

# Emotional Competence as Core Competence of School Leadership

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## Brief Information on the Author

Prof. Dr. Rolf Arnold: Dipl.-Päd. (MA. Edu.), born in 1952, obtained his PhD at the University of Heidelberg (1983), worked thereafter for five years in an International Adult Education Centre, obtained his postdoctoral qualification at the Distance University of Hagen in 1987 and has been working at the Department of Pedagogics (in the fields of Vocational and Adult Education) at the Technical University of Kaiserslautern since 1990. He is also Scientific Director and Chairman of the Board for the Distance and International Studies Centre (DISC) as well as the Speaker of the Virtual Campus Rhineland-Palatinate (VCRP).

- He held teaching posts at the Universities of Heidelberg, Bern and Klagenfurt.
- In 2002 he rejected an appointment at the University of Tübingen.
- Since 1984 he has undertaken numerous teaching and advisory field trips to developing countries, particularly in Latin America (Topic: Development of Educational Systems).
- He is a member of numerous expert commissions and member of the regional advisory committee for continuing education in the State of Rhineland-Palatinate, chairman of the administrative council of the German Institute of Adult Education (DIE), chairman of the advisory board of the Institute for Further Education and Counsel (IFB) for the State of Rhineland-Palatinate and a member of the BMBF's innovation initiative for continuing education as well.
- Main research areas: Adult Education, Vocational Training and Continuing Education, Teaching and Learning System Development (e.g. Distance Studies), Systemic Pedagogy and Intercultural Vocational Education.



## Learning Objectives



Learning Objectives

The students should

- be able to justify to what extent emotions influence the construction of the subject-matter of social sciences, especially the school and instruction as well as upbringing, and argumentatively trace the scientific theories and methodological approaches that occur as a result,
- be able to describe the effects of mutual projective clutching in relationships as well as the important aspects of emotional competence and justify the necessity for emotional development,
- be able to describe how emotions develop in teaching and leadership situations,
- be able to present some of the fundamental theories and concepts of emotional construction of reality in their basic hypothesis,
- be able to explain the basic concepts of emotional and reactional leadership, the stop and think ties etc and present the systems theory view of emotional competence.





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## Glossary of Terms

### **Emotional Competence**

Emotional competence is referred to the ability to deal with one's own feelings and others so that a successful cooperation is possible. One side of the emotional competence is the self-reflection, the other is empathy, i.e. it has to do with basic skills of understanding oneself and the other person.

### **Emotional lanes**

These are early acquired emotional set ways (pre-established emotions) with regard to dealing with fear, insecurity, relationships, authority, etc. These are "restricted early to a particular lane" and they pre-establish our future behaviour, i.e. that which is possible for us is largely pre-established. We can, however, "get on the track" of these set ways and gradually learn to deal with them differently (e.g. in a new way).

### **Change in learning culture**

A change in learning culture refers to the specific change in the "cherished habits" in teaching-learning processes. It is true that these are often contradicted by the psychology of learning, but they are still alive. A strong habit is based on the notion that the best condition for learning is to learn, a different habit comes from the fact that relationships should be declared in order to be effectively acquired. In contrast to these, new learning cultures are based for example on the idea that people can only learn themselves, which is why they need to practice this, and the educational institutions must switch over to arranging learning opportunities.

### **Feeling and interpretation programs**

People act on the basis of early recorded programs, i.e. in certain situations they feel so, which is how they have learned to feel in such situations, and they interpret these situations within the framework of their worldviews and interpretation habits. For these reasons, it is generally so that our feelings and thoughts have us "instead of us having them.

### **Leadership**

Leadership is known as the art of inspiring other people, mentoring and guiding, such that they are inwardly prepared to contribute to the attainment of the goals of a team or an organisation. Whoever leads is though responsible for the achievement of this goal, but he needs the cooperation of others. Leadership is the art of ensuring such cooperation.

### **Learning school**

Learning school refers to a school that operates according to the systemic principles of a learning organisation. The essential principles of a learning organisation are: the self-reflection of the manager, transparency of objectives and responsibilities, subsidiary leadership, involvement and activation of teachers (other teachers) and learners.

### **Primary constructions**

The primary constructions are the early recorded thought and feeling programs, with which people construct their certainty.

### **Rackets**

Rackets refer to, according Eric Berne, patterns and ever-same response to particular challenges. Rackets are routine responses that habitually set in, in strain situation and have relatively little to do with the respective situation itself and the actors involved in them.

