways of interacting, it came possible to find a more flowing way to work with the future from the here and now. So, the key question here was not avoiding making plans or visions, but creating ways concerning

how we could *relate with* our plans or visions for a future *softly, flexible way*. I suggest that when plans or visions are seen as something to be done by managers or small group and then implemented, this leads again to strong subject-object change work, which is not based being in the here and now. This could mean participants are capable of making more open preparings by focusing on how the purpose could happen in the here and now or how the vision could be embodied in our everyday encountering in this moment, like in our story. Of course, there could be the question of whether people even do need the kinds of concepts such as a purpose or a vision. In this case, what people meant with these concepts changed. They no longer thought of them as fixed constructions, but that they could change all the time. We were more interested in those moments when we can feel that these are embodied in the here and now in small everyday acts. Thus, responsibility is shared, and it is in this moment. It is not about looking for the future or waiting for someone to implement these.

In our detailed description of our present-oriented strategy work in the co-written story (Takanen & Petrow 2010), we described how we worked with living values, purpose and vision (see also a short version in subch. 5.4). The support group tried to enable this move from conceptually-oriented, quite fixed so-called strategy practices, towards on-going, emerging strategy work that could also be constructed as identity-making and reality-making. This organisation has had times when incentives came from the head of the organisation; before our process they had made a strategy by presenting a future vision and purpose. A challenge from big plans and visions towards embodying the future in the here and now meant focusing on small everyday actions like encountering with others, in more spontaneous ways of relating. For example, in the support group the future is no longer understood as just something coming, but as an on-going process in which we participated: we constructed it as living in the here and now, it pointed towards possibilities in which we could open or close ourselves. It felt that it was not separate from us. This could be expressed as a belief that we are co-creating the future by our ways of relating with each other and with the context. Bringing a present-oriented focus to strategy practices changed these practices: it was no longer a question of making vision and value statements as fixed things or things that we change once a year. The in-house developer, Pilvi, had described one example of how purpose and vision also changed many times in our workings; they did not come fixed but they hold them lightly as on-going drafts in the co-written story (Takanen & Petrow 2010). We also developed the way of bringing attention to how some values are emerging or not in our embodied action. This was a very simple becoming aware practice which simply helped

participants to focus on these values *without trying to do or change anything*. The idea behind it was just to invite focus on values, and to suppose that this act itself is inviting living values in our action.

Let me draw together how our ways of developing changed through practicing being present at 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 the first: how to suspend our intellectually oriented ways of forming sounding vision or purposes statements, and instead listen to how these are already living in our everyday action. These challenges, led us to create strategic (we understood visioning the future as strategic) change work practices in the support group, which started from the here and now. In this situation, where visions, purposes and values were constructed, people were working with different ways of knowing like sensing the values in their body, making art works which embodied these values (see subch. 5.4). They listened to the emerging ways of acting as an emerging future in the here and now. These ways of acting were listened through embodied feelings and insights. So here we did not focus on conceptual working with formulating sounding phrases about vision or purpose as they had been used to, but were working with our senses such as listening to how everyday actions are already embodying some values. To me, it appears that the process of working with purpose and values was a relational process where these were reproduced in flowing, soft and creative ways, rather than fixed ways. However, this was challenging because participants were so used to the notion that vision and values are just statements, not living processes in everyday action. To me and many of us, the biggest challenge was to notice when we were not focusing on the here and now, but to find ways to bring attention again to the present.

7.4 From Thinking -mode towards Embodied Sensing

In this subchapter, I reflect on one present-oriented practice called an orientation practice that we regularly practiced together at the start of any development session.

Imagine and feel you are coming to a change work session from your work. Maybe you do not notice what kind of thoughts and emotions are happening within you, but you are at one with them. Probably you do not

notice feelings and sensations in your body. You are just starting to talk about issues with others because you have only some hours to do it. Talking and talking. Debating. Feeling uncomfortable tensions. You are thinking: this is not working. Why do I have to be there – I have a *real* job to do? Others state their opinions like truths. You feel that you know them already, nothing new. Most of the participants are speaking from outsider positions, separating their individual stances, listening maybe by judging, or feeling separate or otherwise disconnected. Particular power games are going on. Is there anyone really listening to what is happening in the here and now? Is there any space for the unknown/new to emerge or any space to re-relate differently?

Imagine and feel you are coming to a change work session from your work. Notice what kind of thoughts and emotions are coming. Notice how you are feeling in your body. The facilitator is asking you to stop and be silent for a moment. Listening to what is happening in your body just now. Listen to your breathing, inhale and exhale. Noticing the little moment between them, a space between where breathing changes its direction. Listening to your thoughts, feelings, and emotions by accepting them as they become. Listen to the background, space between thoughts, silence. Accepting. How does it feel to start after a short silence? Are you in the here and now?

Putting it in a simplified way, it could be interpreted that there are two different kinds of developmental practices starting a change work session in OGE. The first one describes the way these participants were used to. The second describes how we do a short orientation practice in every session. It is possible to imagine and feel that these are not only two different situations, but different practices which invite different kinds of relating. The first one reinforces such thinking, which does not open up to this on-going moment. The second could possibly invite participants to feel this moment and open up to embodied sensing in the here and now. If we think that people are used to these practices, they are experiencing them in a particular way which is connected to practice itself. However, someone could also experience it very differently.

As I have earlier elaborated, the orientation practice included five phases:

- 1) Becoming aware of what is happening in one's own space and writing it down and/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 regular orientation practice aimed at enabling the observing of happenings in one's own space. This could be regarded as practicing being present in the on-going moment by stopping, listening to our breathing and focusing on what is happening in so called inner space.

This orientation practice was felt differently by different participants (Takanen & Petrow 2010). Slowly, most participants started to appreciate stopping and being silent, but not all of did so, and that was also accepted. The participants who appreciated stopping started to see how it sometimes helped them to orient themselves differently. Participants also felt challenges because they felt so many thoughts going on. Some of them called this habit a thinking-mode. A few who felt this practice to be uncomfortable did not start to do it, and did not feel it working. Actually, stopping and listening to oneself seemed to be the most challenging practice in this working context. We reflected later that this felt to some of them as forcing, even if there was an option to just sit in silence, waiting, when others were doing it, as some did. This challenge also connected to their taken-for-granted norm that the professional does not bring anything personal to the work environment. Another participant describes her experience about orientation by saying "*then little difficulties didn't show up, but all looks possible*" (Takanen & Petrow 2010, 41). In this way, it seems that some participants felt that stopping helped make you feel more relaxed, and that it gives a new perspective, which opens up possibilities. As a reaction to silencing oneself, one participant said that she could not do it because otherwise everything collapses and she does not get things done as she has to. Here we relate ourselves to this fear of losing control and the need for getting things done effectively. I assume that we all know in an experiential way how this feels, don't we? In this kind of situation, you are somehow forcing yourself to be in an efficient-mood, not stopping at all, because otherwise there is the risk that "*everything falls apart*", as one participant said. There is no space to listen to how this feels in your body. When I am in this mood, I am narrowing myself and looking only at what I have to do. I am also calculating how to get it done effectively as soon as possible, and I am judging everything else as disturbances. This kind of relating makes strong subjects and objects effectively: I am constructing myself as an efficient subject who gets things done, I am judging things and

people which/who are not helping my targets as disturbances/objects to be avoided. In this mode, I am not interested in developing together. Perhaps, these regular stops felt dangerous because of the possibility for them to break down dominating, taken-for-granted practices. What if these orienting practices invited re-relating with oneself and others?

Orienting practice could be seen as enabling such relating that is not dominated by language, but that brings participants their sensuous perception. As Koivunen (2003, 152) has pointed out, relating happens not only by language but through body language and sensuous perception, and, in particular, listening. This perspective also points out that we co-construct our perception in relations with others. Perception concerns the whole sensing body. The unification of senses is called the synaesthetic system, which rules the body. So, it is time to let go of a mechanical view wherein we perceive through separate channels, like seeing through the eyes (Koivunen 2003, 162). My underlying supposition was that the orientation practice could enable experiential knowing and also presentational knowing when these experiences are expressed in the group. There was an option to draw your inner space if you found it difficult to verbalise it. I assumed that we could express what is happening in our inner spaces and present them by drawing and metaphorically describing, and then name them in our own ways. We had different levels of experience in this kind of practice; for some this kind of self-reflection was more difficult than for others, but it is possible to evolve in this. An ability to observe the reality, which we named as inner, is also essential from the viewpoint of reflexivity because it is part of relational processes where we are making realities. What we call our own emotions, thoughts and bodily feelings are constructions, which are built in certain moments and places. In other words, our constructions are created locally in cultural contexts: so what we call inner and outer are relationally forming ways of speaking and feeling what is outside or inside from the perspective of the body (see also Shotter 1997). For example, many people construct thoughts inside their head, or feelings in their stomach or heart. Thus, I reflected that my initial choice to speak of inner spaces seems now to be narrowing and separating. It sounded as if the inner and outer are separate, and that you can catch your inner state in one particular moment. My thinking actually shifted to the relational perspective partly because of these reflections that were made together. The notion of how our inner spaces are related to/with others' spaces and the whole context came up in the sharing rounds. Participants briefly expressed their inner spaces by saying how they felt before orientation and how this space felt now. Is there some shift? I got the insight that when we were sharing our experiences and - at the same time constructing - these happenings inner spaces are shifting

again and again. They were like flowing streams of consciousness (James 1890). I started to see how people were expressing themselves as being strongly connected to others' ways of expressing. Even if they at first wrote down some particular inner space (like curiousness or frustration), they often expressed it by bridging it to others' speaking. Maybe it felt like a shifting when listening to others. One particularly important notion was that often people were expressing that groups' space resonated with their own inner space. For example when you felt openness, you also regarded the group's space as open. I re-read all these documented self-reflections and in many of them these two very much strongly resonated together. This could be seen as an indicator of how our innermost constructions are strongly connected to the group. Both are constructions that we are making in a particular situation.

Overall, it seemed that this orientation practice sometimes enabled shifts from a thinking-mode towards embodied sensing. In our process, orientation practice started to deepen towards a particular kind of reflection-in-action. Some participants expressed that they became more aware of what was happening within them in the middle of conversations and how they were relating with themselves and others, and the 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.

7.5 From Result-Oriented Evaluating towards Storytelling in This Moment

Developing ways of being present at work led us (the support group) also to create present-oriented ways of evaluating our process. A good example of this is the communal day in November 2009, which I have described in subchapter 5.4. When we started the project, participants were used to result-oriented ways of evaluating. They appreciated most so-called objective measuring. In every kind of development work, there is some kind of evaluating; sometimes it is more participative and self-reflective, sometimes it aims at objective measuring. All these ways that I and other participants knew before were strongly past-oriented, and they separate the object of evaluation from the subject who strongly creates it. The challenge was that participants were used to making judgements about what is not working in such a way that easily shifted responsibility to outside of oneself.

It seemed to me that this way of just looking at critical points, like what is not possible, and what will never happen, cannot make any space for new possibilities. It is a good skill, but it needs some softer ways of evaluating that open possibilities and accept different ways of seeing.

Over these three years, the whole department worked for a total of ten days in the spirit of self-reflective dialogue, in addition to regular small group work. All of these days are listed in table 2 in subchapter 4.2. The themes were connected to the present moment, and how the renewing organisational culture felt in that moment. This was often carried out by telling stories in small groups and then all together. I have described earlier (subch. 4.3) how producing stories as an inquiry practice worked as a natural, dialogic way of reflecting together. We did not start from any particular narrative methods or theories, but I and we (the support group) listened to the ways of working that could bring out different views and help us reflect *in the present moment*. Later, I have reflected that my view on storytelling could be regarded as a relational constructionist view, which sees it as a relational process of reality-making (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 50). In this view, stories are seen as co-constructions, which invite and suppress particular realities.

