EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CONNECTING TO SELF, THE OTHER, AND

THE WORLD:

AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT REVIEWING AN EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOP

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Abstract

This Final Project reports on a workshop built upon Processwork theory and methods that aimed at cultivating empowerment amongst the participants, delivered in June 2014. Throughout the project, methods for working with empowerment were developed and implemented. Empowerment was considered from different angles: on the individual level, on a societal level, and self-acceptance as a form of empowerment, as well as through interactions with the group and the facilitator. What empowerment is from a Processwork perspective is discussed. Finally, a Processwork empowerment model is suggested. The model consists of three levels: Connecting to oneself, connecting to the other and connecting to the world.

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Introduction

This final project is an educational project aimed at developing and delivering a workshop that cultivated empowerment amongst the participants through the use of Processwork concepts. In this contextual essay, I describe and discuss my development and delivery of an empowerment workshop that took place in June 2014.

This project was created because I want to develop methods for working with empowerment. I find that Processwork in its philosophy and in its facilitative methods has a lot to contribute to the field of empowerment. Processwork is a framework for working with individual and collective change, developed by Arnold Mindell and colleagues, that I will explain in greater detail later in this document.

Why empowerment? Personally, I think that it is crucial for us as human beings to feel that we have the possibility to influence things, to take action, and to make things better as opposed to feeling that we are acted upon or that things are happening to us. I believe that we all have many powers with which to contribute, and I believe that when more people participate with their full powers, a better society will be created.

I believe that many people have had bad experiences in trying to influence things or they have beliefs that this is simply not possible. On a societal level, many people do not feel they can influence the bigger things in society, such as politics or the economy. This can lead to disillusionment and distrust towards politicians and other people in power. I believe that this is a kind of projection of our power onto other people. On an organizational level, employees might not know how to influence decisions, or decisions

and changes are made that do not make sense to the employees. I believe that this can also lead to disillusionment.

Empowerment can be defined as

> . . . a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power (that is, the capacity to implement) in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important. (Page & Czuba, 1999)

In this definition, gaining control over one's life is seen as important, as is getting the ability to act on things that are important in one's life. I think this is an important part of the concept of empowerment. Adding to this, there are different foci in the literature when it comes to how to carry out the empowerment process. One is an individual view of empowerment that emphasizes the individual's ability to follow one's own goal without questioning the structures and possible inequality of society (Andersen, 2013). Another view, the collective-critical, is critical of the structures of society and focuses on the collective development of awareness and action in relation to conditions for under-privileged groups (Andersen, 2013). Whereas the individual view focuses on the individual's psychology and how to change this, the collective-critical view focuses on fostering awareness of the structures and the conditions in society and how to change these.

I see Processwork as a framework that embraces these two different views, as it both supports the individual to have agency, and also supports awareness about the structures in society. Processwork also believes that changes on one level (i.e., the individual level) can make us capable of changing things on another level (i.e., the

societal level). I will elaborate my understanding of how Processwork connects to empowerment in the literature review.

My initial definition of empowerment is to get a feeling of one's own power, to get the feeling that one can influence things important in one's life, and that one gains more agency. By this, I mean getting a subjective experience of yourself and your own strengths, and getting the subjective feeling that you can change things which are important in your life, and that this influences you in a way that you start acting on things important to you. Further, I understand empowerment as something that is both a personal process connected to our personal history and psychology, and also connected to the societal dynamics and our understanding of these dynamics, our awareness of these issues, and our possibilities of acting. I will review my definition of empowerment in the discussion, after having explored my findings.

Empowerment is a topic of big personal interest and importance to me. When I was a child, I remember feeling a deep yearning to decide for myself and define my own activities. For instance, one of my earlier childhood memories is when I, as a young child around 5 years old, was allowed to walk alone from my parents' house to my grandparents' house. It was a quiet road without cars that went through the woods, and I remember how I enjoyed being allowed to walk there alone, enjoying the sunshine and all the green, and making up my own stories and fantasies, at my own pace, feeling free. I remember how I enjoyed it when in school we were allowed to work independently on a self-chosen subject. As a youngster, I became politically active, because I wanted to influence and change things in the world. As an adult, I have worked on helping people to influence their lives and their surroundings by facilitating processes in different

settings (e.g., young immigrants in their neighborhoods and employees at their workplace) and utilizing different participatory methods. So it is important for me both to feel and take my own power, and to help others feel and take theirs.

When I first met Processwork, I was in my late 20s and had difficulties fitting into a normal working life, but at the same time, I did not know how to create something different. I had a job where I did not feel that I could really use my competences and my drive. I often felt frustrated and that it just was not possible to change things in this workplace. I had also left my political activities as I did not feel that being a member of a political organization was leading to any changes, and I did not know how to make a difference.

One experience was especially important to me in terms of changing my perspective. I was at a Processwork seminar in Sturovo, Slovakia, called "Europe Matters" with around 60 people from all over Europe. There was a group process, and someone suggested the topic: "Let's also look at the good things that communism did in Eastern Europe!" I thought this topic was interesting and I also felt it was controversial, and since nobody reacted to the topic, I suggested it again. A Bulgarian lady in her 50s got really angry with me, because she did not feel that there had been anything good in communism at all in Bulgaria. I felt upset that she got angry with me—was not the purpose of deep democracy that we could speak about anything we wanted, that all voices should be heard? We were then dividing into smaller groups, and I suggested a group with the topic of looking at both the good and the bad things in communism. The Bulgarian lady did not join the group, but people came from other former communist countries, such as Slovakia and Croatia. They had also been upset by my comment, but

still decided to join the group. They spoke about their experiences during communism, both bad and good.

I realized that what made them upset about my comment was the lack of recognition of the pain and the oppression they had experienced during communism, and my lack of recognition of my privilege, as a Dane, of not having experienced this oppression. I realized that, yes, it is deep democracy and all voices should be heard, but also people will react to my voice, and I must take responsibility for what I say. I ended up having good relationships with the people in my small group, and I told the Bulgarian lady that I understood her reactions and that I learned something from our encounter.

I learned through the encounter that I was looked upon not just as a young woman, but also as a West European with the rank and privileges connected to that. Realizing this rank and these privileges felt empowering because I realized how fortunate I was coming from Denmark and having this background, and it made me feel less like a victim. The feeling of responsibility that I had did not feel heavy, rather, it felt freeing in the sense that I felt that I was important and could influence things. With my comment and my suggestions, I had stirred reactions against me, but I had also gathered a group and my initiative had helped people (and myself) process issues and transform the way we looked at different things.

This experience changed the way I looked upon my job and my challenges after I got home. Realizing my rank made me feel less like a victim of circumstances, and the experience I had had of being able to influence things affected me in the sense that I was able to transfer it to other contexts as well, also at work. For me, this is an example of how transformations at one level (transformation of experiences of roles and rank in

Europe) can lead to transformations at another level (transformation on the personal level).

Other aspects of Processwork also changed me in the direction of feeling more empowered and more able to take things in my own hands. One such aspect was work on conflicts. Working on myself on the different conflicts I had, often with people in power, made me feel less polarized and able to pick up the power I saw in the other person, and therefore more able to take action. Another aspect was working on difficulties. I once worked on my fears, and through imagining that I was the fear I became a big, powerful storm. Moving like the storm and feeling like it I got in contact with some power that I did not know well in myself. Learning gradually that this power is actually within me, however neither very known nor active, makes me believe that I am more powerful than my normal self would think. Another aspect that has been empowering for me has been to work on being more appreciative towards myself and others. I have often felt that my criticism towards myself has made it difficult for me to carry out the things I wished for, and that my criticism toward others has made my relationships difficult. Working on becoming more appreciative has made me even more powerful in the sense that I now feel freer because I can embrace and understand experiences instead of reacting against them.

These experiences and my drive for empowerment made me want to make a training aiming at cultivating empowerment amongst the participants. My question was: How can a training that uses Processwork concepts cultivate empowerment amongst the participants?

Literature Review

In this chapter, I review the main trends in the literature about empowerment. I also explain why I see Processwork as an empowering philosophy and method.

Definitions of Empowerment

As mentioned earlier, empowerment can be defined as

> . . . a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power (that is, the capacity to implement) in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important. (Page & Czuba, 1999)

In this definition also lies the notion that power is at the core of the concept of empowerment, and that the possibility of empowerment depends on the idea that power can change and that power can expand (as opposed to understanding power as zero-sum; Page & Czuba, 1999). A zero-sum understanding of power means that there is only a certain amount of power, and if I get more, you get less—as opposed to understanding power as something that can expand, which means that one person can gain more power without another person having less.

There are differences within the literature of empowerment. John Andersen, a Danish professor of sociology, finds that there are two main views of empowerment in the literature. In one view, empowerment is seen as the individual's ability to follow their own goal, but without questioning the structures of society and how they influence equality in society. The other view is critical against the structures of society and focuses on the collective development of awareness and action in relation to conditions for under-privileged groups (Andersen, 2013).

I find that these two views reflect the main differences within the concept of empowerment. However, there are many distinctions as well as many different applications of empowerment within the two views.

Individually Focused View on Empowerment and Where Used

Within the individually focused understanding of empowerment, there is also focus on empowerment in management literature. Two theorists write about: "how to make your employees feel more empowered" (Blanchard et al., 1999), "how to make the employees feel that they own their jobs" (Blyham, 1998), and "how to make people motivated" (Blanchard et al., 1999). This approach sees things from the leader's perspective where the goal is more focused on organizational effectiveness (through satisfied and motivated and independent employees) and less focused on change of consciousness.

Another approach that also views empowerment as an individual process can be found in health care. The American-Israeli professor Aaron Antonovsky (1987) has investigated why some people are better at coping with stress, illnesses, and crisis than others, and found that healthy people possess a "sense of coherence" meaning that they see the world as comprehensible, they can handle the problems they encounter in life, and they feel that life has a meaning that is worth engaging in. Antonovsky (1987) sees that this "sense of coherence" affects not only people's quality of life, but also their physical state of health. From Antonovsky's theory comes a focus on how to help people strengthen their resources in preventive health care (Bach, 2001). Antonovsky does not make a direct connection to empowerment, but I see a connection as Antonovsky believes that individuals can change their health situation by changing the way they look at the

world. Therefore, helping individuals strengthen their resources can be seen as an empowerment process focused on the individual with the aim of bettering their health situation.

Further, there is also an individually focused understanding of empowerment found in self-help books where the goal is personal empowerment. An example here is Jase Peck's *The Self-Empowerment Guide.* On his accompanying webpage (selfempowermentguide.com), Jase Peck (2009-2013) speaks about five levels of empowerment: physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and financial. Peck stresses gaining awareness of our behaviors and thinking about what we want to change in our lives. He believes that we can control which thoughts we allow into our minds and that we can program ourselves: "It's time to change the programming to believing in yourself and what you can do" (Peck, 2009-2013). In this view, people can consciously change their lives if they gain awareness about their behaviors. Again, the focus is on how the individual can change their psychology in order to improve their lives.

Collective-Critical View on Empowerment and Where Used

The other view on empowerment contains a fundamentally critical understanding of society and power. Power and resources in society are seen as unequally distributed (Mathiasen et al., 2000, pp. 10-11), and as a strategy, empowerment strives to create changes and more fairness and equality (pp. 10-11). This view on empowerment sees Brazilian educator Paolo Freire as the creator of the concept empowerment (Mathiasen et al., 2000, p. 17). Freire developed his theory in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s. He wrote his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1968 wherein he elaborated his concept of a liberating education for poor and oppressed people. He introduced the concept of

conscientizacão that refers to learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take actions against the oppressive elements of reality (Freire, 1970, p. 19). Freire thus spoke for an education that not only describes the world, but also helps the learners transform it.

Because empowerment in this view is critical against the current distribution of goods in society and sees empowerment as a way of transforming power and resources, the concept of empowerment is only seen as relevant in relation to under-privileged groups whose possibilities an empowerment process seeks to change (Andersen, 2005). Thus, empowerment in this view is often used with marginalized groups (i.e., in developing countries). It is also used in the Western world. For instance, in Denmark empowerment is used by social workers as a method of helping marginalized groups to help themselves.