### **Re-constellating**

... refers to the fact that we are usually able to perceive the new things we encounter, only through the pattern of an old experience. We "re-constellate" it, which means we manoeuvre ourselves over and over again into similar constellations.

### **Reflective observation**

Reflective observation is a way of perceiving the world and oneself that always remains conscious of the fact that what presents itself to him, is always also an expression, reflection and result of my particular way of looking at the world. Anyone who observes reflexively, is usually less quarrelsome, because he can recognise that the other person is in the possession of truth, namely his truth.

### **School development**

... is the systematic effort to achieve a goal-oriented further development of a school. School development includes teaching and educational development, organisational development and personnel development.

### **Self-leadership**

Self-leadership is defined as an individual's abilities, to independently plan, execute and be able to judge his learning and actions. What are fundamental are attitude questions, because for self-discipline – which is the basis of any self-leadership – one needs a certain measure of self-reliance, being open to criticism and constructive attitude towards oneself and the world.

**Subsidiary leadership**

Subsidiary leadership is a leadership that very much reflects the fact that people can only lead themselves. For this reason, subsidiary leadership avoids unnecessary guidance and control, it trusts people to be capable of a lot, and it tries to ensure the desired co-operation through goal agreements and participation.

**Viability / viable**

Constructivism defines "viable" as explanations and interpretations of reality that enable an actor to act successfully. It is therefore not about the objectivity of the perception – this is not achievable – but about their viability. This can at least be assessed, because an actor can determine (e.g., from the reactions of his environment), whether his interpretation permits an appropriate behaviour or not.





# 1 The Basis: Pedagogic Leadership as a subsidiary Leadership

In this chapter some leadership theory considerations will be presented as they are discussed in management theories. The image of a professional manager will be outlined, who does not derive his professionalism from a domineering and control mentality, but who is rather capable of action adjusted to the system. To develop such a competency, both theoretical and behavioural and self-reflective learning processes have to take place. The result of such learning processes is a management action that is alert and competent, but not bossy and domineering. Leaders who are capable of such subsidiary leadership are aware of their personal latent dominance claims, but also of their questionable nature. They are capable of guiding the development of learning organisations (see Senge 2006) as professional mentors. The organisation school will often be regarded as a company in this chapter. This – no doubt frequently overused – metaphor is justified in my opinion, since through the external view it makes some of that visible which would normally remain hidden in the blind spots of what we take for granted. A narrow business management view of the school – in which the pedagogic action is reduced to any price valued service – is however not supported.

Management theory

Subsidiary leadership

## Activity 1:

Before you read on – please sit back and just think about the tasks you carry out yourself in a leadership role or as the person responsible in your organisation. Which tasks seem particularly important to you? Which tasks should be given more space in your opinion?



## 1.1 Leadership is Empowerment to Self-leadership

”Leadership” is not a sympathy charged term. Leading (in the sense of authoritative leadership) and especially leader (in the sense of authoritative leaders) are historically contaminated names that immediately evoke memories of the dark phases of a human-despising culture of subordination. Who then wants to burden his professional self acclamation with such associations? Although today one still speaks of ”managers” and sometimes also of ”human resource management” and of ”personnel management”, there is hardly anyone who would not have rather preferred other terms and speak of ”management” or ”leadership” when he describes the role of those who are responsible for the coordination process and the overall achievement of objectives in companies and other organisations

If the word ”leadership” (as the opposite of authoritative leadership) is used in Bond of acceptance

this text, it is done with a twofold purpose: firstly, to raise awareness of the "other side" of leadership that has something to do with the fact that leadership and followership can only really be effectively tied together by the bond of acceptance. Secondly, to illustrate the experience that successful long-term leadership has more to do with "fostering" than "taking drastic measures". It is true that sometimes leaders have to implement irksome decisions and it is also a characteristic of "their job" that many decisions are controversial, however even in times of escalating severity, they will not really be successful on a long-term without a fundamentally friendly supporting environment. Many executives know this from painful personal experiences. They have had to come to realise that their more of the same concepts (Watzlawick) do not lead to the desired "breakthrough", but just to "more of the same" which is often enough "nothing". In view of this background, "leadership" proves in this context to be the more realistic, more system secure, but also the more pedagogic enlightening concept in contrast to the authoritative style of leadership. In view of the school Smyth writes on the concept of leadership:

*"The notion is examined, whereby we, presuppose a purely behavioural view of leadership and proceed to a concept, that supports an educative notion of leadership which permits people in the school to perceive what they do as meaningful, and to change things that are to be changed to the extent to which it is possible. The tacitly assumed rationale here is that the decisions of the leadership more likely becomes necessary if one tries to understand the conditions under which teachers have to do their work. This means that one starts with the practical aspects of teaching, develop a language to discuss teaching and help teachers to detect the contradictions, constraints and inconsistencies that arise in their work. This awareness promotes the development of an inner eye that makes it possible to critically examine unverified assumptions and to identify viable ways in this process by means of which changes are possible" (Smyth 1986, p. 3).*

Expert knowledge Wise leaders know that people have their own thoughts and, fortunately, "do their own thing." And good leaders also know that people want to and can engage themselves and contribute to solving problems. Today it is mostly so, that only the employees themselves dispose of all the detailed knowledge and the necessary contextual feature that is needed for an objectively reasonable decision. The "followers" are often the real experts of their problems – an idea that even today many executives still do not want to accept. They question their right to exist, if they are not the ones who ultimately "know" and should "call the shots".

Empowerment to self-leadership Anyone who thinks this way has not yet grasped the fact that the increasing complexity of organisational processes today can only be designed successfully if those directly involved on site are capable of self-leadership and – more importantly – authorised. Both – the "empowerment of employees to self-leadership" on the one hand and their "right to self-leadership" on the other hand – are therefore important aspects of modern-day leadership cultures.

Today, fewer and fewer companies can afford the luxury of permitting their employees to only do "what is specified in their job description". Rather, they rely on the fact that they can do more than they are officially "allowed to", and often it is the employees on the spot, who "do the right thing with a wink, even though this is not always 100 percent in accordance with the stipulations "coming from the top". Is it really possible – as one can sometimes read – that many employees can only effectively contribute 20-30% of their actual competence in their jobs and can the company do without such an unbelievable huge know-how potential? Can the school also continue to function as before?

### Activity 2:

What relationships are apparent between the self-leadership and constructivism?



Fischer and Schratz also argue for a new understanding of leadership in schools and educational organisations, which is characterised by a more holistic thinking and action. They see "self-organisation" as the "driving force":

*"If we get to the core of the difference between traditional school reform and self-organisation, we find that school reform is imposed from above and always oriented towards a predetermined goal. If this is achieved, the reform is then terminated, and peace returns again in the school. Self-organisation is a process of self-renewal and can be understood as a continuous development in which the initiative emanates from the individual school and the driving forces and objectives are also in their autonomous responsibility" (Fischer / Schratz 1993, p. 108).*

For this reason, it is now assumed that a truly sustainable school development can only succeed if the "affected parties" are involved and if one succeeds in leading them to self-leadership, that is, to coach them in their own problem-solving processes. "And what will become of the leaders, if everyone leads himself?" – one might ask. A general answer to this question cannot be given, since behind this shift to a culture of self-leadership, a largely changed requirements profile, especially for the group of "leaders" and those responsible for co-ordination and goal achievement, become apparent.

Stakeholder participation

"Modern leadership" is – this could be a way of paraphrasing this new requirement profile paradoxically – "an empowerment to self-leadership." For the individual leadership claims of executives, this means that they only lead where self-leadership is not successful or has not yet succeeded. This subsidiary leadership follows the principle of subsidiarity, only to act in the areas, where the inherent strength of the teams is not sufficient. However, subsidiary leadership is not to be confused with non-leadership. Rather it is the systemic more intelligent form of leadership, knowing that goal achievement is possible by just using what already exists and almost only in accordance with these forces. Subsidiary leadership also makes high demands on the sensitivity and self-control of managers. These have to really let themselves in for a redefinition of their role and must free themselves a bit from the ideas of "having under control",

Empowerment to self-leadership

”being above such” and ”doing”. In contrast to this, soft skills are in demand. Managers must develop social, communicative, and ultimately, even teaching skills. They bear a part responsibility for the learning and development of their teams. For this purpose they must be open to dialogue and be interactive. The success of their actions actually, ultimately depends on whether and to what extent they are able to advise individuals and groups in planning their development, accompanying processes of change and applying a continuous sensitivity to the internal dynamics of organisational change.

Hence in organisations of learning, modern leadership assumes the task of being responsible for the moderation of self-organisation. Basis for a sensitive and process and development-enhancing leadership in this sense is first and foremost a farewell from the illusion of the doability and all-embracing competence.