There are differences in how narrating is focused – is it narrating the past, the future or the present. When it is seen as a present-oriented process, it could be seen as an on-going process of inviting particular kinds of realities. We (the support group) wanted to find ways that would not lead us to an intellectual self-evaluation, where things are validated as being a certain way, but to a co-creative way of evaluating. This would not feel like evaluation so much as just telling stories together that come from everyday working experiences. As I have told earlier (subch. 4.3), we co-created a particular kind of storytelling, which was not so strongly dominated by language; instead it was achieved by experiential and presentational ways of knowing. For example, people made stories by drawing or moving together. Some of these moments are described in the story (ch. 5, see also ch. 6). There were, for example, visual and verbal spontaneous reflections on what our organisational culture is like at the moment, in story form (see more subch. 4.3)

Van der Haar and Hosking (2004, 1031) suggest that storytelling is an important way to conduct the evaluation process through social interaction. This could be seen as act of appreciating local knowing in its own context by focusing on participant's experience. If the evaluation process is viewed from a relational constructionist perspective, it is understood as emergent

in interactions and relationships between the participants (van der Haar & Hosking 2004, 1031). Thus, evaluation is not some programme or practice that is independent from change work. It is seen as an on-going dialogue. I will next reflect on how our ways of evaluating changed because of the orientation of being present in action.

At the end of the story in the Practicing phase (subch. 5.4), there is description of one of these communal days where we participated in self-reflective storytelling. With the in-house developer, we prepared and co-facilitated an evaluation day where different ways of knowing complemented each other. Working with mindful body practices, drawing and sensing, seemed to open space where concepts and language were not making things and entities but instead gave more space to open crafts where there are many possible ways of seeing, thinking and acting. On another occasion, as an evaluative question I asked from participants *“how their culture is living right now?”* This act invited the process of becoming aware. I also asked what they have let go, which connected to the process of letting go. I felt that these kinds of questions and reflective, experiential storytelling – with a in the here and now-orientation – enabled us to narrate differently and to listen to different voices. I learned that working with embodied feelings and senses seemed to bring out our experiences more fully. In this case, it does not separate a clear-cut object, but sees us as part of a process in which we are evaluating and at the same time constructing. This insight came when we noticed again and again that examining the renewal process together through conventional conversations or interpretive analysis got stuck. To me it did not seem that it enabled different ways of being present in act of evaluating. These situations often made us return to the practices and categories of conventional conversation, which excluded something that was emerging, and froze reality as something already known. On-going reality-making processes were narrowed to so-called facts by perceiving them as somewhat permanent and fixed. Thus, small changes that were happening were not perceived because we thought easily that we already know what is there. We had a tendency to maintain our ways of interpreting reality. Thus, producing stories from within the here and now felt like a fruitful way of creating space for experiential and presentational knowing. It enabled diverse ways of seeing what is going on – not in the past, but just now. This kind of knowing has a strong embodied and sensed quality; bodily feelings are telling participants’ stories.

An appreciation for experiential knowing and ways of refining it into a presentational form grew during the inquiry process in the whole

community. Using Heron's (1996) concepts, I could point to how storytelling allowed experiential knowing to become presentational. The stories were allowed to continuously reshape themselves without being analysed conceptually or fixed as truths. Forms of experiential knowledge that were difficult to verbalise also came up in our storytelling (storying) when we combined the storytelling with photograph work, visualisation work, drawing and voice and movement installations. These forms of knowing were strengthened towards the end of the process, as readiness for this kind of work gradually gained strength. *The present – the concreteness of the present – as a phenomenon to consider, as a structure, is for us an unknown planet: so we can neither hold on to it in our memory nor reconstruct it through imagination* (Kundera 1993, in Shotter 2009, 135). This difficulty of speaking, emerges due to the fact that the present is still emerging. We encountered this challenge by making self-reflections within situations through telling short stories, drawing, or moving from the here and now. Moving from the here and now meant expressing by body gestures how I am feeling. In this way, we tried to evaluate through connecting with our living and lived experience in this moment. These dialogical, narrative evaluation sessions invited open-endedness and space for polyphony. I suggest that suspending conceptually-oriented propositional knowing enabled polyphony and multi-layered stories. When we made collective interpretations, we strived not for a single truth but for flexible interpretations that could open up in various directions. This was connected to the assumption that renewal is an ever-changing process that does not have an ending point. These points seem to resonate with soft self-other –orientations, for example accepting multiple local rationalities in different but equal relation, working with senses and language, and working in the present and with possibilities (see also Hosking 2010b, 233-234).

Concluding with Some Relational Constructionist Ideas

In this chapter, I have reflected on how did we practice being present in development work. I reflected on this issue organising it as follows: 1) from making changes towards 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 and 5) from result-oriented evaluating towards on-going storytelling in the here and now. This particular kind of practical activity, which I have reflected from the perspective of practicing being present, became possible in many ways. Some of these ways of being present became more regular practices. I

conclude this chapter with a short comparison. I look at how these ways of being present connect with some orienting themes that McNamee and Hosking (2012, 73) have described very recently (see table 4, column 1). They have presented these as a ways of doing inquiry from the relational constructionist view through orientations, as opposed to particular methods (McNamee & Hosking 2012, 73). I combine their themes to some practical ways of enabling which we have co-developed or used in our case (see table 4, column 2 & 3). These ways have spoken partly with different concepts than those that McNamee and Hosking use, so I have also explicitly brought our ways to speak here.

Table 4. Orienting themes

Orienting themes (McNamee & Hosking 2012)	The practical ways of inviting or enabling	The ways of speaking about this in OGE
Opening space for now-ness	Practicing becoming present. Dialogue, listening. Inquiry from now Storytelling from now Orientation practice	Being present in the here and now, practicing being present in action
Respecting emergent processes and possibilities	Working with what emerges. Reflecting on on-going processes without conceptualising them strongly, suspending quick labeling and analysing.	What is emerging? How is the future emerging in the here and now? Appreciating incompleteness and vulnerability: not planning too much and not knowing
Seeing both questioning, and listening as transformative	Questioning, an orientation practice, listening ourselves and others	Silent working as listening to oneself, practicing listening
Constructing in both conceptual and non- conceptual performances	Storytelling in our communal sessions	Allowing different ways of knowing
Constructing eco- logical ways of being	Microcosms that are “organic” ways to work with the environment	Not making strong structures, but living enabling structures like microcosms

8 Co-Creative Process Inquiry as an Emerging Developmental Approach

In the last chapter I reflected, through my experiences, on how did we practiced being present in development work. In this chapter, I ask what kind of way of developing enabled different ways of being present at work? Thus, I continue by describing Co-Creative Process Inquiry (CCPI) as an emerging approach that could be regarded as one outcome of this research. I describe this approach in the first section, and thereafter, in the second section, compare it to other similar approaches: Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and Co-operative Inquiry (CI). This comparing also answers the question: could CCPI be regarded as a unique development approach? In this first part of this chapter, I describe how I view this approach in this moment. The aim of the description is not to capture it, but simply to make a draft of it. I will do this description by asking four questions (Räsänen 2010, Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010): how, what, who and why? These questions form a frame which could help to make practical activity explicit, and to compare different developmental approaches.

8.1 Description of Co-Creative Process Inquiry

I will use four questions from the framework of practical activity (Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010) in these forms: 1) how is developing work carried out? 2) what is being developed? 3) who develops, for whom and with whom? 4) why is this kind of development work is valuable? The last question is slightly adapted from original: why are these means of development work valuable or at least justified? (see Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010, 6). I made the question broader than an original by changing the focus from means to whole development work, because it fits better to this approach. I would like to also point that, my view about *developing* changed during this case, and I stopped using a word *developing* because it easily brings an association of practical activity which strives for some aims (as objects) and where this aim is not in the here and now. However, it is a generally used term for this kind of practical activity, and thus it makes sense to use it in organising questions instead of my approach's own terms, such as renewing or co-creating.

I have created a description at two levels: the more general level to describe this approach, and the more specific level to give examples for OGE case. Thus, the case is used as an example of CCPI as a developmental approach. However, this approach is carried out as an emergent process, thus it could be different in many ways in other contexts. Hence, answers to four questions are made from this larger perspective, and OGE case is just one example of the possibilities of this approach.

I start a description by summarising short answers to every question (see table 5), and thereafter I will answer them in a more detailed way.

Table 5. A summary of CCPI in organisational context

	CCPI in organisational context	In this case
How	By focusing on being present what emerges. As an emerging process starting with participant's questions/themes. Attending, questioning and listening particular ways described as CCPI cycle: becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing. Working both in small groups, and whole community.	As an emerging process appreciating local ways by starting with participant's questions/themes. Co-developing suitable ways of working together in this context with a support group and with whole community: starting from work process groups, and shifting to theme groups (microcosms), forming self-evaluative practices that invite four ways of knowing.
What	New ways of being present in everyday work, allowing what emerges, becoming more mindful co-creators through seeing how we are participating reality-making.	New ways of acting-> new ways of relating with your environment, oneself and customers
Who	The whole working community and possibly also their customers with outside and in-house co-facilitators.	One working community, 44 persons and the facilitator. Partly with their customer's.
Why	Taking relational responsibility for co-creating realities in everyday encounterings; by creating e.g. new ways of being, better well-being because of space of possibilities to participate and enable re-relating with oneself and others and work in more meaningful ways.	For creating new ways of acting in situation where human resources were diminished and workers are feeling challenges in well-being and management. For moving towards questioning and dialogical organisational culture instead of knowing answers on behalf of others.

How is developing work carried out?

This approach brings attention to being present in our everyday encounterings in organisational contexts. These encounterings are viewed as spaces where we co-create the future from the here and now. Our ways of relating can enable and suppress particular kinds of realities (see Hosking 2010b). For example by being present through listening, the listener can hear something that she/he did not hear before and thus new possibilities can start to emerge if these people continue this as a dialogue. Similarly, the way the facilitator is relating with others, is more important to outcomes than some particular tools or methods (see Henry 2000, 149). The ways of doing are not based on the ways of *making* changes or even developing, but allowing change to happen in every moment. This could mean attending, listening and questioning in such ways that invite us to participate together in reality-making without strong and fixed aims, plans and objectives.

The story (ch. 5) answers the how-question from one perspective: it organises this renewing process through four phases which invite be(com)ing present in action. These are named 1) becoming aware (enlargening attention towards how we co-create our reality in the here and now), 2) letting go (re-relating our taken-for-granted ways of acting), 3) attuning (listening to emerging orientations) and 4) practicing (embodying particular orientations in our encounterings). Through these the focal point has been on this on-going-moment, and this has made space for whatever emerges. Thus, this approach is based on a particular kind of organising from the here and now. These four perspectives called the CCP cycle has been the core of this emerging approach, which I first called enabling empowerment (Takanen 2005), and then the Co-Creative Process. These four intermingled perspectives have worked in slightly different forms as the basis of my, and my colleagues', work as CCP(I) facilitators over the last years. However, I see these phases now as processes/perspectives and they have shifted and lived in this long inquiry process in OGE, and here I have reconstructed them with relational constructionist vocabulary (see table 6). From the relational constructionist stance, all questions invite and suppress something, they are forming realities and thus they could work as enablers. Four questions as perspectives, which can be used after the participants have chosen their question or theme, are:

- 1) What thoughts connect to the question/theme just now, how would I describe my thoughts in a free way? What kind of feelings and needs are there related with these thoughts and this question?
- 2) What can I let go? What ways of thinking/acting could I let go?

- 3) What kind of orientation could enable I to re-relate with this theme/question?
- 4) How it feels to embody this orientation in the here and now, and how can I embody this orientation when I/we meet this theme again?

The first questions enable becoming aware processes where participant's way of constructing particular kind of realities become visible and explicit. Becoming aware of our on-going ways of constructing relational realities is invited through expressing our thoughts, feelings and needs and listening to them again from another. The second questions are meant to enable letting go in the sense of re-relating. This process of re-relating means making space for other possibilities without thinking about how they could become possible yet. The third question invites attuning, which is the process of becoming present as an embodied relational being who could become aware of happening in her/his inner space. This meditative process invites such experiential knowing where there are no separations between I and other and environment. Through this process, one could become aware on her/his way of relating to/with her/himself and the question/theme without trying to do anything except simply listening 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. The fourth question focuses on practicing, which could start by, for example, speaking or moving together from a particular orientation that has arisen through an earlier perspective. This orientation includes some kind of re-relating with an initial question and the way it has been earlier understood. This orientation could be actually felt as an embodied way of relating, such as peaceful relating, joyful relating, humorous relating or whatever, to participants, feels to be working. A facilitator could ask how this orientation feels in your body, how you feel when you move through it. Thus, practicing means the process of re-relating in action differently from this new orientation to a question/theme when you encounter it again. At the same time, 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, word practicing is used here in a particular sense, describing the way of an embodied engaging on-going activity where awareness is focused on what is happening just now. It is a conscious acting with a particular orientation. For example, if I have felt that openness as an orientation is needed in encountering some challenging situations, I will try to practice openness when the challenge emerges again, and if I find myself reacting as my usual way, I just softly became 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 this way make space to openness.