Empowerment in Context of the Danish Welfare State

In *Empowerment på dansk* [Empowerment in Danish], Mathiesen et al. (2000) speak about empowerment within the context of the Danish welfare state. The Danish welfare state is built on solidarity and universality and is reaching wide, yet there are still social problems and they are growing (Mathiasen et al., 2000). In the welfare state, the relationship between the professional and the one who needs help is central. This relationship has a risk of dependency, and therefore, Mathiasen et al. see empowerment as a useful strategy for professionals in their work with marginalized groups, as empowerment will help foster engagement and involvement. They also stress that it is not easy for the professional to give up their power, and that is why the professional has to work on themselves regarding their own feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness, or

being in the expert's role before they can work with others' empowerment (Mathiasen et al., 2000). I find this interesting as it emphasizes the professional's own role and work on themselves even when working with other people's empowerment.

Processwork and Empowerment

Processwork is a unique framework for working with individual and collective change. Although there are few direct references to the word "empowerment" in the Processwork literature, because of its methods and its understanding of individuals' and groups' abilities to change, I view Processwork as highly empowering. I next expand on how I understand Processwork to offer an empowering framework on both the individual and the collective levels.

Empowerment on the Individual Level Through Processwork

One of the things I find empowering in Processwork is that there is a true belief in the person's experiences and that the solution to the person's problems lies within the person her or himself. In his book, *The Dreambody Toolkit,* Joseph Goodbread (1997) formulates: ". . . what I believe to be the fundamental law of process-oriented psychology: What happens is right and should be encouraged. It only looks wrong when we do not understand its context sufficiently" (p. 30). This is different from what Goodbread (1997) calls "the implicit fundamental law of psychotherapy in general" which is: "What happens is wrong and needs to be changed" (p. 31). Goodbread (1997) also speaks about how therapists usually have goals on behalf of their clients, but that Processwork offers a new way of dealing with therapeutic goals, in the sense that the Processworker

> does not even have a specific goal for his clients in terms of the types of change which they ought to experience. Instead, one of his main goals is to perceive the tendencies towards change which are already manifesting themselves in his client's life. (pp. 24-25)

Goodbread further states that Processwork is descriptive rather than prescriptive.

The way Processworkers seek to work with and understand the changes happening in their clients lives is by following the flow of the process. This view has roots in Taoism. The Taoists see change as naturally happening: "Resisting change or struggling against the Tao creates tensions and difficulties. Transformation occurs naturally once a person is able to trust nature and go along with what is happening" (Diamond & Jones, 2004, pp. 17-18). Processwork differentiates a process into a primary process and a secondary process. These two processes are separated by an edge.

> Primary process refers to those experiences that are better known and closer to a person's sense of identity. Secondary process refers to those experiences that are further from a person's sense of identity. Primary and secondary processes are separated by an "edge." The edge represents the limit of the known identity as well as a point of contact with unknown experiences or identities. (Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. 20)

A Processworker works by unfolding a person's process that ". . . involves noticing a secondary . . . experience in the initial description of a problem, amplifying its expression until a new meaning or aspect of identity emerges and then integrating the new experience into everyday life" (Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. 23). This is done by noticing various signals and sensory grounded information that is shown by the person in different channels, as well as following the person's feedback (Diamond & Jones, 2004, pp. 24-26). Diamond and Jones emphasize that following the process requires awareness in both the Processworker and the person he/she is working with. "The client becomes aware of her experiences, notices what she senses, feels, and perceives, and tunes into experiences

that are far from her everyday identity" (Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. 28). Working on a client's secondary process also results in a shift in the experience of agency. An experience related to a primary process is often experienced as one where you have agency, whereas an experience related to a secondary process is experienced as on where you have less agency (Lane Arye, n.d.). Experiences related to the secondary process is experienced as "things happen to me; others do it" (Lane Arye, n.d.). By becoming more aware of our secondary process, we experience more agency in the sense that we understand and relate to what is happening to us. We become the agent rather than being acted upon.

I see Processwork as a very empowering method in individual work due both to the view of following the process of the individual, which I see as radically believing in what the person is experiencing, and due to the emphasis on cultivating awareness in the person. I believe that trust in the person's process and the practice of becoming aware of what is happening within ourselves gives us a greater sense of ourselves and a larger amount of curiosity and appreciation of ourselves, which I think is crucial to the ability to act on the things we find important.

Goodbread (1997) further emphasizes that ". . . precisely those things which disturb us the most have the greatest potential for enriching and transforming our lives" (p. 26). That Processwork sees disturbances and challenges as something which, if transformed, can enrich and transform our lives, I believe is highly empowering, because this leads to a curiosity and an acceptance of all parts in our selves.

Another view on accepting all of our parts comes from Dawn Menken (2013). In her book, *Raising Parents Raising Kids*, she speaks about how we (kids and adults alike)

often will not show or stand for our emotions, because, for instance, showing hurt can be seen as a sign of weakness.

> As a result, when we mask our hurt and do not embrace our emotional needs, we become defensive and tough. However, defensiveness is not true power. In fact, tough and defensive behavior can become a form of self-hatred. We dislike our needs and vulnerabilities. We can't stand for our feelings for fear of the self-loathing that might follow. When we do this, we have turned against ourselves. (Menken, 2013, p. 60)

Menken states that there is a power in standing up for our feelings and vulnerabilities. I see this view, that there is a power in our feelings and vulnerabilities, as a contribution and expansion of the concept of empowerment, which makes it clear that it is not just empowering to find your strengths, but also to stand by your feelings and all that we are.

Another concept relevant to empowerment in Processwork is rank. Rank refers to a person's social position (Oxford, 2014). In Processwork, the concept of rank is divided into sociocultural rank (related to a person's social and material circumstances), and psychological and spiritual rank (inner strengths and spiritual beliefs; Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. 12).

Mindell (1995) states that rank shows up in one's feeling of confidence. Further, he says, "The subconscious influence of rank determines how we feel about ourselves and others" (Mindell, 1995, p. 52).

Rank is important in relation to empowerment, because how we feel about ourselves will add to how powerful we feel and how good we feel about ourselves. We often identify with places where we have low rank. Therefore, it can be empowering to work on the places where we have high rank.

Empowerment on the Group Level and Societal Level Through Processwork

Processwork has also developed an approach and methods to working with groups

and with issues on the societal level. I find this as equally empowering as the approach of

working with individuals.

In his book, *The Leader as a Martial Artist*, Arnold Mindell (2014) states that

the world has exactly those problems that we are meant to solve. They are just the
perfect ones for us to grow with, and we are the only ones who can solve them.
Governmental interventions by public leaders will never suffice without everyone
caring for their own awareness and working together. (Kindle edition, location
186 of 3751)

Mindell here stresses the importance for all of us to be involved in the solutions of the

world's problems. This view has roots in the principle of deep democracy which

Mindell's approach to working with groups in based upon.

Mindell defines deep democracy.

Deep democracy touches upon all levels of our lives. In personal life, it means
openness to all of our inner voices, feelings, and movements, not just the ones we
know and support, but also the ones we fear and do not know well. In
relationships, deep democracy means having ongoing awareness of our highest
ideas and worst moods. In group life it means the willingness to listen to and
experiment with whatever part comes up. In global work, deep democracy values
politics, ethnicity, separatism, and the spirit of nature. (Mindell, 2014, Kindle
edition, location 3459 of 3751)

Mindell (2014) further stresses that "there can be no democracy without

awareness and acceptance of all our internal and external parts" (Kindle edition, location

3475 of 3751). I think the principle of deep democracy itself is empowering, because it

stresses that we need everybody and everybody's voice in order to create a solution. I

think feeling that we are needed and important can help shift our view on our own power,

because if we are seen as important, we must possess some power. I also think that there

is something optimistic in the vision of deep democracy. There is a belief in people,

almost like a belief that together we can make it happen, which feels empowering to me.

Again, the view that all parts are needed and the appreciation of all of our different sides

feels empowering to me, because then we can feel the power of standing for who we are.

Mindell (2014) wanted to develop a method to help groups to live, work, and

grow in community (Kindle edition, location 87 of 3751). This method is often referred

to as Worldwork. Mindell sees the world as a field, where we are all connected.

"Mindell (1992) sees the world as a field in which each part reflects and connects to all

other parts and to the whole" (Rose Schuitevoerder, 2000, p. 66).

Ingrid Rose (2000) describes process-oriented group work in her dissertation,

Process-Oriented Dialogue: An Inquiry Into Group Work and Conflict Facilitation. A

group can be understood as a field. What happens in a field through interaction between

its different parts is that

> Each field is in a constant process of transformation and evolution which initially
> manifests through chaos and polarization. Polarization in turn gives each position
> a chance to "wrestle" with the other, thus promoting an alchemical shift, which
> often appears as a change in feeling, position and/or value system. Out of this is
> born a deeper understanding and empathy for those holding initially opposing
> views and positions, and for parts of oneself. (Rose Schuitevoerder, 2000, p. 66)

In a group setting, this happens through interactions between the group members who

take different roles and interact with each other:

> Within a group setting one may find that various roles emerge, are held by
> different group members, interact with each other, and then transform and/or
> disappear. Noticing these roles and being aware of what they imply for the whole,
> adds to an awareness of what polarities and positions are present within the group
> and how they can be made useful. The different roles are meaningful and
> important for the whole group. The wrestling process occurs when these opposing
> roles have the opportunity to interact with each other and/or oppose each other,
> and through this learn more about what the other role may be trying to express and

represent. Expression of the roles supports the interaction of positions and gives rise to the unfolding of underlying, unidentified material. It is through this interaction that transformation begins to occur. Roles can be picked up intentionally by group members or facilitators and congruently represented, to aid the group in giving expression to the various parts present. (Rose Schuitevoerder 2000, pp. 66-67)

Rose here describes how members of a group, through taking different roles and through interacting with each other, learn more about each other, get an awareness about the different polarities present, and get an understanding of the different views and of parts in ourselves. I find this empowering because through gaining an understanding about the different roles, and through also experiencing the different roles as parts of ourselves, we can experience feeling less opposed to the other side, and through this we can feel more powerful and see more possibilities for action.

An example of how people get empowered through processing issues in group processes is found in the work of Lane Arye and Arlene Audergon in Croatia after the civil war, as described in their article, "Transforming Conflict into Community: Post-war Reconciliation in Croatia" (Audergon & Arye, 2005). The purpose of the project was

to support the work of key players involved with reconciliation and community building throughout Croatia. The idea was that if they worked among themselves on the painful and complex post-war issues, they could in turn better meet these problems in their communities and organizations. (Audergon & Arye, 2005, p. 1)

Through working on and processing the traumas they had experienced during the war, through processing and reacting to the role of the "killer," and through taking responsibility for what their side did during the war, the participants experienced a feeling of hope for the future, and in the end reported about life-changing experiences and about having taken initiatives to change things in their communities (Audergon & Arye, 2005). I see this as an example of how processing issues and seeing things from both

perspectives and taking responsibility for what their side did during the war can be empowering in the sense that people gained hope and energy and started seeing themselves as active players who could change something in their communities.

Teachers Empowered

A Processwork project working explicitly with the term empowerment is Lukas Hohler and Joe Goodbread's (n.d.) project, "Teachers Empowered." It aims at developing leadership qualities in teachers and states that "Prerequisites for the development of leadership qualities are work on one's own personality and one's own vision for leadership" (Hohler & Goodbread, n.d., p. 2).

In an interview with Lukas Hohler (2014), he further stresses that he finds it empowering to work on your direction in life. In the program, they work on both the teachers' personal vision and personal strengths, and they work on the professional role of the teacher, understanding the role in context. This makes the teachers start standing up for who they are (Lukas Hohler, personal communication, April 9, 2014). Other aspects of the program are working on rank and working with communication and disturbances in the classroom (Hohler & Goodbread, n.d., p. 3). They work with disturbances from the point of view that disturbances are a potential. This somewhat different way of looking at disturbances lands well, in Hohler's experience, if it is done in a way such that people are really welcomed, and where there is a curiosity about discovering who they are and which are their strengths (Lukas Hohler, personal communication, April 9, 2014). Also working with rank and privilege can be empowering, because we often identify with the places where we have low rank, hence it can be empowering to work with and recognize the places where we have high rank (Lukas Hohler, personal communication, April 9, 2014).