Table 6. Process Perspectives of Co-Creative Process Inquiry

The process perspectives	The questions	Examples of practices	The way of knowing	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.	The way of knowing that is everyday experiential knowing.	Seeing your way of co-constructing as one possible story that is accepted. Opening to different ways of constructing your story.
Letting go	What can I/we let go without knowing how? What ways of thinking/acting could I let go?	Dialogue walk with theme letting go with pair. Asahi, yoga asanas or other movements that feel releasing.	Experiential knowing.	Giving space to letting go, and opening towards not yet known other possibilities. Re-relating.
Attuning	What kind of orientation could I/we re-relate with this theme/question?	Guided meditation. Silent intuitive drawing or moving.	Experiential and presentational knowing.	Opening different ways of knowing, where you are no longer constructing oneself separately. Soft or non self-other relating 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 meet this theme again?	This is practiced in every-day-situations by becoming aware when “I am encountering this theme again” – how I re-relate with it through a particular orientation.	Practical knowing where attention is on being present in the here and now, practicing self-chosen orientation.	Re-relating by being present in action by embodying a particular kind of orientation.

These questions could facilitate bringing attention to this moment. This cycle and the ways of working with it could be viewed as a light structure (see Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009). This term could be used when structures are empty of some specified content of “what” (Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009, 14). In one sense, this is the case here: questions that work as starting points come from participants and are their decisions, and the following four questions are relatively empty of particular content. This process of questioning could also be viewed as light structure because it includes many self-reflective and dialogical practices that aim to support participants towards opening-up possibilities, rather than closing down solutions and problems. In this way, it is possible to create some structures, but let them be temporary and open (Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009, 15). When the questions are relatively empty of “what”, participants can bring to there what is meaningful to them in that moment through their own expressions. These questions are reflected often and then can shift because participants re-formulate them in on-going process. Participants can explore the question from many perspectives through practices that invite different ways of knowing, like drawing, silencing etc. Thus, this way of working aims to suspend quick answering and one-sided reasoning. It gives space to especially practical and experiential ways of knowing, which connect to our emotions, and sensings. For example drawing brings out emotional processes that we can feel in the whole body. Through drawing we can make visible such expressions of energy that are not possible to describe through speaking without losing something essential (Seeley & Reason 2008). These ways could also help us to see our taken-for-granted ways of making a particular kind of reality.

In OGE case, support group and sometimes the whole community also co-created the way of experimenting in small groups, called microcosms, the way of doing co-creative evaluation (with the support group) and the way of combining strategy work to this cultural renewing from the here and now. I described and reflected on these in earlier chapter. These present-oriented enabling structures were moving and shifting in action, and also enlargening participants’ ways of knowing and thus they could invite soft self-other relating. In addition, we had two practices that I suggested when we started and, which have systematically been done quite similar ways in almost every session. These were the orientation practice and the practice of reflecting interaction. The orientation practice seemed to enable becoming more conscious of how our feelings, thoughts and sensations are arising relationally in every moment, and shifting all the time. It seemed that the practice of reflecting our ways of interacting helped participants to shift towards more dialogical ways.

Inviting multiple ways of knowing is viewed as a particular feature of CCPI, which roots from experiences that different ways of knowing are needed in order to overcome taken-for-granted ways of acting. This way of speaking, these four ways of knowing, are rooted in Co-operative Inquiry (Heron 1996). There, four ways of knowing are appreciated by co-creating ways of inviting them, and their dynamic movements to each other is enabled and reflected in action. Different ways of knowing are invited by meditating, drawing, storying, moving together or other ways. Many of these practices or methods are used in other approaches in specific ways and for specific purposes (Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010, 7, see also Hosking 2004, 16). Here, they are used from the relational constructionist stance with a focus on the present moment. Propositional knowing is suspended in many situations, and when it is invited, a strong connection to experiential knowing is enabled. In this way, our taken-for-granted ways of interpreting and knowing can become diversified. It seems that focusing conceptualising or concept-driven reflecting can bring us back to subject-object ways of relating. This does not mean that propositional knowing is not acceptable or appreciated, but should be complemented with other ways of knowing.

Thus far, in this thesis I have described this approach in two overlapping ways: the one way was as an emerging process (ch. 5 & 7), and the another way is a more systematic cycle model through four perspectives (subch. 5.1) in one day's working. Heron and Reason (2006, 148) have also found it useful to distinguish between these two complementary ways of doing inquiry: the Apollonian, and the Dionysian, which are useful here. Often these ways go hand-in-hand in the inquiry process. The Apollonian means a more systematic, controlling and explicit approach, and the Dionysian gives space to emerging, spontaneous processes. The Dionysian inquiry takes a more imaginative, expressive, spiraling, diffuse and tacit approach to the interplay between making sense and action (Heron and Reason 2006, 148), which means that the way is more context-sensitive, emerging, and flexible.

In this OGE case, we have worked together a few times with the whole CCPI cycle expressed fully and systematically (see an example in subch. 5.1), which could be understood as the Apollonian. Mostly, our inquiry could be regarded as Dionysian in the sense that I (or other in-house co-facilitators) brought these questions or perspectives in different spontaneous forms when we worked together. We prepared some practices that fostered becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practicing. For example, the self-evaluation practice of storytelling had all these perspectives in it. As described, this has been very context-sensitive work, not planned strictly before. I found this worked in this context, because in this way we could

focus on what was emerging in the here and now and appreciate everyday challenges and take them as part of the process.

CCPI could be understood as starting with particular kinds of enabling structures, such as four perspectives on how to become present in action and opening up what is emerging. Heron (1996) has described that when the Dionysian inquiry goes too far, there are no plans or structures at all, and when the Apollonian approach goes too far the danger is that people become stuck to their plans and there is no space for what is emerging. Thus, the ways that could combine these two could probably avoid these dangers, and thus work better. This inquiry combines these two in a dynamic way; what works it depends on context. In OGE case, there was a need for some structures, which were at the outset partly open, and partly fixed. This enabled us to move together slowly towards a participating emerging process. However, at the whole, this process centres more on the Dionysian way than that of the Apollonian.

What is being developed?

In this approach, in one sense there are no means and goals that are stated at the start. There is nothing to be developed. However, some open-ended, often indefinable intention/s were described at the start. For example, organisational renewing could be understood as an intention. Possible outcomes are not known or defined at the start, but emerge from participants through the process. This requires systematic stoppings together to reflect on what is emerging in the here and now. So, in this approach, there is no need to state any fixed *objectives or aims to strive for*, but orient towards relational processes of reality-making where everyone is viewed as a co-creator. Hence these very processes, the relational processes, could be regarded as objects of this approach (see also Hosking 2010a). This on-going renewing (which can be regarded as a particular kind of relational reality-making) is not viewed as happening outside of participants. In this way, everyone is responsible for renewing, which happens in relational processes: how I am relating with myself and others, how I am listening, how we are working together, how I am participating? This invites everyone to reflect in action: what I and we are enabling or inviting in this way of relating, talking, listening etc. The possible changes and shifts are reflected without words, such as drawing or bodily movements, and storying together. They can also be seen in reflecting how our question and our relation to it, has changed. The local ways of storying are appreciated, and a CCPI facilitator does not make any evaluations that are stated as truths. Thus, there is no expert to say what the valuable

outcomes are, or what kinds of changes have taken place. Actually, this kind of truth-telling is seen to be impossible: there are many truths and they are allowed through verbal and non-verbal storytelling together.

In this particular case, the answer to “*what has developed*” was open-ended: simply renewing culture. We spoke about open-ended intentions without any closed definitions of what these could mean. These intentions were named such as to develop being present in action; an ability to act flexibly on the edge of chaos while facing an uncertain future, to enable participants’ empowerment, to create a questioning and open dialogical culture enabling leadership, etc. Hence, these definitions were intended to leave space to different views that can develop or change all the time. These intentions could be in-filled with those contents that participants bring there in the form of themes or questions and shift in many ways in the emerging process. Different ways of seeing intentions are accepted and invited. This allows local knowing. What was important, was a process itself, not strict aims but an orientation to practice being present in action. One could also say that that intention was also renewing or letting go from moment-to-moment.

Who develops, for whom and with whom?

In this approach, all participants are seen as co-inquirers. They are also viewed as co-creators in these relational processes wherein realities are made. This could be viewed as a relational constructionist stance. At the starting phase, the co-creative facilitator creates possibilities for this process with others. The responsibility of the process is slowly shared with all or most participants. The CCPI facilitator views the whole community as those with whom to co-create this process together. Hence, this work does not start from up-to-down or down-to-up but from the middle as participatory relations with the working environment. This could be called starting within in the sense that participants are strongly seen as initiators of the process. Starting within is regarded as happening in connection to many expectations, pressures etc. from the working environment.

This power with stance challenges; it takes time to invite everyone to engage together, if taken-for-granted ways of acting have been hierarchical, such as in my case. This also requires enabling structures with regard to how all participants can participate and engage. One option is working in small groups and building the support group that works quite invisible by enabling the whole on-going process. The support group can be formed by asking who are interested to engage as in-house facilitators. *The forming is*

open; no-one is chooses, for example key players to the group, as is the case in many other approaches. Thus, the group is not that kind of core group where participants are representatives. Because, this approach aims at the process wherein participants can themselves enable their renewing as an on-going process, creating flexible structures fits with this. Some participants in the support group can also change at times. In our case, we co-created a so-called support group that tried to act in enabling ways, and sensing the whole process. The support group could bridge the processes that happen in working in small groups, as well as working all together. Building together skills that everyone in the whole community can contribute, and participate can be enabled in dialogical practices. Thus everyone is seen as an enabler in his/her ways of relating with others.

When change agency is located in on-going relational processes of reality-making (see Hosking 2010b), not in individuals, this points to relational responsibility for this reality-making. This includes a particular position of the facilitator as one participant, who is not knowing on behalf others but inviting them to be co-creators in the sense of co-creating local realities in the here and now. CCPI facilitator is seen as one participant, who is relating with others as a sensing, feeling and thinking relational being. The way of participating is radical in the sense that the facilitator is bringing her/his own vulnerability, fears, thoughts and so on to serve the process. One facilitator shares, for example, her/his own doubts and fears, this can allow others to do so too. This means that it is not a position or just narrow professional role, but it connects the facilitator's way of living and doing her/his work from practicing being present in action. Thus, this is not that kind of facilitation that means just bringing tools or methods to support processes. The orientations and so the ways of relating are more important than particular methods or tools. Thus, soft self-other ways of relating forms the basis of this work.

Why this kind of development work is valuable?

This kind of practicing together could bring many valuable outcomes, like relating soft ways with oneself, others and the environment. The shift towards power with practices and engaging ways of participating co-creation of realities are seen to be valuable in this approach. A practical challenge in many working communities that I have worked with is that everyday work feels like extinguishing fires, and most acts feel like quick reactions. It is valuable to feel that you can participate in co-creating these relational realities in the ways that feels valuable and meaningful to you. Stopping and slowing-down is needed to participate from more listening

space with opening possibilities rather than taken-for-granted ways of acting.

In CCPI work, participants reflect the on-going process and their ways of narrating can bring insights of valuable moments or outcomes through the process. In our case, the organisation also had their normal ways of evaluating customer satisfaction, personnel satisfaction and productivity which could also be used as one kind of information of outcomes of this kind of developing. However, most important are participant's on-going self-reflections, such as feelings and sensings of how this is going on; in this case, for example, the moments where participants felt new ways of being that were valued by themselves. In the case, many participants appreciated how their customers have seen their action and how customer satisfaction scores have increased. They also appreciated practical new ways of acting, and the feeling of we. Participants can value that which seems meaningful and valuable to them, and it can be different for different participants.