I saw many interesting aspects of the project "Teachers Empowered" in making connections between Processwork theory with empowerment in a training program (i.e., the focus on the person's strengths and vision, the focus on rank and privilege, working with the disturbance and the focus of the context). I took them with me in designing my own training program.

What Does Processwork Add to the Field of Empowerment?

I see a connection between Freire's development of a consciousness where the participants learn to perceive the social, political, and economic contradictions of society and Worldwork, because Worldwork also strives to bring awareness to the participants about the differences and diversity in society, and this awareness and method of working also helps in acting to change it. Some differences between Processwork and Freire's understanding is, however, the view of society as containing conflicting interests vs. a view of society as a whole where polarities can be transformed.

Another difference between Processwork and the collective-critical view is that the collective-critical view sees empowerment only as relevant for marginalized groups, whereas Processwork sees empowerment as relevant for all of us. Both because feeling powerless can be seen as a role which does not necessarily belong to the marginalized groups alone, but also because of the concept of rank, where you do not necessarily have high psychological and spiritual rank even though you have high sociocultural rank, so therefore, empowerment can be relevant to everybody.

I see that Processwork adds an interesting connection between the individual level and the group and society level in the understanding that all processes are connected, as Mindell (1995) writes, "All of your childhood wounds reappear when you deal with large

group conflict" (p. 46). In a way, Processwork brings together the two main differences that Andersen found in the literature, both the focus on the individual and the focus on the more structural aspect, in the sense that Processwork both focuses on the individual's personal work on him/herself, and on the larger polarizations in society.

From the collective-critical view, you could criticize the individual view for not focusing on the structures of society and how they influence the individual's possibility of taking his or her power, or that they do not "educate" the people in order to understand the repressing structures of society and how the structures influences them. On the other hand, the individual view could criticize the collective-critical view for not being focused on what the individual could do, his or her personal history, and probably also for being too pessimistic in regard to all the oppressing structures in society and the difficulty of making a change, even though an empowerment view (also in the collective-critical thinking) stresses how to make changes.

In a way, it is a very classical discussion whether to focus on the individual or to focus on society. I think Processwork has something to offer here in the sense that Processwork both looks at the individual and his/her process (as holding possibilities for change), and at the polarizations on a societal level, trying to understand these dynamics and gain awareness about society, and helps people identify with the parts that they feel opposed to.

Processwork seeks to understand how this is connected—that changes on one level can lead to changes on another level. That means, that if I—as an individual— experience some changes personally (i.e., I pick up my power more), it could lead to changes also in the social settings that I am a part of. If we, in a group, work on some

issues on a society level, and work on the polarizations and experience a transformation in the polarities, it can lead to changes in our personal lives, as we might approach the challenges we meet differently. Processwork also offers specific methods of working with empowerment both at the individual level and on a group level.

Approach

An Educational Project

This is an educational project. According to PWI guidelines, an educational project is, "A project which has the primary purpose of educating and informing its audience, through a range of possible events and/or materials" (Wagner, 2013). Examples of this are: "Development of a course, class or seminar curriculum. Teaching a class, course, seminar or workshop. Designing and producing educational or training materials" (Wagner, 2013). I have designed, conducted, and evaluated a workshop aimed at cultivating empowerment amongst the participants through the use of Processwork concepts.

In this chapter I present how I developed the workshop and my thoughts around which group to do the workshop for. Further, I discuss how I assessed and analyzed the workshop, which limitations are connected to my approach, and which ethical issues requisite to take into consideration.

Designing the Workshop

I designed my workshop to include the Processwork concepts that I find empowering, based on my definition of empowerment and the literature review. My workshop was to include the following exercises.

Your Own History of Empowerment. To begin the workshop, my intention was to do an exercise that gave people the feeling of their own power and a broad view about what empowerment could be. In this exercise, the purpose was that people should think through the decades of their lives and in each of the decades they should look for a

situation where they felt their own power, whatever that meant to them. They were then going to share one of these situations with another participant and go more into depth with that situation, working on a movement that enhanced the quality of the power.

In the beginning of the exercise, I would lead people through a short Earth-based inner work, where they would connect to a place on Earth that they liked and connect to the qualities of this place through movement. Earth-based based work is a recent development in Processwork (Mindell, 2010) that helps people get in touch with deeper and less polarized parts in themselves.

I felt it was important that people in this exercise would connect positively to their power, instead of starting by working on their powerlessness. Further, the exercise was also to serve as a warm-up wherein people would get in touch with the topic and get to know each other a little by sharing their stories.

The part where they were to work with the movement was meant to be a way of working with their power in a way other than cognitive, finding some essence through the movement that would make them more aware of the quality of the power, and that would help them to feel it and also anchor it bodily by doing the movement and feeling it. A place on Earth that we like represents some of the qualities we have, and by connecting with this place we can be more aware of these qualities in ourselves. At the end of the exercise, people would look to see if there were any similarities between the quality of the movement and the quality of their Earth Spot.

Making Contact With the Power You See in Someone Else. In this exercise, people were to work with a situation where they felt powerless in regard to another person. They imagined that they are the person they feel powerless about, feel what it is

like to be that person, and move like that person. Then they made a movement connected with the person that got them in contact with the person's power. From this place, they reflected upon how they could use this power in their everyday life. Then they dialogued with the person (represented by their exercise partner) from their new place and experienced how it felt differently.

This exercise builds on the belief that we sometimes project our power onto other people, and that the power we see in someone else, can be something which is secondary for us, and therefore interesting to work with in a process of transformation. As discussed in the literature review, those things which disturb us can often enrich our lives, and a person whom we feel powerless in relation to is often somewhat disturbing for us. The idea is that through this exercise people may come into contact with power that is secondary for them and gain experience about how it is to use such power. This way, we experience the other as a part of ourselves, and realizing how we can also be the other, we tend to feel less as a victim, and we experience more possibilities of action.

Rank and Empowerment. In the exercise, people were to go through a list with examples of rank and identify where they each had high rank. After that, they identified areas where they had higher rank than the other person and talked about how that made them feel relative to one another. Further, they would have to go into places where they felt they had less rank and find out what is also good about this.

The purpose of the exercise was to encourage people to identify in which areas they have high rank as a way of making them feel empowered about the places where they have high rank. Further, the purpose of the exercise was also to help people deal with the places where they have high rank relative to others, deal with their reactions, and

learn how to deal with their high rank, because this might prompt reactions from others such as jealousy and may be a reason why people try not to show their high rank. The purpose was also to help people connect with the places where they have low rank and experience what power it gives them. For instance, a person who has an illness has lower rank than a person who has a good health, but might through the experience of being ill gain a sense of other people's weaknesses and be more emphatic. Therefore, it can be empowering to also gain awareness about the places where you have low rank.

Powerlessness and Empowerment on a Societal Level. This exercise was to involve a group process. The idea was that the issue should be one that people felt powerless about. Through an inner brainstorm, the participants thought about issues they felt powerless about and then mentioned the one they felt most powerless about. Then we would spin the pen and ask one person to choose a topic from the list. I did that in order not to spend too long a time in selecting a topic in order to make more time for the group process, and because I thought it did not matter so much which topic was chosen. Before and after the group process, I led the participants through an inner work where they would connect more with why they felt powerless about the issue (before the group process) and work on the role they were most disturbed by (after the group process), in order to connect more with the topic of empowerment and pick up the power in the role which was most secondary to them.

The group process was a way of changing their experience of feeling powerless towards a topic on the societal level, through working with the different roles in the issue, understanding the polarizations, and finding a part of yourself even in the side you are opposed to. I think that many people, also privileged in the Western World, feel

powerless about issues on a societal level that we do not know what to do about, and thus, I found it interesting to include.

Working With Other People's Empowerment. In this exercise, people were to work with a situation where they were empowering another person, and where it may not go so well. In this exercise, they had to become the person they were trying to empower (in the same way as in the exercise about connecting to the power you see in someone else), and pick up the quality/power they felt and see how they could use it in their lives and in the situation with the person.

Working on a situation where we feel disturbed by the other person is often a sign that the other person has an energy which is secondary to us and therefore useful to explore. Also, I found it interesting to look for the quality/power in a person whom we do not see as powerful, but whom we are trying to help, as I feel that this is a way of expanding the concept of power. There could also be some interesting rank dynamics in these situations, both because you experience something powerful in a person you had not thought of as powerful, and because it can be a place for the participants to recognize and work with their high rank relative to others.

Self-Acceptance as a Form of Empowerment. In the exercise, people were to work with parts of themselves that they really did not like. Through imagining and becoming a person who they envisioned would like this part of themselves, the purpose was to accept the disliked parts more.

The purpose of this exercise was to expand the view of power. As mentioned in the literature review, there can also be power in our feelings and in the places where we feel weak. This exercise helps expand the concept of empowerment, as only focusing on

your power and strengths seemed like a one-sided view on empowerment, as real empowerment comes also from loving and accepting all parts of yourself. Thus, this exercise also connects to the concept of deep democracy, as we learn that all parts are needed.

Other considerations. Generally, I wanted to make the workshop experiential, in order to give people a bodily experience of their different power. In the beginning, my idea was that I would make a training program consisting of a full-day workshop and three subsequent workshops of 4-5 hours, designing the training based on an action learning model, meaning that reflection and learning would take place in the workshops supporting the action that would take place between the workshops. This idea came from my experience in designing training programs and knowing that in order to transform new knowledge into changed behavior, new knowledge alone is insufficient. It is also important to practice new learning, to work on implementing the changes, to reflect, and get feedback on that process. However, I changed this due to limitations both of time and of the group, so the workshop became a 2-day training (Friday from 1-6 pm and Saturday from 10 am-5 pm). I further discuss the limitations of this design in regard to action in the section on Limitations.

In order to make sure that the exercises were understandable and worked, I tested some of them on my fellow students. They gave me good feedback and some ideas about how to make the exercises simpler.

Getting a Group

My first idea was to look for a group that felt somehow disempowered, so I looked for groups in disadvantaged neighborhoods. I liked the idea of getting in contact

with a group that had a common goal or something they could work on together, so it would not only be focused on the individuals' own projects. I also suspected that this could provide interesting research about how to apply Processwork in a context where people do not know about Processwork or psychological methods in general.

However, I had difficulty in finding a group. Some of the responses I received from contacts I have in disadvantaged neighborhoods were that it would take a lot of time and energy to gather a group around this issue, and also that the people might feel insulted by being told that they needed empowerment. I also had possibilities of working with certain groups/projects that were aiming at creating empowerment (e.g., a project about educating women in disadvantaged neighborhoods to become "Neighborhood Mothers," helping other women with issues such as health, children, and contact with the social authorities). However, in these projects I would have to tailor my interventions to the needs and the processes of these specific groups that were more in need of facilitation than of training, and therefore, I would not be able to conduct a whole workshop based on Processwork concepts, which was the requirement of an educational project. Also, I realized that Processwork concepts might not be easy to explain to those who are not used to working with their own self-development, as it requires some willingness to work on one's self. I therefore chose to do a workshop for a mixed group of people whom I would contact through my network. I imagined they would be middle class people used to working on themselves and interested in the topic. I see empowerment as not only relevant for marginalized groups, but also relevant for many of us, as I think feeling powerless towards the system is a role many people feel today. Having high social rank

does not mean that you also have high psychological and spiritual rank, and therefore you can feel disempowered.

I reached out to the potential participants with an invitation entitled, "Power, Powerlessness and the Drive for Taking Action—An Empowerment Workshop," with a teaser that we sometimes feel powerless about problems, both in the world and in our personal lives, which can be because we are projecting our power onto other people. I also explained that the workshop would both be on a personal level and on a societal level (see Appendix A: Workshop Invitation).

About 25 people in total expressed their interest, although not all were able to come. In the end, 10 people participated in the workshop: seven participated the whole time (one arrived a little late on the first day, another one got ill on the second day, and a third was present less than half of both days). Half of the participants were self-employed as coaches, therapists, and facilitators, others were engaged in civil society (i.e., through an NGO), were volunteers and lived in an eco-village, and others were interested in self-development. The group consisted of two men and eight women.

Assessing and Analyzing the Workshop

The contextual essay is based on my observations from the workshop, the participants' verbal feedback about the exercises (Appendix C: Exercises), and a written questionnaire (Appendix D: Workshop Evaluation). I was interested in evaluating if the training made them feel more empowered in the sense that they viewed themselves and their own power differently. I was also interested in whether they felt that they would take more action after the workshop.

Limitations

There are some limitations in my project in relation to my research question about whether Processwork cultivates empowerment amongst the participants. One limitation in my design of the training is that it is only a 2-day workshop. As earlier mentioned, new learning has a bigger chance of being put into action if there is also a focus on transformation of the learning into the participants' everyday life. This is partly done as one step of the exercises, in reflecting upon how (for example) the person needs this energy in their everyday life. I believe this part would have been strengthened had the participants gone through a longer process. On the other hand, most of the participants are in a process of development themselves, and in this respect, this workshop was simply part of their ongoing learning.

My project was also limited in the sense that it was a pilot project for a training program that I see as applicable to other situations, but in this project the training was only applied to one group of people. Another limitation in regard to the group of people I worked with is that most of them come from the middle class and are well-educated people with a good knowledge of self-development. Thus, I suspect that this workshop might work differently with a different group of people.

A limitation regarding my findings is that a lot of the work during the workshop was work in pairs which I only partially witnessed—partly because I could not be present in four or five places at the same time, and partly because it sometimes felt disturbing to people if I observed them while they were doing an exercise. Therefore, my data are limited to observations I did make from the work in pairs, my observations from the

group work, people's comments about their pair work, and the written feedback from the participants.

Ethics

I was aware of two purposes for this workshop. One was to give the participants a good learning experience about empowerment, and another one was to test my workshop and gain data for writing my final project. These purposes did not precisely coincide with each other. In order to have clear boundaries around this, I informed the participants before and at the beginning of the workshop that the workshop was a part of my final project, and I also had them sign an informed consent form (Appendix B: Informed Consent). In order to ensure confidentiality, I do not use names or anything that can reveal the identity of the participants, and the feedback sheets (Appendix D: Evaluation Questions) that the participants filled out at the end were anonymous.

Findings

In this chapter, I present what came out of the workshop in terms of the participants' empowerment, and I reflect on my learnings connected to people's reactions to the different exercises and the workshop in general. The findings and reflections are presented in the chronological order of the course of the workshop, in order to give the reader an experience of the workshop.

Participants' Motivation for Joining the Workshop

The workshop began with a round where people shared a little about themselves and spoke about their motivation for attending the workshop. Many of the participants mentioned that they were attending the workshop because of an interest in personal development. For instance, they explained about experiencing that they were projecting things onto other people and feeling powerless, and wanted to be more conscious of their own power and drive for taking action. One also mentioned that they wanted to get a bodily feeling of their own power. Some of the participants mentioned that they would like to use the knowledge to work with empowerment in their local communities, and one participant expressed special interest about powerlessness in regard to societal issues, framed as "What to do about the things we don't know what to do about."

These motivations were generally what I had expected. I felt that the workshop would address the issues people were interested in working on.

Your Own History of Empowerment

The first part of the workshop was about finding situations in one's history in which the participants felt their own power, shared them with a partner, and then went

more in depth with one situation. The exercise started with a short Earth-based inner

work, where people were asked to connect to a place in nature they liked and its qualities.

People generally seemed to enjoy the exercise, and some spent a long time sharing

their stories with their exercise partner. Afterwards, several participants reported that

they liked sharing stories and finding similarities. One person reported that they had

gained a more nuanced view of empowerment. Another stated that one power felt was

the power of writing a children's book within a week's time, showing the power in a

movement where their arms came from the ground and went up over their head. Another

participant reported that they had felt the power in supporting someone. The quality they

felt was like a rock, and the feeling was similar to what they had felt during the initial

exercise where they were requested to connect with a place on Earth that they liked.

Another person told about a power they had experienced during a recent divorce. The

power they felt was the power of detachment, feeling detached from the person they

divorced from. Some people mentioned that they were happy that movements were

included in the exercises, while some other participants found it difficult to work with

movements.

I think this exercise worked well in the sense that the participants got in touch

with different aspects of their own power through remembering and working with

situations throughout their lives, and I think they got both a confirmation about their own

power and a more differentiated view of what power can be. It also seemed to be a good

start-up exercise, allowing people to get to know each other a little. The Earth-based

inner work with which we began the exercise worked well for some people, while for

others, it seemed different from how they were used to working on themselves. Next

time, I would frame even more that the exercise is a way of connecting to ourselves and our power in a different way, rather than cognitively thinking of where we felt powerful. Thinking of a place on Earth that we like brings us in contact with a quality or power in ourselves in a more intuitive way.

After the exercise, I realized that I forgot to hand out name tags. I asked people to pick up a name tag and write their name on it, but one of the participants then said that we really did not need them since the group was so small that we could easily learn the names by heart. She then said the names of all the persons out loud, and we agreed that we did not need the name tags. I think the idea of learning each other's names by heart was fine, but I also see this interaction as a way for the group/the participants to feel their own power relative to the facilitator, which I discuss further later on.

Connecting to the Power You See in Someone Else

The next exercise was about connecting to the power you see in someone else and transforming the sense of powerlessness that one feels in regard to another person. I started by explaining the exercise from a personal example: I had a boss 6 years ago who I felt powerless about. Especially in one situation, he left me speechless. I worked on that situation and showed how I picked up the energy of my former boss by standing like him and walking like him. Moving like him made me feel bigger, and I made a movement that went along with the sense I had of him. Going into the feeling of him and making this movement made me able to speak to him, something I was not able to do in the actual situation 6 years ago.

Then I wanted to demonstrate the exercise with one of the participants in front of the group. At first, people were a little reluctant and some people said that they did not

have such a situation to work on. Some of them asked if they could work on powerlessness against a system instead, but I said that in this exercise it was better to work on a person. One of the participants then agreed to do the exercise. Her example was that she was facilitating a workshop with someone else, and this other person took over the facilitation, even in the parts that they had planned that she should facilitate. I asked her to become this other person and make a movement that this other person would make. She felt into how it would be to be the other person and made a movement with her hands going forward fast. I asked her to amplify the movement and feel it in her whole body, and from that state speak to the person she was facilitating with, and tell the person her opinion. She said to the other person that she did not want her to take over. I commented that it seemed direct and clear.

I was ready to move forward and have the participants do the exercise, however one of the participants said that it did not seem like the person who was doing the exercise was finished. I asked the participant who was working what she thought, and she agreed to continue working on the issue. Other people came in as well and commented on her process, asked questions and gave suggestions.

I went back to doing the exercise with the participant and asked her to go back to doing the movement. I asked her about who, in her imagination, would do such a movement? She said a train. I asked her to feel more into it and to do the movement more and to imagine that she was the train. She made a movement where her arms were going forward fast. I then took the role of the person she was facilitating with. I tried to imagine why she took over the facilitation and argued like I was her. I did that in order to give the participant something to react against. The participant then said more clearly

that she would have liked to do the facilitation and that she feels she is as qualified as the other person, and that she also has a good sense of what goes on in the group. We had a little discussion about whether the participant was done with the exercise or not. Someone noticed that there was a shift in her eyes. I concluded that something changed, at least to a certain point, and I asked the participants to do the exercise in pairs.

During the exercise, some people did not have a situation where they felt powerless towards another person. Instead, they decided to work on a person who has an energy which is very different from their own energy which they felt they needed themselves. One person, who is very determined and always says her opinion, picked up the energy of a person who is very relaxed and mild. She felt how this energy is very different from her normal way of being and felt that she could learn something from it. Another person described her usual self as being always "at work," even when she is in a meeting in her local community. She imagined being a person she knows who is always very relaxed and takes life easy. She made some big movements with her arm and her body which made the person she was working with give her an extra chair, because she noticed that one chair was not spacious enough. She clearly enjoyed being given this extra chair and being in this energy. She further explained that the person she was working with is someone who always gets what he wants because his attitude is so relaxed, and because he behaves like he has a natural right to be in the world. She told about a situation where this person was annoying her in his demands. I suggested to her to work on how it would be to confront the person from the state she was in at this moment, but she said that she was not interested in that since it was not a real conflict, and because she is mainly interested in experiencing the relaxed energy. It might be that

the conflict just is not interesting to her, as it did not seem like a big conflict, and it might also be an edge for her to go fully into the experience of having a natural right to be in the world and get what she wants. I see the power she was working on in this piece as the power of feeling all right just as you are, without doing anything, as opposed to having to "work" hard all the time.

Other people worked on places where they felt powerless. One of the participants later said that he really got something out of this exercise, because his exercise partner really pushed him to go into the part which was secondary for him.

After the exercise, people had different ideas about how to summarize, and I emphasized that I wanted to hear from people who had something they wanted to share, rather than hearing a few words from everybody. Again, I noticed that people had many ideas about how facilitation should happen, which could be a way of feeling their power, or perhaps because I was not being clear enough as a facilitator.

We spoke about different people needing different energies. Some people need to be more firm and stand for themselves, and other people need something more soft and relaxed, depending on what their primary energy is. Connecting with and integrating an energy which is different from one's own is, in my view, empowering because it opens one up to more possibilities of acting and being in the world, which can feel freeing and empowering.

As mentioned, not everybody could find an example where they felt powerless. After the workshop, I reflected upon what I could have done differently in order to make people relate more to the term powerlessness. It could be that powerlessness is a too strong term and that people could relate more easily to the exercise if they were asked to

find a situation where they felt they did not have access to all their power or were not able to use their full power or where they experienced having less power than someone else. I also wonder whether my example of powerlessness (with a person who had more power hierarchically than I, where there were traditional power dynamics of man-woman and older-younger, and where I almost felt that the other part abused their power) emphasized only one way of feeling powerless. I imagine, for example, that a person who is very determined and expresses their views in a strong way could feel powerless in an environment that does not allow strong expressions of emotions.

People had asked if they might do the exercise working with a system they felt powerless about instead of a person. This could also be an interesting variant of the exercise which would further emphasize the societal aspect of powerlessness.

Rank and Empowerment

For the exercise on rank and empowerment, I explained about the concept of rank and gave examples of the different kinds of rank. In the exercise, people were supposed to go through a list of examples of rank, identifying where they each had high rank, and then work on the areas where they had higher rank than the other person, and then lower. Due to time constraints, we did not have time to work on the places where people felt they had lower rank.

During the exercise, some people stated that they did not feel that they had high rank, especially not high social rank, for instance, because of being unemployed or because of being an independent consultant and therefore not having big retirement savings. I pointed out that they may have more rank psychologically and spiritually (i.e., the person who does not have a lot of savings because of being an independent consultant

has high psychological rank in terms of having decided her direction in life and because she was living a life she was happy about). This made sense to her. One person who was unemployed said that once she gets a job, she would feel her rank in the psychological and spiritual sphere more.

I found the participants' own views on their rank interesting. I saw them as people with a lot of resources, and also social rank, maybe not so much economically, but definitely in terms of their health and education.

Some people spoke about rank in their local community and talked about how some people have lower rank than others in their meetings in terms of not having the same skills or confidence of presenting their points of view. They thought this could be interesting to work more on. One person mentioned his high rank in terms of communicating, both verbally and in written words. He mentioned that he got a reaction from a person that she felt stupid. This is an example of how it can be difficult to have high rank and why we might sometimes try to hide it. People ended up not working on the places where they had higher rank than their partner, and I suspect that was because it felt edgy.