This way of working enables becoming aware of how we are constructing particular realities in the here and now. This makes us become co-creators in the sense of taking relational responsibility for what we are forming together. The CCPI practitioners I work with seem to be people who want to enable co-creating new ways of being, and so renewing realities. They appreciate being present in action as the core of this work. They choose to work with people (customers) who share enough similar values: such as, appreciating what emerges, appreciating others, co-creating consciously (in the sense mindfully) and power with stance. This approach invites being present in action because soft ways of relating could make us feel more connected with our actions in this world and those on-going valuable outcomes. To me and other CCPI practitioners this is the way of life, which enables us to serve by being present in action. The CCPI facilitator is in a relationship with these participants, the purpose of this organisation, and its relation with its environment. The purposes are co-created in these relations. This works best, when our customers and partners are sharing and appreciating these kinds of value-based orientations, and ready to practice them together to make their actions in the world more valuable. In organisational contexts, there are many tensions between different values, but all are appreciated and given space.

8.2 Comparing Three Approaches: AI, CI and CCPI

In the first part of this chapter, I crafted the CCPI approach through four questions. CCPI is expressed as an emerging work-in-progress, and probably will also be like that in the future because it centres on the ongoing process of reality-making. CCPI gives one example of a potentially relationally-engaging change work approach that can invite change from inside-out in relations with the environment and customers. It invites and encourages becoming aware of how we are participating in reality-making in our encountering. In this sense, CCPI can be regarded as a way of living rather than a particular method. I suggest that the answers to the four questions form a congruent way with which to present this practical activity as a form of praxis. Next, I want to discuss whether this approach has special, unique features that permit that it to be regarded as a new developmental approach.

I chose intentionally to compare two approaches that come very near to CCPI, and thus these distinctions are at most very subtle. Differences and similarities can be formed only in relations. I would like to underline that all of these inquiries are manifested in many different ways in different local-cultural and local-historical contexts (see van der Haar & Hosking 2004, 1017). They are regarded as context sensitive approaches, not as fixed models or methods. I have compared them by using mostly the texts of the original developers. I have used some parts of this thesis as an account of CCPI, but also complemented it with my views (which were not written). This kind of analysis could only compare what is said in texts, which is in many ways limited: for example in texts, all developers are probably speaking of what are their ideas and ideals, but not so much of the challenges in practicing these.

I started this comparison using the same four questions that I describe above and forming short answers with regard to the three approaches (see table 6). What closely connects all these approaches, is explicitly value-based ways of working with others, and practitioners' commitment to a particular approach as the way of life (see also Cooperrider & co 2008, 34). All these approaches appreciate the participative or collaborative ways of inquiring that are based on power to or/and power with rather than of power over. Thus, at the practical level each of these approaches appreciates a dialogical form of interacting, and enables these in many ways. Participants' experiences and local knowing are taken seriously in all these approaches. Doing together is valued in each approach.

This simple and short way of comparing (see table 7) helped me to see how these four questions enabled an analysis of differences. I chose partly different questions to continue after reading many texts about these forms of inquiry. I tried to form these questions by appreciating these approaches. For example all strongly emphasise particular values and see question of what is valuable important, thus this felt a good question to start. These approaches work with change in time, driving for some kind co-agency and underline or centre on interaction. In this comparative analysis, I will focus on three questions: 1) what kinds of purposes are valued, 2) how change and time-orientation are viewed, and 3) how agency and interaction are viewed. These questions make it possible also to become aware of different ontological and epistemological stances: Co-operative Inquiry has roots in a humanistic worldview, AI is based on the social constructionist view, and CCPI is based on the relational constructionist view. From this perspective, it could be supposed that latter two have more in common because of a similar kind of meta-perspective.

Table 7. Comparing CCPI, CI and AI

	Co-Creative Process Inquiry (Takanen)	Co-operative Inquiry (Heron)	Appreciate Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastra)
A short definition of this approach in the original developer(s) words	The way of co-creating realities by re-relating themes and questions that matters to participants, and thus becoming more conscious co-creators.	The way of working with other people who have similar concerns/interests in order to 1) understand your world, make sense your life and develop new ways of looking at things and 2) learn how to act change things you may want to change and find out how to do things better.	The way of liberating creative and constructive potential of organisations and human communities by unseating existing reified patterns of discourse, creating space for new voices and discoveries, and expanding circles of dialogue to provide community of support for innovative action.
A key beliefs and worldview	Relational constructionist worldview. We are co-creating our future in the here and now – it is a challenge to take responsibility from this on-going processes as seeing how we are relating.	Participatory worldview.	Social constructionist worldview underlining power of language and positivity. Organisations grow in direction of what is studied. Every organisation has something that works right, and gives it life.

	Co-Creative Process Inquiry (Takanen)	Co-operative Inquiry (Heron)	Appreciate Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastra)
How?	By practicing being present in action: spiral of four re-relating processes: becoming aware, letting go, attuning, practicing. By co-creating enabling structures and practices together with participants. Could be done in a more systematic or spontaneous way.	Four phases of reflection and action 1) agreeing on focus of inquiry and planning action and procedures 2) becoming co-subjects: engaging in the actions agreed and observing, documenting 3)co-subjects become fully engaged with their action and experience 4) sharing in both presentational and propositional forms. Could be done more systematically or spontaneous way.	4 D cycle starts with positive topic choice then follows four phases: 1) discovery, 2)dream, 3) design, 4) destiny.
What?	Co-creating new ways of being/relating. Cultural renewing, strategy work and well-being etc.	Developing practices, generating new theories, inquiring organisational cultures etc.	Reinforcing positive core of organisation.
Who?	All participants.	People who have similar concerns or interests.	All participants.
Why?	Being present in action enables us to participate – on-going co-creation differently. Change work is reality-making – how to find ways to re-relate by allowing this on-going change, not trying to make it.	Creating self-generating culture as a counter to prevailing forms of social oppression and disempowerment (Heron 1996, 5). Bridging the way how we work and the way we life (Heron & Reason 2006, 144).	Sustaining and enhancing life-giving potential in organisations. Problem-oriented view diminishes the capacity to produce innovative theory capable of inspiring (Ludema, Cooperrider, Barrett 2006, 155).

I would like to also point out that AI and CI have been developed in practical contexts over many decades. In recent years, AI has come very popular in organisational contexts. CI is used in organisational contexts

more as the way of developing professional practice than enabling organisational change processes. From the time perspective, CCPI is in its early phases, as an emerging approach: it is just in its birthing process. Expressing this playfully, AI and CI could serve as more experienced midwives, which this “new spirit” has chosen as warm-spirited enablers. CCP(I) has been co-developed over a seven-year time span in organisational change processes and as a personal and group non-coaching process, mostly in Finland. In its earlier form, it was for the first time expressed in 2005 in a book about empowering community (Takanen 2005). It describes how to co-create the future in the here and now. In this thesis, CCPI is for first time described as an emerging approach that has its meta-theoretical basis in relational constructionism and which also has its identity in dialogue with CI. There are twenty practitioners, about 40-50 organisations where this approach has used in somewhat similar but emerging forms, and maybe thousand people who have participated in this way of inquiring.

What kind of purposes are valued?

I will here compare what kinds of purposes are valued in these three approaches. In AI, there is strong emphasis on the positive core of organisation. “*AI is a high-engagement, high-performance process*”, describes Cooperrider and his colleagues (2008, 51) about this approach in the context how it should be demonstrated in organisational context. They aim to engage people by asking their peak experiences, values and vision of the future for the organisation and your world. Even, CCPI appreciates somewhat similarly participant’s values; it starts focusing more on their important everyday questions that people create in that moment. These questions could be searching for a better future, struggling with on-going challenges etc. Every way of expressing questions is accepted as good starting points, so it does not to be positively formed. If questions are formulated in a problem-oriented way, solution-oriented way or positive way, that is accepted. However, the process after that enables people to see how they are constructing these, and what kind of thoughts, feelings and needs are formed there. This analysis is done together, without explaining or searching for a solution or striving for another formulation.

AI points out “*the power of generative images to create a world of hope and possibility*” (Watkins & Cooperrider 2000). Even positivity is underlined; it does not deny the negative and destructive. “*It is rather, about the focusing on the positive as a force of building more positive future*” (Watkins & Cooperrider 2000). Here I view clear difference to CCPI. In CCPI, there are not processes of separating positive and negative, and

inviting the other one, positivity. This does not mean that the value of positivity is not appreciated. It could be asked, whether AI closes down dialogues of challenges or problems that are voiced from cynicism and criticism. In CCPI, all different voices are invited, and, for example, cynicism or pessimism are seen as valuable ways of expressing experiences that can help us to learn together. Summarising this, CCPI focuses on accepting what emerges instead of visioning a better future and developing further positive strength.

CI appreciates *“the intrinsic value of human flourishing in individual and social life, in terms of enabling balance of autonomy, co-operation and hierarchy; and about participative decision-making...”* (Heron 1996, 16). In CI, being present is introduced as one inquiry skill. Heron (1996, 115) also speaks of paying heed in the sense of careful attending that is intentional. This notion of extraordinary heed refers to mindfulness or wakefulness (Heron 1996, 117). Being present means *“owning our creative transaction with what is given”*. It is *“the ability open up fully to our participation in reality through our empathic communion with it, and our unrestricted perceptual patterning of it”* (Heron 1996, 119). Heron (1996, 119) also points to how patterning through creative minding happens. These quotes enable us to point out that there are many ontological-epistemological differences with the relational constructionist stance, which CCPI is related to here. Let me analyse these. In the relational constructionist stance, there is not a given aspect of reality, and there is not just one reality, but many realities as on-going processes. In CCPI, being present in action means being present in relational processes where realities are forming. In bringing the distinction between CCPI and CI with regard to this issue, being present can be seen as an important skill but is not underlined similarly to the way it is in CCPI as an orientation.

In CCPI, being present in action is the purpose and the core orientation, as the way of being and thus as the way of relating. This orientation embraces everything that emerges without judging it as positive or negative. In compared this to CI, CCPI expresses its purposes and values in a slightly different way. It is about opening up to what is emerging and accepting it. Thus, there is not such a big vision for planetary transformation (CI), human flourishing (Heron 1996, 16) or positive future (AI) in CCPI. However, this does not mean that these kinds of visions are not possible in working with CCPI. However, if participants bring these kinds of visions, the question here is how I and we are embodying these in the here and now. Thus, the vision is not seen as somewhere in the future, but in the here and now.

How time-orientation and change are understood?

I will analyse here how change and time-orientation are viewed in these approaches. It seems that the way that change is understood is strongly connected to a particular kind of time-orientation. By time-orientation, I refer to how past, present and future are regarded and the tendency to underline some of those. Time-orientation is not largely discussed in the sources that I have read about these approaches. However, Chandler and Torbert (2003, 134) have pointed out that action research inquiries aim not only to understand past events, but on-going present as human interactions in which one is a participant, as well as future intention. However, it is an important perspective that connects how change and knowing is understood (e.g. Petranker 2005, Purser, Bluedorn & Petranker 2005, Purser & Petranker 2005). For example when time is understood in linear way, it makes sense to speak of planning and implementing happening as separate phases, as a linear process. When time is viewed as cyclical or as a spiral the present, past and future are all happening now and thus change is also happening in the here and now, in the present on-going moment, as in CCPI.

CCPI underlines the power of encountering as spaces for co-creation where an emerging process unfolds in the here and now. Thus, it connects with a particular way of viewing time, which Hosking (2010b) has expressed as two sound qualities of change processes in time and in action and in the here and now. Past is viewed as live action in the present, and thus it is re-constructed regularly in our practices (Hosking 2010b, 238). This contrasts with the more spatialised, linear and sequential construction of time (Hosking 2010b, 238), which seems to dominate in both in CI and AI, even if they strive for different time-orientation. I made this conclusion from AI and CI accounts that separate reflecting and acting, and planning and implementing. This seems to imply a linear and unidirectional process in which the present is a moment between past and the yet to come future (see also Hosking 2010b, 231). Let me explain this further in a more subtle way.