The skepticism I felt in people in relation to this exercise could relate to the Danish ideal of equality. Denmark is a society that highly values equality, with a system of supporting equal opportunities for everybody, despite social and economic background (e.g., through free education and social security for people who are unemployed or ill). To value that everybody should have equal opportunities can make us want to focus less on their differences. Also, socioeconomic differences are fewer between people in Denmark than in for instance the US, that makes the differences in social rank smaller,

and could make the discussion about social rank feel less important. Another component is the Danish culture of being modest and humble that is described by the Danish author Axel Sandemose (1933) as "The Law of Jante." The Law of Jante has 10 sentences, for instance: Don't believe that you *are* something, don't think that you're smarter than *us* and don't think that you can teach *us* anything (Sandemose, 1933). This culture can make people ashamed of success and support an environment where you do not speak about what you are good at. However, recently there are discussions in Denmark about the culture of the Law of Jante changing, with more emphasis being placed on valuing and supporting individuals to have success (i.e., youngsters with special talents).

I think the culture of equality, humbleness, and modesty can make it difficult to work on rank in Denmark, because we do not like the idea that some people have more rank than others and we do not like to think that rank affects our relationships. When working with rank in Denmark, I think it is essential to be aware of these cultural factors. If I were to do the exercise again, I would frame and discuss the concept of rank more in a Danish context before working on the individual experiences of having high or low rank.

Check-In on the Second Day

Morning of the second day, we started with a short check-in. I asked people if they had had any thoughts or reflections on empowerment since yesterday. One person said that she had felt two different kinds of empowerment: one was through being creative, another one was through taking a stand.

Some people mentioned that they thought they took over too much in the facilitation, and because it is my project, they thought I should facilitate. Some people

also mentioned that I should be more firm in my facilitation—cutting people off if we are off the track and getting us to move on. I agreed to do this more.

Empowerment on the Societal Level

I wanted to do a group process on an issue that people felt powerless about. I started by explaining to the group about the concept of deep democracy and I especially mentioned why it is a good idea to interact and even try to understand figures and opinions which are very extreme for us. After this, I asked everybody to do an inner brainstorm about issues they felt powerless about and to mention the one issue they felt most powerless about.

The issues that came up were:

- Overpopulation;

- Cuts in the health care system;

- Lack of consciousness;

- Lars Løkke-case (a politician got money from his party to buy himself clothes and the party paid for his family's holiday);

- "Hunt" on marginalized people (i.e., people who are ill);

- Money power (i.e., through capital funds);

- Conditions for homeless people coming from other countries;

- Lack of democratic influence on the European Union;

- The taboo of racism.

We then chose a topic by spinning a pen and asking the one who the pen pointed at to choose a topic. I had thought this was a good way to choose the topic as I did not

think that it mattered too much which topic we chose to work with. However, I can now see that it might have felt more empowering for them to use a sorting process, because it could have given the group a feeling of the power of choosing a topic together, and it might also have meant more buy-in to the topic from others in the group.

The topic that was chosen was "Lack of consciousness." I explained how to do a group process: that we were looking for roles and polarizations, that we can take a role even if we did not agree with it, and that deep democracy was about listening and trying to understand all the different roles.

I had planned to do some inner work before and after the group process around the issue. Inner work before the group process was supposed to be about how the topic made you feel powerless and why it was difficult for you. However, I forgot to do the first inner work. I believe that it would have helped frame the group process in terms of empowerment and also have helped people connect more personally to the topic.

Group Process

In the theme "Lack of consciousness" (as explained by the person who suggested the topic) was a critique towards people who were not conscious. The person believed that if we were more conscious, we would not, for instance, be polluting the world.

A role opposing this opinion said, "We don't want somebody to decide what consciousness we should have." Another role was saying, "It's too much. We can't stand being so conscious the whole time, there's too much to think about and to take into consideration." A part of this role was being more direct and specific, saying, "We don't wanna be conscious. We just want to live our own life. I have three children and two

cars—the money we saved from not buying ecological food we spent on a vacation to the Caribbean."

There was a lively discussion in the group and many people wanted to contribute their opinions and enjoyed taking different roles. Other roles that emerged touched more upon the social aspects, that people should be aware of the social impact of their actions, and of the social differences, that not everybody has the same opportunities economically and socially, or, in other terms, not everybody can choose whether to be conscious or not. This would have been an interesting point to hold on to.

However, as the process was cycling, I tried to hold the discussion down to those who did not want to be conscious and just wanted to live their lives, and those who said that it is important to be conscious. I asked if somebody could speak personally from the point of not wanting to be conscious, because so far people had only taken this role as a role and often somewhat with a humorous touch. A participant then spoke personally that she chose to eat meat, even though she knew about the bad things in meat production, the CO2-emission and so forth. Another participant then spoke personally that she stopped eating meat because she watched a television show about meat production. In this interaction, there came some understanding between the two different viewpoints. Some people then said that both sides can be unified, and that we make our personal choices about what to be conscious about and what not to be conscious about.

Some people expressed their frustration that the group process was supposed to be about empowerment on the societal level, and that they did not feel that the group process touched enough upon this. One person ended up leaving the room for the last part of the group process, also frustrated about the direction the group process was taking. I think

these reactions related to the role that came up earlier about the social aspects, and I see it as a reaction to the fact that the discussion was between two relatively wealthy people about whether to eat meat or not, which did not include the socioeconomic aspects of people not having a choice about what to buy. Somehow, the people were saying that we did not focus on the "real" issues.

However, at this point I chose to focus on the issue we were working on about lack of consciousness, and encouraged a personal interaction between two participants, one who said that she is not so conscious in relation to social issues, but that she is conscious about her own mental health in order not to get stressed, and another one who reacted to this saying that we should not only have an inner awareness, but also a social awareness, and that we should demand things from each other. I chose to focus on this because I felt that demanding things directly from each other could be an edge for the group. In this personal interaction, the two persons saw each other and understood the choices of the other person more, and the participant who spoke in reaction to the other said that she did not want to put demands only on people at a personal level, she wanted the politicians to have visions. This could still be an edge to demand more personally.

After a break, I gave an overview of the group process, and we made a circle in order to hear everybody's experiences of it. Some people mentioned that they had the experience that everybody has a form of consciousness and that they came to an understanding about what was important for them, in terms of what they felt was important to be conscious about. One person mentioned that it was important to speak to the voice on the other side (speaking to the voice of the "lack of consciousness"). They mentioned that it felt as if they were speaking to a human being, and something changed

for them in relation to people who "lack" consciousness. Other people mentioned the importance of demanding things from other people, pushing their own points of view. One person mentioned that demanding things from people is an invitation to community in our individualized culture, but that it is also important to make demands in a way which does not put people down. Another person also mentioned the more societal level of community and wanting politicians to act. Other people again mentioned that they missed the point about how to get empowered on a societal level and how to act on this, and they mentioned that they still did not know what to do about the things they do not know what to about. The person who left the room during the process said that she felt it was mainly a power struggle, and that she did not feel that it was enriching, and asked the question about how we can enrich each other's life, and that she felt inertia. A person mentioned that it would have been interesting if we had been a more diverse group.

After this sharing, I asked people to do an inner work. This inner work was about picking up the energy of the role you were most annoyed with in the group process. However, because of time, we did not have the opportunity to share results.

In terms of breaking down polarizations and getting a bigger understanding of both sides, some of the people did gain understanding about the side less known to them (e.g., the side that lacked consciousness and preferred just to live their lives). They also got a sense of what could be done about this (e.g., demanding things from other people in a nonpushy way). In this way it seems that the process did move something in people. On the other hand, some participants pointed out that we were not touching on the important things and they did not feel more empowered at a societal level. I think they have a point, and I think the group process could have been more interesting and given

more to people if we had worked more deeply on the social and economic differences, and that not everybody can choose whether to be conscious or not.

From the feedback it seems like people generally got something out of the group process, because different views on a topic were expressed and both sides were explored. I think people could have gotten more out of the group process had I included in the discussion more about the social and economic differences, because it seemed to have more energy than the discussion about whether people were conscious or not.

In terms of experiencing the group process as empowering, it would have been good to let the group choose the topic themselves. I also think the inner work in the beginning of the group process where each person would relate to the topic was important. Further, I think that it would be good to emphasize the integration part more. A group process is designed to voice different opinions and to make us become aware of how we are also the other. That can lead to a transformation on the emotional level, but how this can be put into action would be something to focus further on. For instance, small group discussions after the group process would have been useful.

Also, I think it could be interesting to look at other ways of working with empowerment on the societal level rather than through a group process, because it is difficult to predict the outcome of a group process. It could be through a more structured group process / case work, or through different exercises where people work on the issues they feel powerless about.

Working With Other People's Empowerment

Unfortunately, we did not have time to do this exercise. I handed it out to the participants and explained it for them, so they would be able to do it at home.

Self-Acceptance as a Form of Empowerment

The last exercise was about accepting the parts of yourself that you do not like as a part of becoming empowered. In this exercise, people worked with parts of themselves that they really did not like, and through imagining and becoming a person who liked these parts, the idea was that the participants would increasingly accept these parts of themselves.

As a demonstration, I did the exercise with one of the participants. The part of himself that he did not like was his sometimes coming forward too strongly with his opinions and viewpoint on another's life/situation which sometimes hurt people and had ruined friendships. He explained that part of this side is his enthusiasm, which he likes, but this particular part he does not like. A voice inside of him says, "Don't think too much of yourself! Don't come forward with your ideas, because then you don't listen to other people's needs." I asked him who would be like this part of him, and he said that a woman who is in charge of the NGO he is a part of would be like this part. I asked him to become her, and he stood up and started moving like her, and making big movements with his hands. I asked him to speak from her perspective to himself, imagining that I am him. In the role of the woman, he told himself that he likes his behavior very much and that the NGO really needs someone with his drive and enthusiasm. As him, I said that I also like the drive and enthusiasm, but that I did not like the part that ruins friendships. He then got a little stuck in the role as the woman, and we changed chairs. In the role of the woman, I thanked him for the work in the organization and told him how wonderful the work he does is. He looked delighted and said thank you, and that he feels that he does not like this part of himself. I said in the role of the woman that we really need him

in the organization and that I really like this part of him. He looked happy and said that

he got something and that there is no point in going further as he will not get anymore

right now. He said he feels a bigger acceptance of this side of himself that he did not like.

I am sure he got something here and yet I feel we could have gone a little further. I also

think there is some empowerment in saying, I got something here—I know that I am done

(for now).

People then did the exercise in pairs. Afterwards, the feedback was really

positive. Most people worked on parts that they really did not like and felt that the

exercise was useful and helped them become more appreciative of themselves. They also

found the teamwork useful as they saw each other's less liked sides with more positive

and milder eyes. One person found that the side of themselves they did not like was not a

universal side, but occurred only in certain relationships. A couple of people mentioned

that they could have been braver, because the parts they chose in the exercise they

actually liked to some extent. One person wanted to do this exercise in the future with all

his negative sides one by one in order to gain more self-acceptance. I think it is

especially interesting how important the relationship part of this exercise was for people

in order to get a different view on their less liked sides. Once we approach an area we

might feel critical about and look at it, we might discover that it is not, for example, as

universal as we thought (as one participant found), as we get a more nuanced view on it.

Feedback

After the last exercise, I asked the group to fill out an evaluation sheet. Here is

the feedback from the participants, according to the questions on the evaluation sheet.

The biggest learning during the workshop. Most of the people mentioned either a specific method of working with their power or the methods / tools in general as their biggest learning. For instance, some people mentioned the exercises of getting in contact with the power you see in another person, getting in contact with some less developed power, and looking more at the parts of ourselves that we disavow as their biggest learning. One person also mentioned that the positive relations with other people in the group were important for them.

The view of yourself and your own power. Half of the people mentioned that their view of themselves and their own power changed throughout the workshop. For example, people mentioned that they felt as though they believed more in themselves and their own power, that they were able to stand more for themselves and therefore gave more wholeheartedly to others, and that they had sharpened their view on their power and how they grew it. Other people did not go into detail about why they did not feel their view had changed, other than one who said they did not know yet whether their view had changed or not.

The view of the world. Most of the people reported that their view of the world had not changed. One person said that they had rediscovered their focus on the interaction between individual-relations-politics, and another person reported that their view had changed in the sense that they saw that we all had some experiences and something important to say which was meaningful to listen to. Another person reported that they had gained conformation that through Processwork you can expand your perspective of the world. Asking whether people's view of the world had changed was a big question, and I expected most people to say "no" to it, and I hoped that some of them

would feel a change. In my high dreams, I hoped for people to say, "Yes—I don't feel so polarized anymore—I feel more capable of changing things." As earlier mentioned, if some changes were made in the workshop design that related to societal issues, I believe more people might have felt at least a slight change here.