Often AI is viewed as a social constructionist approach to *planned* change (e.g. van der Haar & Hosking 2004, 1017). In one handbook (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 45), there is an expression such as “*successful change management requires...*” which can be interpreted that AI is seen as change management. This differs in many ways from CCPI, which is not viewed as a change management approach but the way of allowing and participating in on-going changes as relational processes. Change management

approaches also prefer planned change, which is also expressed as the purpose of AI. I found this confusing, because they are also speaking of AI as an emerging approach. “*AI is an emergent process, one that unfolds as success build on success*” (Cooperrider & co 2008, 53). An emergent process is seen very differently in CCPI; it is not reframed by positive questions or themes, it is not understood as (future) success build on (past) success. In CCPI emergence means an on-going, unfolding process in the Dionysian sense, in similar fashion to that in CI.

The argument of *emerging* approach seems particularly interesting, if we look at how many ways AI practices are framing strongly the process. In AI, the characteristics of good topics are formed. Thus, therein power is used to frame what are good and valuable topics: for example they have to be affirmative or stated in the positive, they have to be desirable identifying what people want (Cooperrider & co 2008, 41). In CCPI, all topics are accepted, and all forms of questions. For example if some participants ask a question “*why are managers not doing anything about the problem of personnel reducing*”, that is seen as valuable as a question “*how to lead inspiring ways?*” These different questions can be used as starting points where many voices are enabled.

“*Once the purpose is established, the AI process is then designed.*” This is done in a simple form as a statement, such as, “*Our organisation will use AI because we want to...in order to...*” (Cooperrider & co 2008, 54). However, in AI the plan is made in a “*flexible way*”. This designing and stating the purpose differs from both the Dionysian way of CI and CCPI: change is not planned this way. AI is seen as *visioning and planning methodology*, and it has expressed that it differs in how images of the future emerge out of grounded examples from the organisation’s past strengths (Cooperrider & co 2008, 41). If we look at it in this concrete way, we can see how, for example, storytelling differs in many ways between AI and CCPI. The biggest difference is that in AI it serves as a visioning and planning method, and in CCPI it is seen as on-going process of reality-making: it is a way of expressing on-going realities through many voices without searching for a positive future. In AI, the aim is for good stories, and in CCPI all kind of stories are accepted, and different voices are appreciated. Also in CI, storytelling can be used but this is not viewed primarily as relational processes where realities are made as in CCPI.

Let me look even closer; how this change is seen to be not happening at every moment in AI. Recently, Cooperrider and his fellows (2008) have expressed that *transition begins* in the Design phase continuing throughout

the Destiny phase. Thus, it could be interpreted that earlier phases are not seen as formative processes where transition is already happening. This phase was earlier called the Delivery, which emphasised planning for continuous learning and improvisation (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 11). They reflected themselves that it was a time for action planning and developing implementation strategies (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 11). Let me continue by quoting how AI practitioners speak about the Design phase: *“This design is more than a vision. It is a provocative and inspiring statement of intention that is grounded in the realities of what has worked in the past combined with what new ideas are envisioned for future.”* (Cooperrider & co 2008, 7). Here, the present seems to be ignored or taken-for-granted as a space where the past is combined with future ideas. Then AI practitioners continue by saying *“the Design delivers the organisation to its Destiny through innovation and action”*. The idea of delivering is still living in their thinking. They explain how *“the organisation is empowered to make things happen”* (Cooperrider & co 2008, 7). Thus change is again seen as *making things* happen, that are not here or only as seeds in the form of ideas.

In CCPI, there is not that kind of history of implementing or delivering. I agree with AI practitioners’ notion that change is happening all the time. However, it seems that these layers of implementation ideas are still living in their texts. There is the principle of simultaneity in AI, which means that inquiry and change are not truly separate moments, but are simultaneous (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 15). They explain that even the most innocent question evokes change. This constructionist view is described clearly and in a sound way, but when it comes to phases of this kind of process, it seems that modernist myth is again evoked. In AI, the past as good, positive experiences and strengths is appreciated, and channelled to visions of the future. I wonder, does this mean that future visions are based only on the past (as something that has gone). Is there any space for the unknown that does not come from the past? In this way, it seems to me that AI is bringing past and future together, but does not pay attention to this on-going moment.

In CCPI all phases are seen as simultaneous processes where potential renewal or another kind of change is happening, thus there is not a separation, as in AI, between planning (or dreaming) and implementing. However, one could argue that in the story of development work (ch. 5) these phases are organised in a seemingly linear way, even they intermingle in every phase. Anyway, this is just the way of presenting it, if you read closely every phase, you see how actually all these phases are under each

other. In AI, there is the language of *implementation*, which reflects how thinking, designing and dreaming have been separated from implementation. In CCPI, there is no implementing: practicing being present is going on all the time. If participant's want to live in a trustful community, they can participate in it in the here and now by trusting each other. Sometimes practicing works better than at other times but it is there all the time. Of course, participants can bring ideas of implementing in CCPI, and it takes time to rethink these ideas and let them go. Every act of questioning, becoming aware, letting go, and attuning are already small ways of becoming and being present in action where the future is co-created. The future is not primarily there as ideas or visions but as embodied ways of being, such as feeling trust in the here and now when we are discussing together.

If we look closely CI, there is a particular kind of future-orientation that takes the form of developing better ways of acting, and striving for human flourishing and planetary transformation. There can also be interpreted a subtle divide to past, present and future in linear ways, which takes the form of separating action and reflection, planning and doing. In CI, there are four stages of the inquiry cycle. For example, the first stage is viewed as a reflection phase where a plan of action for the first action phase is undertaken. Thus in this expression, reflection and action are clearly separated, and action is seen as happening not in the here and now, but in particular phases. In this sense, this seems to be a modernist view even though CI generally appears to overcome many modernist beliefs. I would like to point out that Heron (1996, 124) is also speaking of reflection within action as a radical way of paying heed to action. Thus CI could be understood as including both these views.

CI has been defined by pointing out that participants "*learn how to act to change things they might want to change and find out how to do things better*". Here change is seen as separate from us; participants are changing *things*. Of course, this can be understood as a handy way of speaking about change that is easily understood by participants. However, it sounds as if this way of speaking separates us from the on-going processes that are change. CI also underlines personal transformation, but for the same reason this is not expressed in this definition. However, I see that this is part of its uniqueness, that it does not only enable changes in the world but in us. If interpreted this way, it comes near that CCPI enables on-going changes in the organisational processes that we are part of. In the co-written story (Takanen & Petrow 2010), we spoke about organisational culture in the sense of on-going processes in which we are participating,

and thus renewing as one kind of change that can happen in both of these because they are not separate.

In CCPI, being present in the here and now, from moment-to-moment is an orientation and the core process: it is enabled through four perspectives or processes that bring attention to how we are going on just now. Thus visioning is not seen as important as practicing our visions in the here and now. Enlarged present includes past and future as living processes in the here and now. For example, when we co-wrote the story of our experiences (Takanen & Petrow 2010), past experiences were living strongly in our bodies and those feelings transformed to the text. At the same moment when writing and telling this story, we felt how the future was forming itself by writing.

In conclusion, it seems that any of these three approaches are not strongly past-oriented in the sense of focusing on the analysis of the past. There is also similarity of appreciating past, present and future, but it appears that CI and AI have greater emphasis on the near future rather than the present and how the future is happening in the here and now.

How agency and interaction are viewed?

All these three approaches intentionally try to enable some kind of co-agency that culminates in questions of power. Power to and power with stances are preferred rather than power over. CI looks most explicitly at power questions; in contrast, AI does not point to these. Similarly in CCPI, the question of power is viewed in the way reflecting how it is done by enabling participation. However, co-agency is understood quite differently in these three approaches: CI gives more space to individual uniqueness, seeing co-subjects as self-directing actors, whereas AI views participants both as individuals and as a web of relations, and CCPI underlines how individual and social are formed themselves as relational processes.

The question of co-agency is closely connected to interaction as a place in which it happens, but it can also consider that co-agency is viewed as interacting relational processes itself. The meaning and particular democratic or dialogic quality of interaction is underlined in each approach. In CCPI interaction is seen as processes of co-constructing, reproducing and changing relational realities and relationships (see Hosking 2010b, 232). From this stance, relational processes make people and realities (see e.g. Hosking 2006b, 15). From the participatory worldview, on which CI is based, this is put differently: people are making realities by participating in a partly given world, which is viewed as subjective–objective. In CCPI,

change is viewed as on-going inter-action (see Hosking 2010b) that invites relational responsibility. Thus, in everyday action, this underlines the power of encounterings. In these moments, change can be the re-construction of previously stable patterns (see Hosking 2010b, 232).

By pointing to the distinction between CI and CCPI, and that CI is a participative worldview (sometimes using relationality as a synonym) this is seen as an interaction *between* entities. Individual uniqueness and potential are underlined, and seen as forming in relationships. However, in CI the reality (not realities) is viewed as a subjective-objective transaction, the fruit of the active participation and construing of the mind in what is given (Heron 1996, 115-116.) Co-subjects in inquiry are seen as self-directing agents, whose creative thinking determines their action (Heron 1996, 202). From the relational constructionist stance, there is not that kind of underlining of self-directing, individual agents but the focus is on how we are participating together and working from within. Thus, individual creative thinking is not seen as determining the action. Hence, in CCPI, there is not conceptualising inter-personal or intersubjective processes if these are understood as happening *between* human actors (with personality, attitudes) (van der Haar & Hosking 2004, 1021). Thus, act and supplement (Gergen 1994, Hosking 2006, 11) are related to each other, not persons. However, I have found that speaking in practical contexts, it often needs to speak about you and me, which sound like separate entities and that things are happening between these entities. Even I view these processes as relational processes where there are no separate entities. It is just practical to speak taken-for-granted ways. This same tension also seems to be found in AI. Probably, it is just handier to speak about an organisation than on-going organising when you are working with people who appreciate everyday ways of speaking.

AI aims at creating contexts in which people are “*free to be known in relationship*”. “*It offers people the change to truly know one another – both as unique individuals and as a part of the web of relationships*” (Cooperrider & co 2008, 27). This seems to have similar spirit as CI, which sounds humanistic: knowing truly one another as individuals and as a part of relationships. This could be seen as a “*both and*” view, which does not close down the possibilities to be known as an individual and relational being. In CCPI, I would put this slightly differently: we are relational beings, which can be constructed as unique individuals.

I will elaborate on how these approaches express relations with participants. In all of these approaches, there is space for participants to

take a role as facilitator. In AI, participants can at least interview each other. In CI, facilitator(s) can be an outsider or insider. In CCPI, there is a need for both outside and inside facilitators in order to enable change processes when the outside facilitator is not participating, and after she/he has stepped down. Thus, each of these approaches are based on power to participants or power with participants.

In AI, the facilitator or consultant is inspiring others, and teaching about AI when they start (Cooperrider & co 2008, 53). It seems that in AI, the way a facilitator is relating with others is not so strongly centred than in CCPI. For example in the Appreciative Inquiry Handbook – for Leaders of Change, this issue is not discussed at all. Instead, there are recipes of what to take into account in different practical situations. In other handbook (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005), this issue is discussed by stating clearly what are the roles of leadership, an AI consultant, the core team and participants. Leadership is understood there as leader's work, not as a relational process. This seems to be based on a modernist belief whereby leaders and followers are separated. The AI consultant's role is stated as introducing AI and training people as internal agents of inquiry, interviewers, and AI facilitators design the overall project flow through the AI 4-D cycle. They also facilitate AI activities and continually seek ways to give the process away, to support organisational members to make it their own (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 46). It appears to me that there are quite many ways where the AI consultant is taking large responsibility for the whole without others, such as designing the overall project flow. This seems to be subtle power over stance. In contrast, in CI there is a strive to enable that every participants can participate in decision-making, planning contents, and methods. This sounds very ideal. Probably, this is more possible when it is used in small groups, than in whole organisations. In this moment, CCPI could be considered as a middle way of these two: it strives for collective decision-making but in practice this is not always possible or meaningful (because it takes more time). Thus, support group could also be formed where the participants are from every other small group, and this enables many decision-making processes by bringing together their experiences from the small groups. This support group differs from the core group and topic selection group (Cooperrider & co 2008, 39) because in AI participants work as representatives. In CCPI, they are not considered to be representatives, and the biggest decisions are made by the whole group whenever it is possible.