Feeling of being able to change things that are important in one's life. Over half of the participants answered "yes" to the question about whether they felt that they were able to a larger degree to change things which are important in their lives. Most of them answered that they would work on different things, mainly related to self-development. Some mentioned that now they had tools to work with, and others mentioned that they would work more on what they project onto another as well as work more on their shadow sides. One person answered that they saw the road a little clearer now, but that they were not sure how to follow it. Some mentioned that they would seek support to work further—through a community of self-development or through a coach.

Basically, people said that they felt increasingly able to work further on themselves. Working on oneself can be a big part of changing important things in one's life, however, I expected people to mention things they wanted to change. Perhaps, the workshop could have been more focused on what people wanted to change in their lives.

View on empowerment. Some of the participants responded that they had gained a more nuanced view on empowerment and that they now thought of power / strength in more contexts and / or saw the power also in the sides that they disregarded. For some people, it was new to work with empowerment as a concept, thus, their understanding of the concept developed. One person missed a model for what empowerment is. Another

person said that they still do not know what to do about the things they do not know what to do about.

Other comments. A participant who answered "no" to most of the questions further explained that the content of the workshop was known to them. Rather, they attended the workshop to experience the group dynamic of a group that they did not facilitate as well as their own "pitfalls."

After the participants filled out the evaluation sheet, we gathered, and I asked them to say what they had liked best and what could have been done differently during the workshop. Generally, people were happy about the workshop. They said that the topics were relevant, that it was great to work on these things, and that they got tools they could take home with them.

People mentioned that they had really liked the group. They mentioned that they had developed relations to each other, and that they had liked the interaction in a group where people did not know each other.

Some people mentioned that they would have liked to work more on the societal level and have liked to have had more group interactions, and that the workshop got too individualized. About the design of the workshop, people commented that there had been an adequate amount of exercises and enough time to work on them, a good flow. A person mentioned that he got a lot out of when we worked with someone's situation in the middle and that we could have done that more. Also the person would have like more variety such as groups of three instead of only groups of two. This really made sense to me. If I were to do the workshop again, I would put more emphasis on the group interactions, and I would also change the exercise related to the societal level.

About the facilitation, some people said that they would have liked a more directive facilitation style. However, some found that it had changed from the first to the second day, and some people said that it had been good for them to be disturbed in their own perception of facilitation. One person commented that the whole group also had responsibility for the facilitation in the sense that we are a microcosm and that it is not just about the facilitator being more directive, it is also about the group allowing the facilitator to facilitate, which everybody did take responsibility for on the second day.

One person mentioned that she had felt uncomfortable because the room had been full of professional people who all felt that they should facilitate. Another person asked her whether she felt it had changed on the second day, and she said that she felt so.

Reflecting further on the groups' process and people's comments about the facilitation, I notice that people had many opinions about my facilitation from the beginning (e.g., in regard to name tags, how to facilitate a person's process, and how to summarize). I can relate this to my own edge of being directive in my facilitation. I can also relate it to the fact that it was a workshop on empowerment, and that people were feeling their own power relative to the facilitator.

I could have framed better that people coming in and giving advice could be seen as feeling their own power. I could also have framed the whole discussion about facilitation and leadership as a discussion about empowerment and power: What kind of leader do we want? What kind of power do we want a leader / facilitator to have, and what kind of power do we want to have as a group? I could not bring it up at that time because of my inner critic informing me that I was not being a good facilitator. Working further with my own relationship to leadership and authority after I led the workshop, I

had a reflection during an inner work saying that because I planned the workshop and because of my experience, I know what is important to do and how the different exercises should be facilitated, and therefore it would be to the benefit of the participants if I picked up my rank and my authority as a facilitator more. I feel that this experience and insight will be helpful for me in the future.

Further, I think it is interesting how the group itself developed in the sense that they agreed that they came in too much in the facilitation, and therefore, as one person mentioned in the evaluation round, started taking more responsibility for the group and allowing me to facilitate on the second day. I think this can be seen as a form of empowerment of the group; that power does not necessarily means taking over, but it can also be the power, for instance, to allow someone else to facilitate in order for everybody to have a good experience.

Discussion

This chapter includes a summary of my findings and a discussion about the contributions my project offers to the field of empowerment and to the field of Processwork. Furthermore, it includes a review about what I might do differently another time. The main findings of my workshop are as follows:

- Half of the people who attended the workshop mentioned that their feeling of power had changed throughout the workshop;

- Over half of the people who attended the workshop felt that they would be able to act on things important in their lives to a greater extent after the workshop;

- Some of them experienced that their view on empowerment had changed, for instance, they started seeing power in parts of themselves they formerly disregarded;

- The participants of the workshop found the Processwork exercises and methods useful;

- There is a big interest in working on powerlessness on a societal level. However, a group process in itself is not necessarily empowering;

- When you work with rank in Denmark, it requires more framing and discussion, bearing in mind the Danish culture of equality, humbleness, and modesty;

- Power dynamics in the group and relative to the facilitator need to be included as part of the learning.

Limitations

A major limitation of my project is that I did not research what happened after the workshop—my research only includes people's immediate responses to their feeling of empowerment after the workshop. Thus, I do not know anything about the long term effects of the workshop, and that is a limitation, especially because action is part of my definition of empowerment.

Contributions to the Field of Empowerment

I believe that Processwork has many interesting perspectives to offer to the field of empowerment, which I have emphasized throughout my project. One important perspective is the understanding that "the other" is you. This perspective can expand our view on our powers, as we, through picking up the power we see in someone else, can experience powers in ourselves we did not know we possessed. Thus, it also changes our view on powerlessness. When we start experiencing both sides, we experience that on the other side of powerlessness is power. This also changes our view on how to obtain power on a societal level. We might think that empowerment on a societal level is about gathering our forces and fighting against what we feel oppressed by. Instead of this, empowerment on a societal level becomes a question of understanding the other side & learning how we are also the other side. Through this we get a greater connection to the other side which may eventually lead to more interaction and change.

The focus of many of the empowerment approaches is either on the individual level or on the societal level. I find it an important contribution to the field of empowerment that Processwork emphasizes that both levels are important and that they're connected. The focus on both levels is important, as an individualization of all problems

can be painful for the individual since it can make us feel responsible for everything, whereas a belief that the way society is structured determines all our actions makes us responsible for nothing.

I also find the aspect of empowerment through self-acceptance a contribution. Seeing power in our weaknesses and the parts of ourselves that we do not like is different from the usual understanding of empowerment as having to do with strength. I think this expands our understanding of empowerment, because empowerment becomes a question of valuing and accepting all parts of ourselves, instead of seeing only the power in our strengths.

Contributions to Processwork

In terms of Processwork, I see my work as contributing in terms of framing how Processwork can be seen as empowering. My research question was: How can a Processwork training cultivate empowerment amongst the participants?

I see Processwork as empowering on three levels which I will explain further:

- Connecting with yourself: I see it as empowering when people connect with their true and whole selves. During the workshop, this was done through connecting to experiences in people's history where they felt powerful, which I believe is empowering because you recall and re-experience your strengths. I also learned during the workshop that connecting with the parts of yourself that you do not like can be empowering as well. And even though this part of the workshop did not get that positive feedback, I still believe that connecting with your own rank can also be empowering. Both in terms of recognizing the places where you have high rank and in terms of finding what it gives you to have low rank in some places.

- Connecting with the other: I find it empowering to connect with the other in the sense of connecting to the powers we see in other people, learning about them and using them more. Through this, we get a whole different view on who we are, which means that we get new opportunities for being and acting in the world, which can feel empowering.

- Connecting to the world: I see connecting to the world as empowering because we often feel disempowered by situations which we feel that we cannot change. By experiencing and getting an understanding of the other side, we get a closer connection to it and may learn how we are also the other side, and this may create more interaction and a feeling of a possibility of change, which is empowering.

I see these three levels of connecting to yourself, the other and the world as an empowerment model for Processwork, because I think it emphasizes which aspects of Processwork are empowering. I believe my empowerment model could be developed further into training for organizations, groups, and social movements. Offering this model is a contribution to Processwork, because empowerment is something important to many groups and organizations today, and therefore, it would be a way of introducing Processwork in new areas.

Within this model, my exercises are also a contribution, because they put known Processwork methods into the context of empowerment.

Furthermore, trying out my methods in a specific context is a contribution. Especially the work on rank in Denmark is a contribution. As mentioned earlier, there seemed to be an aversion amongst the participants to embracing the concept of rank, which I think is due to the culture of equality, humbleness, and modesty. This shows that

some Processwork concepts need to be tailored and framed relative to the specific culture that one is working in.

What Might I Do Differently and Next Steps

If I were to continue working with empowerment trainings, there are various things that I would do differently, as already mentioned in the chapter about findings.

In the exercise "Connecting to the Power You See in Someone Else" I would frame the exercise differently, in order for people to relate more easily to the exercise. Instead of asking for a situation where people felt powerless, I would ask them to find a situation where they felt they did not have access to all their power. Furthermore, I would give more varied examples, and I would allow for more time to discuss which situations it could be interesting to work with. I might also add an exercise about feeling powerless in regard to a system.

In the exercise about rank, I would start with an in depth discussion about rank and equality: How do we perceive the concept of rank in Denmark? Which feelings do we have about it? After this, I would go on to work on the individual experiences of having high or low rank.

In the part about empowerment on a societal level, I would make sure to do the inner work before the group process and right after the group process, before the debrief. I would also spend more time on finding a topic that the group really wants to make a difference about and allow more time for the individual to work with their relationship with the topic and possible actions. I would also clarify the roles more – the role that

makes people feel powerless and the role which they identify with – and have people switch between these two roles, allowing them to experience and understand both. I think it is really interesting that people had a great motivation for this part of the workshop, and I think it is interesting to develop this further, both because of people's motivation and also because I feel Processwork really has something to offer in this area. Many psychological methods work with empowerment on the individual level, but working on empowerment on a societal level from a psychological point of view is rare. I would also work more consciously with the dynamics within the group itself and its relations to the facilitator as a part of the empowerment process. I would also like to make a longer training in order to allow time for taking action and following up.

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Appendix A: Workshop Invitation

Power, Powerlessness and the Drive of Taking Action
An Empowerment Workshop

Sometimes, we feel powerless towards things happening in society: The global economy, the crisis in Ukraine, environmental problems. Sometimes we feel powerless on a personal level in regard to other people, for instance our boss. And sometimes, other people do have power to decide about our lives—and we don't have an immediate influence on Putin's decisions about taking over the Crimean Peninsula. But at the same time, the feeling of powerlessness is a sign that we also have the power and strength, we see in others, in ourselves—only it is not so well-known to us. By getting in contact with the power we project onto other people, and by working with the polarizations, we experience in society, we can experience a greater sense of our power and a greater drive for taking action.

I would like to invite you to work on this in an empowerment workshop:

Friday June 13 from 1-6 pm and Saturday June 14 from 10 am-5 pm.

Through the workshop, you will get methods and tools to work with empowerment that you can both use yourself and with the people you work with. You will get tools to work with individual's empowerment in terms of working with the power we project onto other people. And you will get knowledge about a method of working with problems and conflicts on a societal and group level which works well in transforming the experience of the problems/conflicts and create a feeling of power and drive.

During the workshop we will work with:

- Your own personal history of empowerment. When in your life have you experienced a feeling of power and felt your own drive—and why?

- Power and powerlessness. We sometimes experience ourselves as powerless in regard to other people who we experience having more power than ourselves. How can we constructively use the power that we experience in other people?

- Empowerment on a societal level. We sometimes experience that we are powerless in regard to things happening on the societal level. Through working with opinions and polarizations about a present topic we will get an understanding about how things are connected and we will feel less separated from the system and through this experience a larger drive.

- Rank and status.

- Working with other people's empowerment.

- How can we use what we learned during the workshop—in our own work, with ourselves and the people, we work with?