In CI, it differs if the facilitator(s) is enabling the Dionysian or the Apollonian inquiry. In Dionysian inquiry, the facilitator takes care of the

way in which action emerges by diffusion from the reflection phase; being improvisatory and responsive to the situation. In Apollonian inquiry, the facilitator will enable more the intentional preplanning of action phases (Heron 1996, 65-66). Heron (1996, 73-100) has described facilitating processes in different phases in great detail, which cannot be expressed here. What seems to be important is that in CI the facilitator is aware of emotional, interpersonal and cognitive processes.

In CCPI, how the facilitator relates with themselves and others (as on-going processes) forms the basis of the whole work. This relating is viewed as on-going processes that at their best can embody present-orientation wherein the self and others are not seen as fixed entities. This could bring a feeling of freedom of becoming all the time. CCPI practitioners call themselves CCPI facilitators, CCPI practitioners and co-creators. This work is rarely expressed as consulting or coaching. The facilitator's task is enabling re-relating with oneself, others and the environment by practicing being present and by opening up what emerges and embracing it.

8.3 Drawing It Together

Both CI and AI have formed their identities as developmental approaches by contrasting their practices and ideas to more conventional ways of doing action research or change work (e.g. Cooperrider & Srivastva 1987, Heron 1996). However, I chose this path of walking with close relatives and opening a dialogue between these three approaches. I have made these distinctions with the purpose of identity-making, not as expressing what is the better way. I honestly believe that the approaches that work are those in which practitioners are living and thus embodying it every minute, and I see that all these approaches have the kind of spirit that enables practitioners to find their own voice in relation to a particular context with other participants.

Identity-making happens through forming both similarities and differences. I have suggested that these three approaches have many profound similarities. First, the approaches underline the participant's views, appreciate local knowing and point to the participatory, relational nature of the world(s). Second, each can be seen in terms of power with, rather than power over. They each have special qualities: AI fosters the positive core of the organisation and life-giving visions, CI points to

experiential inquiry with many possibilities to enable human flourishing and planetary transformation, and CCPI enables being present in what emerges and asks us to become relationally responsible co-creators in everyday situations, in the here and now. Third, all these approaches point to the meaning of questioning as on-going process. Fourth, these approaches embrace both “*oneness and diversity*” (see e.g. Cooperrider & co 2008, xii). There are also many subtle differences in what kinds of purposes are valued, how change and time-orientations are viewed, and how agency and interaction are viewed. Thus, I suggest that CCPI can be viewed as the unique developmental approach that differs in many ways from other approaches.

Let me close this by briefly reflecting on some challenges in making this analysis. I analysed more differences between AI and CCPI in organisational contexts, because it was easier to find suitable sources of AI: AI practitioners have written many books on how this is done. Their texts are easy to read and practically-oriented. It became more complex to draw differences between CI and CCPI even though they come from different ontological-epistemological stances. The difficulty derives partly from the nature of CI as multifaceted approach that has used so many ways. The difficulty of comparing also connects to a lack of descriptions of how CI can be and has been used in organisational change processes. There were a few that were set in organisational contexts (e.g. McArdle 2004) but not organisational change processes, so I found that they were not helpful for these purposes. Some researchers have also used CI simply as a method (Meehan & Goghlan 2004). Often this has been done from different worldviews, which makes it something else (e.g. Ottman & co 2011) and does not work for the purposes of comparing the approaches. CCPI and CI can be seen as close relatives in many ways: CCPI has borrowed from CI extended epistemology, the so-called four ways of knowing. It has received inspiration from the Dionysian way of inquiring. However, both have different ontological stances. In these last months, I have had on-going discussion with Heron about similarities and differences between the two approaches, and it seems to me that even if it is possible to uncover all kinds of distinctions by reading texts, in practical life the approaches come close to each other in Dionysian forms. In the future, this kind analysis could be deepened by researching in action experiential ways, and then comparing similarities and differences.

9 Discussion: Co-Creating New Possibilities by Being Present

This research has focused on possibilities to develop different ways of being present at work. Paradoxically, this research does not aim at developing in the sense of striving for something, but being present with what is emerging and thus co-creating new possibilities. This exploration of how to practice being present in development and research work is still an on-going question for me, but writing the thesis is ending soon. Thus, I invite you to participate in the on-going process of co-creating outcomes that are expressions of this study's findings (see Heron 1996, 104).

The practice of making outcomes can be seen differently from the perspective of co-inquiry and from perspective of the slightly more conventional social science wherein scholars speak about contributions. The answer to what is that kind of new knowledge which is regarded as a contribution or worthwhile outcome differs: many action researchers (e.g. Reason & Bradbury 2006, Heron 1996) consider new knowing (like new practices and skills) in participant's contexts as most valuable and speak of different kinds of outcomes (e.g. Heron 1996). One of these outcomes, new propositional knowing, could be considered as a contribution from the perspective of more conventional social science. However, in action research, inquiry is sometimes reported this way, but it is not regarded as the primary. From the social science perspective, often new knowledge, which is called a contribution, means something that is new in relation to particular academic discussions. I have taken these two perspectives as complementing each other in the task of concluding some outcomes from this study, of which some of these could be regarded as propositional contributions of this action research.

I have been discussing and co-creating outcomes in many encounterings with others. I have invited my co-inquirers, research colleagues, supervisors, CCP facilitators and practitioners of mindfulness (consultants, coaches, therapists) to join these generative dialogues and debates. We have discussed in small group sessions, a research community's seminars, and other situations. These discussions helped me to form the basis of this chapter. I would like to point out that a search like this is not about finding or stating any truth(s) but more about being present in questioning and

listening to what comes up. Thus, our understanding remains partial, open-ended and emerging.

Let me next describe briefly what kind of outcomes and openings I will discuss in this chapter. I start with those that could be regarded as contributions and then enlarge towards different kinds of openings. First, this brings a contribution to mindfulness studies in an organisational context and particularly in change work. Second, this contributes such participatory research and action research methodologies in the area of change work through introducing CCPI as an emergent developmental approach and by comparing it with AI and CI. Third, this gives concrete examples of how soft self-other relating (Hosking 2010b) could emerge and could be invited intentionally through development work. Finally, and most importantly, this work contributes to participant's and their environment in many ways. I have structured this chapter accordingly.

However this way of expressing contributions is only one possible way, and I would like to offer another which I discussed with Niina Koivunen in chapter 3. This way of structuring outcomes comes from co-operative inquiry (Heron 2006). These outcomes could be also seen as a) transformations on personal being through engagement with the focus and the process of the co-inquiry, b) presentations of insights about the focus of inquiry through expressive modes (like our co-written story with drawings and photos, Takanen & Petrow 2010), c) propositional reports like some parts of this thesis d) practical skills, which are skills to do with transformative action and participative knowing. Thus, I see that four different kind outcomes have also unfolded from each other in this study, and these carry on different ways of knowing.

The first very practical kind of outcome, new ways of being present at work, have been co-created repeatedly in different ways during our development process. These connect to Heron's first and last kind of outcomes. They are not understood here as some new fixed ways of acting but ways of re-relating with oneself and others and the environment in every moment. Thus, these ways are changing all the time. This kind of practical knowing is only partly reported here and I appreciate all those small on-going outcomes that cannot be captured here but which "*are living in our hearts and new ways of encounterings*" in OGE's environment and my work. Some of these have been analysed as new ways of relating and thus I have shifted practical knowing to propositional knowing. Thus the second outcome is an analysis of particular moments where the ways of relating shifted towards soft self-other relating and how

movement between subject-object relating and soft self-other relating were happening. This analysis has been carried out with relational constructionist concepts, and thus it could be interpreted as propositional knowing that emerges from experiential and presentational knowing. Embodying and feeling new ways of being present at work during our encountering in OGE inspired me and another participant to co-write outcomes of a third kind; a presentation of our insights (see Heron 1996, 104), which is presented (drawings, photos) in the book *Kohtaamisten voima* (Takanen & Petrow 2010) and in chapter 5. The fourth outcome has taken the form of a description of Co-Creative Process Inquiry and a comparative analysis between three different developmental approaches. The description of CCPI could be also regarded as propositional knowing based on experiential and practical knowing. This connects to Heron's last, and also to his first kind of outcome. I chose to express this other way of constructing outcomes, because it makes visible how different ways of knowing have been intermingled in this work. However, this chapter has structured through bringing those particular contributions which I introduced first. These two ways of expressing are also overlapping.

The research task, developing different ways of being at work, has been explored through five questions in this thesis. First, I asked how did we carry on development work in OGE? I answered this with the story of development work. Second, I asked what kind of relating emerged in particular moments in development work, and how the soft self-other relating was invited in those moments. I analysed the moments of soft self-other relating in terms of the customer and oneself. I also reflected on how we moved from convenient client-customer relating towards co-creative partnership. I suggested that practicing being present enables soft self-other relating. I also suggested that soft self-other relating and strong subject-object relating do not need to be seen as opposites, but rather as different ways of relating, which are on-going subtle shifts to each other in many everyday encounterings. Of all those moments that I analysed, soft self-other relating was invited or consciously enabled in many ways through the ways we carry on developing work. Thus, third, I asked how did we practice being present in our developmental work? I organised my reflections in to five themes: 1) from making changes towards 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. Fourth, I asked what kinds of ways of developing enabled different ways of being present at work? I described Co-Creative Process

Inquiry as an emerging developmental approach, which is based on four present-oriented perspectives. These are named, becoming aware, letting go, attuning, and practicing. Finally, I asked: does CCPI differ from other approaches and compared the approach to other similar kinds of approaches. I concluded that although CCPI has many similarities with AI and CI, it differs with regard to its present-oriented focus, which takes different ways of being present in action. Let me next look closer at some particular contributions of this study.

9.1 Contribution to Mindfulness Research in Change/Development Work

Discussions about mindfulness in organisational contexts have increased in the years I have been doing this exploratory study with others. However, mindfulness is still scarcely researched in the context of change/developmental work. Developing mindfulness skills has also become a fashionable trend in organisational contexts by promising time to stop, a skill for living on the edge, a skill that fosters well-being and innovations. However, still, most of mindfulness studies in organisational settings are theoretically-oriented and/or pre-planned (controlling) programmes without a strong connection to everyday organisational life and its challenges. However, some of the studies have brought new knowledge of how mindfulness shows up in empirical settings (e.g. Langer & Moldoveanu 2000, Eisold 2000, Dane 2011).

One pioneer in mindfulness studies, social psychologist Langer (1989, 133-152) has written about mindfulness on the job, which is principally based on her studies. She has brought three perspectives: how mindfulness fosters innovations, how manager's uncertainty could help initiatives and innovation, and how burnout risk diminishes if you are mindful and not stuck to rigid mindsets and old categories. In her view, mindfulness is opposite to mindlessness, which means automatic behavior, taken-for-granted ways of reacting (Langer 1989). This kind of social-psychological view takes mindfulness as an individual state of mind, which could be developed with particular practices (e.g. Langer 1989, 1997). I agree with these views on how mindfulness fosters innovations and well-being based on our experiences in OGE. It seems that being present at work fosters, for example, innovations and initiatives. In this study, participants also felt that they can participate more and co-create new possibilities and practices

with others. However, as I have argued earlier, this kind of modernist social psychological view is based on many separations that could be questioned. This view takes mindfulness as an individual state. In its applications, it also separates managers and followers, which re-produces managers as active actors who can do something to others. What follows from this kind of view is that mindfulness is explored in the form of techniques and programmes in empirical settings. It has set as an objective and sometimes also as a tool that brings about more innovation or productivity. These programmes could be very systematic, including formal meditation practices, which have been empirically tested in many groups before in different contexts (e.g. Kabat-Zinn & co 2007).

In this study, I have asked what happens if we take mindfulness as a relational processes of being present at work in the middle of everyday challenges. I have used a concept being present in action instead of mindfulness to underline this as a relational phenomenon at work. The study has brought the kind of example where being present at work is not just an objective of the study (doing research about mindfulness instead of researching through or with it) or a tool for something. I have set it as a research and development work orientation, which could be practiced in both researching and developing. Thus, it is regarded as on-going practicing together with co-inquirers, which took present-oriented ways and practices into context - in a sensitive way. In this study, I also co-created a practical developmental approach, described here as CCPI as an emerging approach, which is based on practicing being present in the here and now. Its intention is embodying being present as an orientation in change/development work. The value of this kind of study is also in the stories that I have told about how practicing being present can occur in an everyday context in the middle of change work (see ch. 5-7).