Workshop Facilitator

The workshop is facilitated by Sine Andersen. I am an experienced facilitator and have worked with empowerment in many contexts. The workshop is part of my Final Project in my Master's in Conflict Facilitation and Organizational Change at the Processwork Institute, Portland, Oregon.

My work is based upon the method and paradigm Processwork (also known as process-oriented psychology) which is an approach to working with individual and collective change. I have experienced the method as very empowering in myself, both on a personal level and in regard to feeling a larger drive about changing things on a societal level.

Practical Information

The workshop will be held on Friday June 13 from 1-6 pm and on Saturday June 14 from 10 am-5 pm.

The price is 100 dkk to cover the costs of renting a room etc.
Place tba later.

RSVP the latest June 1 to sine.andersen@gmail.com. In case of questions, send an email or call me on 2720 1661.

Appendix B: Informed Consent

Informed consent about participation in project

I participate in the workshop "Power, powerlessness and the drive for taking action—An empowerment workshop" on June 13-14 2014, which is held by Sine Andersen as a part of her Final Project in her Master's in Conflict Facilitation and Organizational Change at the Process Work Institute, Portland, Oregon, USA.

I give my consent to that my evaluation of the workshop and Sine's observations of the workshop will form part of her Final Project. My evaluation and the observations will form part of the Final Project in an anonymized form.

Date:

Name:

Signature:

Appendix C: Exercises

Your Personal History of Empowerment

Alone

1. Think back on your life in decades—when you were 0-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40 etc. Think back on each decade and remember a situation where you felt your own power (whatever that means to you). It should be specific situations. Make a note to yourself about the situation and why it felt powerful.

With a Partner

2. Choose the situation where you felt most powerful.

3. Remember the power you felt in that situation. Feel it now and with your hand or your whole body, make a movement that expresses that power. What is the essence of this power? How would it feel if this power was more present in your life? What is it useful for?

4. Think back on the movement which was connected with your favourite place on Earth. Is there a connection between the quality of that movement and the movement connected with your experience of your power?

Connecting to the Power We See in Other People

1. Think about a situation where you felt powerless towards a person whom you felt had more power than you. Explain how the person acted and how you reacted.

2. Imagine that you are the person that made you feel powerless. Feel how it is to be him / her, how he / she stands and walks. Forget about the feelings you had in the situations and towards this person, just feel what it is like to be that person.

3. Make a movement that represents the person. Forget about the person and go into that movement. What feels good about making the movement? What is the quality of the movement? How can you use this quality in your life? Find a way to anchor the movement.

4. Stay with the movement and its energy. Now, imagine that you are facing the person you felt powerless about. Your partner takes the role as the person. From the place where you are now, speak to the person. If it gets hard, go back and make the movement again and feel its energy. Notice what changes in your way of speaking to the person.

5. What was different? Where do you need this energy, this power, in your life?

Rank

1. Speak of places where you each have high rank (look at the list of examples of different kinds of rank).

2. Each choose an area where you have high rank. Speak about this rank. How did you gain it? Is it something you are born with or is it something you developed? How conscious are you about this rank in your everyday life?

3. Now, relate to each other and each of you find a place where you have more rank than the other person. How does it make you feel? It is difficult to have more rank—do you feel that you shouldn't have more rank than the other person? Are there cultural reasons for why it is difficult to stand by having higher rank than other people? Explore these cultural reasons for not noticing or celebrating your high rank.

4. Stand up for your high rank. Notice the effect that has on your partner. The person may feel put down, but may also feel relieved. How can you relate to the person with your high rank in a good way?

5. Think about one of the places where you have low rank. Which power does it give you? What do you know about the world and about yourself which someone who doesn't have this experience doesn't know? How does it make you more sensitive than someone who doesn't have this experience?

Different Kinds of Rank

Societal rank
Our status in society relative to others which is defined by for instance:
- Race
- Gender
- Socioeconomic status
- Religion
- Physical health
- Sexual orientation
- Education
- Family

Psychological rank
A feeling of balance and psychological well-being, also in difficult situations, for instance:

- Feeling that your viewpoints are valid, even when other people disagree
- Feeling loved
- Having lived through a difficult period and be strengthened through that
- Self confidence
- Feeling balanced, also in the midst of conflicts and difficulties
- An ability to work with, or be free of, complexes and difficult states of mind
- Peace of mind

Spiritual rank
Is related to a feeling of being centered, having peace of mind, a feeling of belonging and feeling connected to something bigger than oneself, for instance:
- That there is something bigger than you which holds you and supports you
- Having had experiences which expand your understanding of life and death
- Having been close to death
- Knowing the meaning of your life
- Feeling supported by a sense of justice or meaning

Working With Other People's Empowerment

1. Choose a situation where you were working with empowering other people—or helping them help themselves—where you felt stuck, where you felt that your good intentions weren't received.

2. Explain the situation to your partner. Explain how the person acted and how you acted.

3. Imagine that you are the person that you were trying to help. Feel how it is to be him / her, how he / she stands and walks. Forget about the feelings you had in the situations and towards this person, just feel what it is like to be that person.

4. Make a movement that represents the person. Forget about the person and go into that movement. What feels good about making the movement? What is the quality of the movement? How can you use this quality in your life? Find a way to anchor the movement.

5. Stay with the movement and its energy. Now, imagine that you are facing the person you were trying to help. Your partner takes the role as the person. From the place where you are now, speak to the person. If it gets hard, go back and make the movement again and feel its energy. Notice what changes in your way of speaking to the person.

6. Does the exercise give you any new insights about your own values and your approach in working with other people's empowerment?

Empowerment Through Self-Acceptance

1. Is there a part of yourself that you don't like? It can be a part of your character, a certain behavior, a difficulty. Explain more about this part to your partner. Why don't you like it? What is painful about it? What in you is against it? What is the argument against it? (i.e., "You shouldn't … because …"). Be specific about what the resistance to this side is. Your partner should take notes about this.

2. Imagine a person that you think would like this side of you. It can be a real or imagined person.

3. Try now and become that person. Feel how it would be to be that person. Move like that person. Be that person. Now you are that person. Look through your new eyes with your new heart to the one who doesn't like a part of himself/herself. What would you say to him/her? Which advice would you give him/her?

4. Your partner now goes back to the notes s/he took in the beginning about the part you didn't like in yourself ("You shouldn't … because…"), and reads it out loud. From your new place, with your new heart and your new eyes, what is your reply to this voice? If it gets difficult, go back to the feeling of being this other person and stay there for a while until you find the feeling and let the partner repeat.

5. How do you now look upon the part of yourself which you didn't like before?

Appendix D: Evaluation Questions

What was the most important learning for you during the workshop? Why was it important for you?

Has your view of yourself and your own power changed? If yes, how?

Has your view of the world changed? If yes, how?

Do you feel to a greater extent that you will be able to act on things which are important in your life? If yes, what will you do?

Has your view on empowerment changed or expanded in any way? If yes, how?

Appendix E: Script for Workshop

Friday June 13

Time	Purpose	Content	Exercises
1-1.30 pm	Welcome the participants Create a safe space Set the context for the theme Introduce the participants to each other	**Welcome and introduction** Welcome Introducing myself: Master's student of Conflict Facilitation and Organizational Change in Portland, Oregon. Process consultant and facilitator with working experience from the City of Copenhagen. Introduction to the theme: Empowerment is difficult to translate into Danish. In English, the word comes from "empower"–to give power to, to enable to. I understand the word as feeling your own power. Feeling that one can change things important in one's lives and surroundings, a subjective feeling. I've worked a lot with empowerment–with young immigrants, employees, involvement, and motivation. Personally, empowerment is important to me—I've always wanted to change the world, and I've been politically active. I've often felt powerless—how to make a change, how to make people follow me? I find that Processwork is a very powerfull paradigm for working with empowerment. Processwork sees all parts of a human being and all parts in a group as something we need, it appreciates and recognizes all parts. I find this powerfull. Processwork also see that people have two main processes—one we identify with, and one we don't identify with. This means that if we identify with being powerless, there is also power somewhere—we just don't identify with it yet. Going through the agenda for the workshop	The participants introduces themselves: Name, what they do and what they wish to get out of the workshop.

		Information about practical stuff. Information about use of the workshop in my final project + signing of consent sheet (has been sent out before the workshop) The participants introduce themselves + their motivation for joining the workshop	
1.30 pm- 2.45 pm	To be aware of one's own powers through different situations throughout one's life.	**Your own personal history of empowerment** Explaining the purpose of the exercise: To get in touch with situations where we felt empowered, to get a sense of our own power. Explaining the exercise + if you encounter a situation where you didn't feel powerful, save it for later, we'll get back to it later. An example of an unexpected power I felt: The decade from 0-10 years, when I was around 8 and learned to read and were allowed to go to the library alone—the power of feeling free and independent and having a whole new world of books opened for me. Guided inner work for the first part of the exercise Reflecting alone Sharing in pairs Sharing points in the large group	Guided inner work: 1. Think of a place on Earth that you like, your favourite spot. 2. Imagine that you go there. Sense the place, feel it, smell it. 3. Now imagine that you ARE the place. Be the place. 4. Either with your hand or with your whole body, make a movement that represents this place. 4. What is the quality of this movement? Your personal history of empowerment (exercise handed out): 1. Now think back on your life in decades - when you were 0-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40 etc. Think back on each decade and remember a situation where you felt your own power (whatever that means to you). It should be specific situations. Make a note to yourself about the situation and why it felt powerful. With a partner: 2. Choose the situation where you felt most powerful.

			3. Remember the power you felt in that situation. Feel it now and with your hand or your whole body, make a movement that expresses that power. What is the essence of this power? How would it feel if this power was more present in your life? What is it useful for? 4. Think back on the movement which was connected with your favourite place on Earth. Is there a connection between the quality of that movement and the movement connected with your experience of your power?
2.45-3.00 pm		Break	
2.40-4.00 pm	Getting in contact with the powers which are more secondary to us that we see in other people and integrating them.	**Connecting with the power we see in other people** Introduction: We sometimes feel powerless in regard to a person. It could be our boss, a family member or another person. And in reality, the person might have power over us—for instance our boss. But when we experience ourselves as powerless and the other as powerfull, we don't see our own powers. The reason why we experience this other person as so powerfull is because we're projecting our own powers onto this person. So by getting to know this power we see in this other person, we can feel more powerfull—and through this sense new possibilities for action. This exercise might also make us feel less polarized against people in power. Sharing my own inner work: I was working on a situation with a boss I had 6 years ago. It was a situation where I felt powerless and unable to act.	Exercise in pairs: 1. Think about a situation where you felt powerless towards a person whom you felt had more power than you. Explain how the person acted and how you reacted. 2. Imagine that you are the person that made you feel powerless. Feel how it is to be him/her, how he/she stands and walks. Forget about the feelings you had in the situations and towards this person, just feel what it is like to be that person. 3. Make a movement that represents the person. Forget about the person and go into that movement. What feels good about making the movement? What is the quality of the movement? How can you use this quality in your life. Find a way to anchor the movement.