There is an inviting possibility to construct new opening in mindfulness studies, and relational thinking combined with practice of being present could offer this kind of radical opening. Being present at work comes near the kind of conceptualisations of practicing mindfulness where it has been understood as everyday practice (e.g. Siegel & co 2009). Thus, there is no need to see these opposites. However, when being present is viewed as relational everyday practice, we can overcome this separation to individual or social practice. I have situated the process of being present in encounterings, the moments of relating (see Hosking 2010b, 229). This way of exploring it, overcomes so-called modernist truths, which are based on mind-body separation and the individual-social dichotomy by bringing

focus on relating processes instead of the individual or the social, and seeing this relating as an embodied process.

Let me shortly show how mindfulness practice is constructed by separating individual and collective practices. Mindfulness is usually seen to be practiced through 1) formal meditation, 2) so-called everyday action and 3) retreat practice. All these are usually seen as individual *or* collective practices, not as relational practices. A retreat is conducted with “*very little interpersonal interaction*” (Siegel & co 2009, 23) as well as through the other two ways. For example, everyday action examples are washing dishes, tasting food, walking (e.g. Siegel & co 2009). These are simple and powerful forms of everyday actions. However, when compared to inter-actions with others in organisational situations, wherein there are complex tensions, multitude expectations, time pressure and so on, these seem to almost come from different realms. So practicing being present in these everyday working situations could be regarded as even more challenging because of inter-action and complex environment. Our small practical experiments in this area have shown how it could become possible, but also what kind of challenges are needed to be encountered (ch. 5-7). Mindfulness practices which are used in organisations seem to be focused on formal practices like a sitting meditation. In this case, an orientation practice could be understood as a new form of formal meditation, which took communal form as a self-reflective process in the group. However, we also developed many informal ways of practicing being present in action which are more needed than formal ways because informal ways are more context-sensitive.

This research has brought out four ways of questioning, four process perspectives which invite being present in action (see ch. 8). These invite informal ways of being present because they don't offer primarily pre-planned practices but an open orientation to co-create realities in the here and now. I view this as an opening to how soft self-other processes could practically be invited by processes and practices of becoming aware, letting go, attuning, and practicing. Three of these: becoming aware, letting go, and practicing, are known concepts in the mindfulness literature (e.g. Depraz & co 2003, Senge & co 2004, Scharmer 2007), particularly in Buddhist psychology and philosophy (e.g. Kwee 2011). However, these have found new meanings and practices in organisational every-day action, in this case (see ch. 5,7,8).

I have constructed here a difference between mindfulness approaches which centre individual and being present approaches which centre relational processes of reality-making. Being present approaches could be

seen as a new opening which is closely connected to Chandler's and Torbert's notion (2003) about present-oriented action research and McNamee's and Hosking's work around the relational constructionist view (2012) which could take an orientation to practice being present in the here and now. In this kind of research which takes being present as an orientation and thus as on-going practice, research orientation researcher's role is viewed as one participant who is engaged in being present at work. Those mindfulness studies that are based on a modernist worldview see the researcher's role as something separate. Thus, a researcher is set as a separate actor, who examines her/his objects. However, it seems that this way of relating through engaging in on-going practice of being present have radical impacts on the outcomes of the study. In this case, this orientation shifted the focus on, how I relate with others (co-inquirers) from the here and now. Later, it shifted the focus also to how to write from the here and now. In this research, I have practiced being present in developmental work with others, and tried to be aware when I am not acting from the here and now. We (I and other participants in OGE) have had an opportunity to explore being present in action as embodied, relational ways in our encounterings. I have not just analysed ways of relating *afterwards* but in co-inquiry in the on-going moment of present, we have seen how change is happening in inter-action, in those moments of soft self-other relating. I suggest that when a co-researcher is practicing being present in action with others, we move away from aboutness-research and the ways of knowing become multitude. Actually, you cannot be present if you are not open to experiential and other forms of knowing. These many ways of knowing could enrich our capabilities to co-create new realities.

A biggest challenge of this kind of research work was aiming to be consistent with practicing being present in every layer of this work. I am aware that I have not succeeded in every phase: for example writing the thesis by being present in writing and also inviting the reader to this kind of practice has been shown to be challenging. However, practicing without succeeding is as valuable as practicing with succeeding: the intention and on-going willingness to see how practice is going is the core, not only outcomes. In this study, there are also some openings: like bringing the story (ch. 5) that could evoke being present through reading and some experiments where I write in present tense to help the reader to feel these experiences. On the other hand, I succeeded sometimes with other participants to practice being present at work by suspending (Depraz & co 2003) taken-for-granted thinking, in the sense that I practiced being aware that I will not freeze situations with ready-made interpretations, models and a way of observing that makes reality self-explanatory, objectivised and

given. This orientation enabled, sometimes, the transgression of the subject/object division and the inner/outer dichotomy. Practically, this helped to leave space for and observe (as a participative act) on-going renewal and let go of controlling. I suspended making strong and fixed interpretations in a way that would define the events narrowly from my beliefs or through some theories. In the other hand, participatory and relational assumptions of reality have enabled experiencing phenomena, primarily in the moment rather than through predetermined categories of experience which is always past-oriented.

The key point here is that, if we do only aboutness-thinking research about mindfulness, which are based on and value simply propositional knowing, we are (probably unintentionally) participating in remaking the “*world of separateness*” (see Gergen 2006). As I have shown, the first wave mindfulness studies in organisational contexts have been set this way. These kinds of categorisations and analysis make distinctions that can foster separateness as well as putting a researcher in a particular outsider positions. However, there is also opportunity to hold these categorizations and analysis lightly, not as representations of the real world or truths, but as on-going processes of relational reality-making where they are needed. In this situation, they can serve enriching possibilities to co-create new ways of acting. This research could be seen as this kind of attempt to participate in co-creating realities of relational responsibility that do not reproduce separateness but move between multiple ways of knowing. So, this does not try to cut off propositional knowing but it does start with experiential and presentational knowing to also make the propositional discussion more alive.

9.2 Contribution to Studies of Developmental Work

Participatory ways of doing development/change work are used in many organisational contexts, because these can enable all participant’s engagement in developing their community or/and their services and products. These ways can foster collective decision-making, engagement, innovation and work well-being. When everyone participates, outcomes differ qualitatively and the process and outcomes are more meaningful to participants than when development or change projects do not start from the outside. Possibly these outcomes are more enduring. But, these ways of

working take more time and engaging from everyone, and such ways do not always work.

Many scholars and practitioners have studied different ways of doing developmental work, in terms of their own practices. Some have done it by expressing and analysing particular developmental approach. Here I have used a particular frame (Räsänen 2007, Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010) for expressing and analysing this developmental approach. This frame has made it possible to compare different approaches with each other, and thus enrich the ways of analysing developmental work through four questions and their modifications. It has also enabled developing this developmental approach by thinking through these four questions with regard to how to describe this kind of developmental work. This developmental approach, CCPI, can be regarded as broadly in the family of actor-centred approaches, such as autonomic developing (Räsänen & Korpiaho 2010) and actor-centred process development (Seppänen-Järvelä 1999). In all of these approaches, participants are seen as active actors who can develop their work and/or work environment. In a similar vein, this could also be regarded as the same family as constructionist approaches, such as co-constructive consulting (Hicks 2010) and Appreciative Inquiry. In this respect, the approach can be viewed as an emerging co-inquiry, one kind of action research which centres participation. The closest developmental approaches to my approach, seems to be participative forms of co-inquiry: Appreciative Inquiry and Co-operative Inquiry. Thus, I have compared CCPI with AI and CI, both which can be regarded as well-established, participative or collaborative developmental approaches. These approaches are not easily caught by accounts because they are used in so many ways in different contexts. This made comparing difficult. Particularly when CI or CCPI are used in the Dionysian way, as emerging processes, it is hard to compare them because they are spontaneous processes that are rarely described in a very detailed way. However, the three approaches have many profound similarities. First, the approaches underline the participant's views, appreciate local knowing and point to the participatory, relational nature of the world(s). Second, each can be viewed in terms of power with, rather than power over. Third, each approach concerns co-inquiring as ongoing process. Fourth, these approaches embrace both oneness and diversity (see e.g. Cooperrider & co 2008, xii). On the other hand, each has its unique qualities: AI fosters the positive core of the organisation and life-giving visions, CI points to experiential inquiry with many possibilities to enable human flourishing and planetary transformation, and CCPI enables being present in what emerges and asks us to become relationally responsible co-creators in everyday situations, in the here and now.

What I found interesting is that time-orientation is not explored carefully in the accounts of these approaches. I interpreted that these approaches appreciate the past, present and future, but it seems that CI and AI have more emphasis on the near future and CCPI centres on the present. In CCPI the past, present and future are viewed living in this on-going moment. I suggest that the time-perspective radically affects how developing or change work is done together, and how change is understood. For example, if the focus is on the on-going present moment, it enables us to see how we are co-creating the future in the here and now. Then visioning for the future or planning steps are not considered to be so needed, but the participant's focus on how they can act in the here and now in those ways they have earlier projected to future. This perspective could be a fruitful area for further explorations and dialogues between different approaches. If we look at CCPI as a present-oriented approach, which centres being present as relational processes in everyday encountering, this could be regarded as the first of this kind of approach. There have been many methods and techniques for fostering mindfulness skills, but no systematic developmental approach centres on being present at work.

In CCPI, a particular kind of present-oriented questioning, listening and organising brings attention to our ways of co-constructing realities. By telling the story of the CCPI in the context of expert organisation and crafting it through four questions I open up possibilities to see it as one potential way of working with change in many different contexts. It enables us to participate in more engaging ways in the on-going process of reality-making in the here and now in small acts and their supplements (see Hosking 2004, 2006b). When change work can invite soft self-other relating without avoiding subject-object relating, there are multiple but intermingled ways that serve as new openings and possibilities. Outcomes of this kind of change work, such as new ways of relating with ourselves, others and the environment, touch on what I and many other participants felt to be worthwhile.

What this new development approach could bring to the field of consulting and coaching practices, in which mindfulness has shown its potential and come very fashionable in recent years. It seems that mindfulness/being present is often narrowed to instrumental use and how to do it- models and steps in consulting and coaching area. Here in this work, it has regarded as on-going practicing which has resulted a new developmental approach. Thus it is not just model or something that we can strive for or use to make organisation more productive, but it is ethically-oriented way of living, a living praxis that we can embody in our lives. Thus

it is not anything which comes from outside, but it something which could start from within. In this way, this developmental approach should be seen as living movement of practicing which invites as to be not only mindful but take responsibility of how, what, why and with whom and for whom we are co-creating in this moment. I suggest that this emerging approach, with particular co-inquiring practices could be seen as one contribution to action research methodology. As Hosking (2010b, 232) has underlined, in change work where soft differentiations are invited, there can be radical implications for change work theories and practices. This work can be seen as one small opening towards this direction. One unique feature in this approach is that participants are re-forming this approach, and developing their own developing practices that can work in flexible ways in different situations. The role of the facilitator is radically involved: the facilitator is also growing and learning with others. One contribution of this study has been examples of what soft self-other relating can be in change work, and what kind of challenges it can meet. Some of these analysed examples also show how subject-object relating and soft self-other relating are interwoven in those moments and can shift quickly. I suggest that sometimes subject-object relating (e.g. debating) can shift to soft relating (e.g. open dialogue) just by becoming present in what is happening in the here and now. The story of development work (ch. 5) and description of CCPI (ch. 8) bring some new practical ideas of what this kind of change work can be, and how it can be done. I suggest that conscious co-creating of relational realities by being present can be one ethical way to change our realities and ourselves.

9.3 Embracing On-Going Moment and Relatedness

As a facilitator I have often asked: what if we stop and practice being present in action? What if we don't have to control everything? If over-planned change programmes do not work, there are possibilities to co-develop context-sensitive processes together. Allowing ourselves to stop and become aware that our feet are in the ever-changing river, could be one possibility that can enable other ways of acting. Through this study I have explored these questions by developing ways of being present at work.

This study is in line with those scholars and practitioners (e.g. Shotter 2006, 2009, Hosking 2002, 2004, 2010a, 2010b) who have suggested that it is no longer (only) a question of how to manage these changes. However,

in the organisational context, this view challenges us because conscious participants in organisations are not believing no longer simple how to do it- models and steps. Thus, we have to stop to have a dialogue together and let go those earlier how to do it models. Taking this kind of responsibility together is challenging, and I hope that our story can encourage starting the emerging processes that make space to participate new ways of on-going change. This means relational responsibility (e.g. McNamee & Gergen 1999, McNamee 2009) by starting to ask what, why, and how we are co-creating in our everyday encountering (see also Räsänen 2007). This study also adds: how can we *let go* of those ways of acting and relating that are based on controlling? A perspective of letting go could potentially bring more space to change than striving for changes. A relational constructionist stance (e.g. Hosking 2010b, McNamee & Hosking 2012) as well as our experiences, view that work life happens in small encounterings, the spaces of organising and unorganising (see also Hosking & Kleisterlee 2009). In these moments, letting go of taken-for-granted ways of relating also becomes possible. In these encounterings, there are many possibilities to co-create new ways of acting, and thus new relational realities. These small encounterings matter: how people are working together, how they are relating with themselves, others and the environment. Listen to one account through the participant's voice (a video-taped dialogue about outcomes of this research 1/2012):

It feels that many of us have learned, or maybe most of us, that behind the worlds are worlds. That conventional professionalism and knowing culture has thought to be what customers, offices and personnel of state, wants from us, that kind of expertise and knowing in quite a linear way. And this co-inquiry has opened to us a totally new door in to a new world, where the world is not that unambiguous and that you can't go to other worlds, if you can't stop and open up by giving possibility for these other worlds to come close. It has been so releasing that you don't need to strive for one truth, and now we know that, but how to communicate it to those who do not see it.

This one participant's pondering brings out beautifully why not only rethinking expertise but reconstructing it in action and letting go of a belief of one truth could open more possibilities to participate differently in reality-making. New ways of being (present) can emerge when there is no longer one truth and all-knowing attitude. However, the last sentence of this account brings out a new challenge: new reality need confirmation from others (in this case: customers). The act needs a supplement in order that it becomes a relational reality (e.g. Hosking 2006b), is recognised and in some way heard. People from OGE could invite their partners and

customers to co-create new realities by acting differently but these acts need others to participate, and they have done this in many ways: meeting customers without plans or clear targets, organising customer workshops, inviting them to become part of our story and initiating a new kind of leadership dialogue group.

Embracing our relatedness in development/change work instead of focusing and reproducing only separateness and subject-object relating seems to open many possibilities in organisations. In these times, customers are expected to become more active participants when services and products are co-developed. These kinds of co-developing, which are also called co-creating processes (in the sense of doing together with customer), are supposed to meet better the expectations and changing needs of customers. Becoming aware of on-going relational processes makes us co-creators in a radical sense; the world is not fixed we are participating and engaging with the world. Every moment is thus important: what we are inviting and/or suppressing; what kind of realities are we inviting to become real. If we are living on the edge (see also Shotter 2009), from moment-to-moment, we are more flexible in our ways of working and encountering others. Probably, we also have greater well-being when we are not trying to control something (see also Langer 1989) which is not possible to control, or attached to how things have been in the past or should be in the future. Then we have space to live our values in the here and now. *“Small changes in every moment (are born) by experimenting and giving space to people (to participate). Here I see a big, big possibility...”* said one participant and other continued in the same situation by underlining becoming present through letting go of dominating ways of planning and visioning the future:

I view that what has been really worthy of note is, that we have let go of that visioning and thinking where the future is somewhere there and as if it could be enough to have a defined, fine vision statement and even more fine strategy how to go there. That this perspective has turned around...we know what we want now and in the future. That is practiced now, with an insight that this is the moment when it (the future) is co-built. That is how I believe. Even our official documents, we need them still (said with a smile), like results contract, these are done in this spirit. So, this is visible in these kinds of elements which are coming from the linear and line organisation world...It has been a long time, 6 years, and much has happened in our department : (many) people have gone, we have faced the same (personnel) reducing challenges as others, that people leaving are not replaced with new, as is usual. The new unit has been integrated in

to our department. There has been all kind of turbulence. We have moved to totally different (more open physical) spaces, and soon we will move back to renewed (open office) physical spaces. So I would say that if we had not started this renewing process, there could have been plenty of crying and gnashing of teeth, more than now. Probably, there has been some in this situation too, but it would be more. So that encountering changes, that kind of skill of meeting changes that come from outside, is now so much better and we have those kind of skills...we have got an insight that if there is something to change it is your own relation to it and your own way of acting. Not trying to change so that others complain again. (A video-taped dialogue about outcomes of this research 1/2012)

This study also opens the potential of not just rethinking change work but rethinking ourselves and agency: What if a “*deep feeling of separatedness is just misunderstanding*”, asked one of my discussion partners, Tapio Malinen, in similar fashion than that of Gergen who speaks about “the world of separation”. However, it seems a challenging task to rethink ourselves as one participant described:

It could be that all people are not wanting to undress that robe of separateness, or if they want to, they want to do it somewhere else (other than the workplace) in some other way. I experience that in my work and leading there are partnerships and projects where this is a dilemma in which one finds oneself sitting. It feels most heavy when these people are key persons in making results, and then you consider if it is ok to live with robes or not. I really don't know yet, this thinking is in-the-progress, I can't even say should we have done anything. That is already something if you become aware...separateness could be unintentional...people can suffer from that without finding the way out. But this doing together, it is beautiful way because then you find new sides in oneself and others. (A video-taped dialogue about outcomes of this research 1/2012)

This account shows how rethinking ourselves is a challenge where you meet “*the robe of separatedness*” that you have co-constructed with others.

9.4 Open Questioning

I would like to close this chapter in as open a way as possible by asking questions. This study has opened many intriguing questions to explore: how do present-oriented approaches work in different contexts? How is being present in action connected to engagement and innovation? What kind of leading can support soft self-other relating? There are also other kinds of questions that arise from people's everyday working life in connection to finding or creating new ways of acting or renewing culture that are interesting starting points for co-inquiry. These are not formulated as how we can invite soft-self-other relating or practice being present in action, but they can be connected to intentions with the same aim: How can we stop shutting down fires? How can we learn to listen instead of knowing? How can we manage all these changes that come from outside? How to lead others? How can we create a working community that helps us to engage and bring valuable outcomes? How can we find new ways of acting when people are diminished? Local inquiry processes that start from within organisations, networks and open the questions that are meaningful in these contexts are needed. In these kind of processes, answering the question is not aboutness-knowing (Shotter 2006, 586-587), but is about the process of being involved and so the process of co-creating renewing realities from the here and now.

Personally, I have also become very interested in how so-called third wave therapies, which are based on practicing mindfulness, can be compared with CCPI. There can be some interesting similarities and differences, because they have been developed in very different contexts. Therapy work usually occurs with two people or a small group, CCPI in organisational contexts means complex working in the middle of complex everyday situations with many people and their multiple working contexts. I, with other CCPI practitioners, am also interested in how CCPI can work in different change work contexts. Here, I have only described this inquiry in the context of organisational development work. Many practitioners, including myself, have worked with CCP(I) in personal or small group sessions for many years with promising feedback from customers. This way of non-coaching has the same core as CCPI in organisational contexts: practicing being present in action. It is based on a particular way of relating with other: the CCPI facilitator encounters other as a fellow traveller and becomes a *witnesser* of her/his life (see Shotter's witness-thinking 2006, 586). Incompleteness and vulnerability are appreciated in these encounterings, and these seem to enable such soft self-other relating. Thus,

I am interested in how to research and develop these kinds of practices and their outcomes in participative ways.

My motivation to develop different ways of being present at work was rooted in an interest to participate in such emerging movements in this world, which centres on slow and sustainable ways of living (e.g. Reason & Bradbury 2006). This means small acts locally, in the here and now. These movements could be described best as many small local flows of acts that invite and celebrate the world of interbeing as Thich Nhat Hanh (1987) expresses how this world happens through co-arising where there is no separation. As one participant said *“this works when it happens from heart to heart”*, when we pondered how our story could touch others and open new possibilities to co-creation in many other contexts. Many practitioners and scholars are participating in different directions in this kind of reality-making, which centres on our relational responsibility in this world, in our everyday living.

As a particular kind of action researcher who appreciates on-going questions: I end this thesis by posing five questions regarding the quality of this action research (see Reason & Bradbury 2006). These questions have lived with me through the process in present tense, but now I can ask them this way: How did I and other co-inquirers engage in meaningful work? How this work has brought enduring consequences? How we did succeeded in developing relational practices that enable everyone to participate? Have we enlarged our ways of knowing, and if so what ways? Could these methodological choices viewed as based on a relational and/or participative worldview? And lastly, I would like to add one challenging question that has been intermingling with these other questions all these years: how we have practiced being present in co-inquiring and developing? Thus, it seems natural to pause and listen: Am I present in the here and now while writing in the here and now? And, how I am relating with other? From you, the reader, I would like to ask: how this work touches you in this moment? What kind of relational realities you are willing to co-create, how, with whom and why?

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Appendix

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	How is the process affecting everyday work?	Examples of renewed practices	Which ways of thinking and acting have been let go of?
<p>Quality of dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 OGE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	

<p>Relationship to customers and partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customership is still partly “unformed” – especially in regard to choosing an operating method. • Customership has been recognised, but the methods have not been defined. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 OGE enabled a dialogical connection between them. • Listening to the customer with a clean slate is “something new”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
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<p>OGE RENEWAL PROCESS</p> <p>Enabling leadership and enabling structures</p>	<p>Initial situation 12/2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 organization during the years. The industry has supported a hierarchical leadership model. 	<p>Present situation 12/2009</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 OGE, we are responsible for all actions. 	<p>How is the process affecting everyday work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared feeling: the microcosms 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 developmental solutions for it. • Wider contribution. • Less matters dealt with by the management team, decisions made elsewhere as well. 	<p>Examples of renewed practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewing structures into a more supportive direction. • Giving responsibility for independent 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. 	<p>Which ways of thinking and acting have been let go of?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is at the top hierarchy and not elsewhere. • Only some people having useful viewpoints. • High unit limits. • The hierarchy of different personnel groups.
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<p>Diversifying of the ways of knowing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation is more customer-centred and customers are being listened to with a clean slate, non-judging, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More case-specific customer groups were used in negotiations. • There is more space for experiential and emotional knowledge. • Spontaneous interaction also with interest groups and customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking on behalf of others. • The department thinking unit-specifically.
<p>Renewal skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good foundation was created in the past years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing and performing have been replaced by focusing and presence. • Experimenting. • The freedom to fail. Courage to take risks. • "Opening starts from the inside." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are questioning work methods more easily. • New ways of working are experimented with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the feeling of knowing everything towards accepting incompleteness. • Interdependency and own world view being the one and only. • Connecting certain background factors (age, education, background) to an inability to renew.

<p>OGE RENEWAL PROCESS Expert identity and OGE's identity</p>	<p>Initial situation 12/2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The culture supported development. • Customer skills were not systematic. • Different expertises were appreciated differently. 	<p>Present situation 12/2009</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>How is the process affecting everyday work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We aim for collaboration inside the Ministry of Finance. • Togetherness and interaction with a clean slate are our ways of working. • External contracts have increased. 	<p>Examples of renewed practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support group's work has enriched leadership. • The management is more approachable. • Everyone has got more space to represent OGE. • Players have been highlighted. 	<p>Which ways of thinking and acting have been let go of?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial thinking and withholding information. • Thinking that only some people hold the expertise. • Staying silent.
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This work arises from curiosity to how we could co-create social realities in the here and now. Context is a long-term consulting project in one department of the Finnish Ministry of Finance which seeks to renew their organizational culture. In this action research, the task was to develop ways of being present at work. Co-Creative Process Inquiry was developed as a new development approach that underlines such relating which does not separate you and me but recognises relationality. In work life, this enables new ways of working which are based on power with instead of power over. "This outstanding piece of work shows deep and sophisticated understanding of relational constructionism...it is able to put it to work to show differences between existing approaches to organizational development and mindfulness, gives serious attention to different kinds of knowledge and power, and provides empirical material to illustrate how this kind of work can unfold in practice". Professor D.M. Hosking



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