		We're having a meeting about our collaboration, he gets annoyed with me and says that he feels he has to invent tasks to satisfy me—he wants it to be the opposite, so I come with ideas to him. I feel unable to speak. It was very frustrating. To get in contact with my own powers I imagine that I am him. Imagining that I am him I notice that my voice gets deeper, I feel bigger, my chest goes forward. I notice that I make a movement with my hands going down firmly. I make the movement more. It feels very secure. In my imagination, I answer to his criticism that I would like to work with him. That I feel that we're both passionate about social work, that I feel passionate about that the employees and the clients feel that they have influence. I imagine that he would then start telling me about his passions. After doing this exercise, I felt that something in me shifted. I feel in contact with a power. And I feel different towards this person, my former boss. I still feel that he could have used his powers in a better way, but I feel that I would be able to meet him and have a dialogue with him. Reflection: Situations, where we feel powerless, are often vulnerable. This is okay. And you can also think about which situation you would like to choose. Demonstrating the exercise with someone Doing the exercise in pairs Sharing points in the large group	4. Stay with the movement and its energy. Now, imagine that your're facing the person you felt powerless about. Your partner takes the roles as the person. From the place where you are now, speak to the person. If it gets hard, go back and make the movement again and feel its energy. Notice what changes in your way of speaking to the person. 5. What was different? Where do you need this energy, this power, in your life?
4-4.15 pm		Break	
4.15-5.50 pm	Learning about the places where we have high rank and feeling the power connected to that. Also appreciating	**Rank** Rank is the sum of a person's privileges, both social, economical, psychological and spiritual. High rank may show by self-assureness and feeling safe speaking in a large group.	Exercise about rank—reflecting with a partner. 1. Speak of places where you each have high rank

	the knowledge, the awareness and the power that lies in connecting to the places where we have low rank.	Rank can both be something we're born with (i.e., being born into a certain socioeconomic class with the privileges belonging to this class), or it can be something we've earned (i.e., through having gone through some difficult periods in your life) you get to know yourself better and through this you might feel more self-assured—having gained more psychological rank. Examples of rank: ***Societal rank*** Our status in society relative to other which is defined by for instance: - Race - Gender - Socioeconomic status - Religion - Physical health - Sexual orientation - Education - Family ***Psychological rank*** A feeling of balance and psychological well-being, also in difficult situations, for instance: - Feeling that your viewpoints are valid, even when other people disagree - Feeling loved - Having lived through a difficult period and be strenghtened through that - Self confidence - Feeling balanced, also in the midst of conflicts and difficulties - An ability to work with, or be free of, complexes and difficult states of mind - Peace of mind	(look at the list of examples of different kinds of rank). 2. Each choose an area where you have high rank. Speak about this rank. How did you gain it? Is it something you are born with or is it something you developed? How conscious are you about this rank in your everyday life? 3. Now, relate to each other and each of you find a place where you have more rank than the other person. How does it make you feel? It is difficult to have more rank—do you feel that you shouldn't have more rank than the other person? Are there cultural reasons for why it is difficult to stand by having higher rank than other people. Explore these cultural reasons for not noticing or celebrating your high rank. 4. Stand up for your high rank. Notice the effect that has on your partner. The person may feel put down, but may also feel relieved. How can you relate to the person with your high rank in a good way? 5. Think about one of the places where you have low rank. Which power does it give you? What do you know about the world and about yourself which someone who doesn't have this experience doesn't know? How does it make you more sensitive than someone who doesn't have this experience?

| | | *Spiritual rank*
Is related to a feeling of being centered, having peace of mind, a feeling of belonging and feeling connected to something bigger than oneself, for instance:
• That there is something bigger than you which holds you and supports you
• Having had experiences which expand your understanding of life and dead
• Having been close to death
• Knowing the meaning of your life
• Feeling supported by a sense of justice or meaning.

Rank is important to work with while working on empowerment, because we often identify with places where we have less rank. In working with the different kinds of rank we learn about where we also have high rank, which can give us a feeling of our own powers.

Working with rank in Denmark can be controversial! We have a culture of equality, and we have "the Law of Jante" saying that we shouldn't feel better than anyone else. But if we don't get in contact with the places where we have rank, where we are strong, we can seem arrogant to others.

There can also be a power in the places where we have low rank. For instance my boyfriend has a muscle disease which makes him appreciate more important things in life such as relationships and love.

Working in pairs on rank. | |
| 5.50-6 pm | | Closure of first day
Short check-in: How is it going? Any adjustments to be made before tomorrow? | |

Saturday June 14

Time	Purpose	Content	Exercises
10 am-11.45 pm	Working with a theme we feel powerless about on the societal level to experience how a bigger understanding of the different position can make us feel less polarized and more powerfull, also in terms of taking action	**Empowerment on the societal level** We will now work on empowerment on the societal level. We will work with the powerlessness we feel in regard to a theme on the societal level and how we through working on the theme and the different polarities can feel less polarized and more powerful, also in terms of taking action. We sometimes do feel powerless about things in society that we don't feel we can do anything about. For instance we might feel powerless about that Russia and Putin is about to annect parts of Ukraine. We might feel on the side of democracy, human rights, and feel powerless about that a dictator like Putin has so much influence. Most of us don't identify with Putin, we feel far away from being a dictator, and most of us are not—however, maybe we can identify with a part which is sometimes so obsessed by something, wants something so much, is so enthusiastic about something that we don't listen to other people's feedback? If we can understand that side of ourselves better (understand both sides of the conflict), we can understand better what the conflict is about, and we might not feel as polarized anymore. And by seeing and feeling both sides, by not feeling so opposed anymore, we can experience feeling more powerful and therefore more able to get in contact with the part of us which acts. We feel more the wholeness of the problem. This might be controversial. I imagine that someone might say that it is crazy, not healthy, not good trying to understand a dictator and war. However: • It is here, it cannot just be dismissed (Taoist-Buddhist—being open to what is). Because it is here, it is important to learn more about this energy.	Sorting: Everybody do an inner brainstorm—thinking about which topics are important and chosing one each. Everybody's topics are written on the board Everybody now think: If I were a king or queen, which topic would I choose? We spin a pen and the person, who the pen points at, will get to choose the topic. Inner work before the group process: Think about: How do you feel powerless in regard to this topic? What is difficult for you about this topic? Maybe your low rank or than you cannot make decisions? Or maybe you feel powerful in regard to this topic? What makes you feel powerful? Feel this powerlessness or power in your body. Make a note and save it for later. Group process Inner work after the group process: 1. Which role were you most against in the

| | | We need this energy. Not to be a dictator ourselves, but there is some diamond in it that we need in order to interact with the dictator. For instance a decisiveness, an ability to complete what we stand for etc. The principle of Aikido, using the energy of the opponent.
• The basic principle in deep democracy—there is a wisdom which is trying to emerge. Through interaction between polarities, even extreme polarities, a wisdom arises.

We will do this through a method called a group process.

The principles of a group process are: We work with a topic. We believe that all voices are important—also the voices that we usually marginalize, the controversial voices. This is called deep democracy. We go into depth with the different voices, the different parts believing that through this we can gain an understanding about the different sides.

While we're doing a group process, we can each represent all sides and roles, and change sides. This is a way to feel into both sides and to feel less polarized.

Through a group process, a transformation sometimes happens. Some times in the meeting between two people—sharing personal histories and showing that there are similarities between the two sides.

Steps in a group process:
    - choosing a topic
    - identifying polarities
    - going in depth with the polarities
    - identifying possible ghost roles
    - roles become personal
    - temporary resolution

Sorting "A theme we as a group feel powerless about"

After the sorting, everyone does inner work | process? Why? Which values are behind the role? What are your own values?

2. Make a movement that represents the role you were most against. Forget about the role and the content, just make the movement. What feels good about making the movement?

3. What is the quality of the movement? What is the power of the movement? Does this energy help you feel more strenght? Even if you normally think that there is less power in this role, what is powerful in it? It could be the power of letting something go, or the power of relaxing.
Is there something in this energy you need in your daily life? How?
Look at your note from before the group process—has something changed in relation to your view on the theme and your power in regard to this? |

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		We do the group process After the group process, everybody does inner work again related to the first inner work.	
11.45-12		Break	
12-1 pm	Reflecting on one's own approach in working with other people's empowerment Seeing the strength in what seems weak	**Working with other's empowerment—(starting here and continuing after lunch)** When working with other's empowerment we're in a position where we help others—but we help them helping themselves, finding their own strength. We are at the same time the ones' who are strong, and at the same time our job is to help them become stronger. How do we avoid creating a polarity between us and the ones who are helped? When working with other people's empowerment is important to know the places where we feel powerless and vulnerable ourselves. This makes us able to relate better to their situation. It is also important to know our own rank and use it in a good way, and know how you got out of it. The fluidity is important. We will now work with situations where it can feel challenging to work with other people's empowerment—where we can feel stuck. There is not just a power in what looks like power, there is also a power in the one who looks powerless, there is a power in everything. There is a power in the person that you find in need for support also. What disturbs us can be something we need—otherwise we wouldn't be disturbed by it. In this way, Processwork can be seen as a model for development and change. Sharing my own experience: From a nursing home where I would like the employees to develop their own projects, but they were reluctant. The power of refusing was quite strong.	Exercise in pairs: 1. Choose a situation where you were working with empowering other people—or helping them help themselves—where you felt stuck, where you felt that your good intentions weren't received. 2. Explain the situation to your partner. Explain how the person acted and how you acted. 3. Imagine that you are the person that you were trying to help. Feel how it is to be him/her, how he/she stands and walks. Forget about the feelings you had in the situations and towards this person, just feel what it is like to be that person. 3. Make a movement that represents the person. Forget about the person and go into that movement. What feels good about making the movement? What is the quality of the movement? How can you use this quality in your life? Find a way to anchor the movement. 4. Stay with the movement and its energy. Now, imagine that your're facing the person you were trying to help. Your partner takes the roles as the person. From the place where you are now, speak to the person. If it gets hard, go back and make the

		Working with someone in the middle Working in pairs.	movement again and feel its energy. Notice what changes in your way of speaking to the person. 5. Does the exercise give you any new insights about your own values and your approach in working with other people's empowerment?
1 pm-2 pm		Lunch break	
2 pm-2.45 pm		**Working with other's empowerment (continued)**	
2.45 pm-4.30 pm with a break in between		**Empowerment through self-acceptance** Besides becoming aware of and getting to know our powerfull sides, it is also powerfull and can give inner strength to accept the parts of ourselves which we don't like. It's important to learn to love all parts of ourselves, seeing that all parts have something valuable to offer us. If there is a part of ourselves that we would like to hide, we don't feel as strong. If we can stand for the ones' we are, including our weaknesses, we get strong. Without this aspect, empowerment gets onesided. We will now work on a part of yourself that you don't like. Myself: The part which I don't like is the part which makes mistakes, the part which is not perfect. Difficult to accept, because for instance while doing a workshop like this one, I have trouble accepting if I make a mistake, if I'm not able to present to you the exercises well, guide you well—because I want you to get something out of it and show that I know how to do it. It is painful because I feel I beat up myself when I do a "mistake" and it sometimes makes me not react about my mistakes, because it is painful to realize that I make them. The exercise is about imagining a person who would like this part of oneself. The person I imagine here is Kate, one of my teachers, who is a powerfull person also in her ability to embrace others' and her own difficulties and see	Exercise in pairs: 1. Is there a part of yourself that you don't like? It can be a part of your character, a certain behavior, a difficulty … Explain more about this part to your partner. Why don't you like it? What is painful about it? What in you is against it? What is the argument against it? (i.e.,"You shouldn't … because …"). Be specific about what the resistance to this side is. Your partner should take notes about this. 2. Imagine a person that you think would like this side of you. It can be a real or imagined person. 3. Try now and become that person. Feel how it would be to be that person. Move like that person. Be that person. Now you are that person. Look through your new eyes with your new heart to the one who doesn't like a part of himself/herself. What would you say to him/her? Which advice

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		the power in the whole person. I imagine that she would embrace this part of me and be curious about it.

I imagine that I am her and look back on myself. I imagine she would tell me to be myself. From that point of view, I can even accept the self-critical part—it is okay that it is here too.

Doing the exercise with someone in the middle.

Exercise in pairs.

Reflections together. | would you give him/her?

4. Your partner now goes back to the notes s/he took in the beginning about the part you didn't like in yourself ("You shouldn't … because…"), and reads it out loud. From your new place, with your new heart and your new eyes, what is your reply to this voice? If it gets difficult, go back to the feeling of being this other person and stay there for a while until you find the feeling and let the partner repeat.

5. How do you now look upon the part of yourself which you didn't like before? |
| 4.30-5 pm | | **Evaluation**
Answering evaluation sheets
Oral feedback: What did you like most about the workshop and what should be done differently another time?

Closure | Evaluation questions (sheet):

What was the most important learning for you during the workshop? Why was it important for you?

Has your view of yourself and your own power changed? If yes, how?

Has your view of the world changed? If yes, how?

Do you feel to a greater extent that you will be able to act on things which are important in your life? If yes, what will you do?

Has your view on empowerment changed or expanded in any way? If yes, how? |