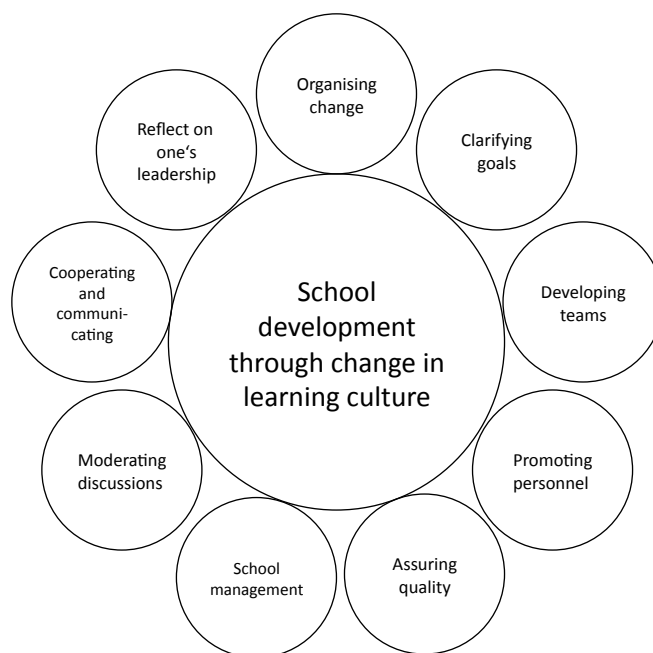
Mnemonic sentence



### Activity 3:

Find by brainstorming, ideas that you can associate with leading (in the sense of authoritative leadership) on one hand and with leadership (subsidiary leadership) on the other. Is your understanding of the terms here different?

To effectively link the necessary change in learning culture with the team and organisational development of the learning school, an educational leadership is necessary which combines the central education management skills with ”self-inclusive reflection” abilities (Varela and Others, 1992) and which is capable of running a quality-oriented school development. To this end, a headteacher or principal must be able to meet the requirements of a complex profile that integrates the following functions (cf. Figure 1.1):



**Figure 1.1:** Requirement profile of school development through change in learning culture

To "advance" school development by change in learning culture (see also Dalin / Rolff 1993) in a goal-oriented manner, and to "accompany" it, it is of crucial importance today to resort to the international approaches to quality management; school development and quality assurance are often used interchangeably nowadays, at least the quality issue proves to be the school policy issue. Quality

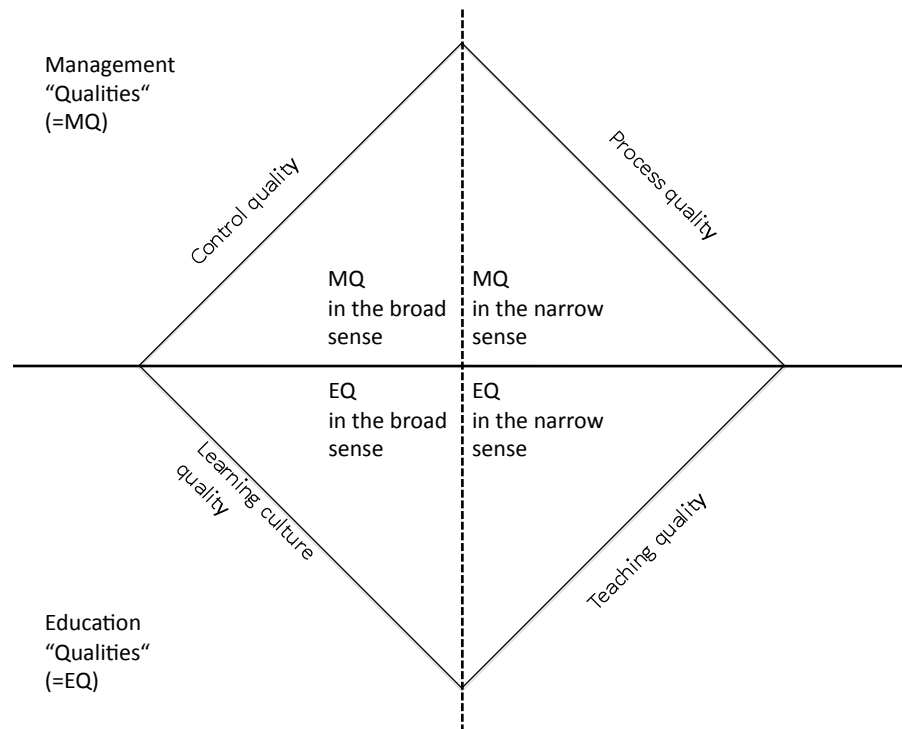
Helpful is the use of the international quality approaches, because this debate has made at least four things clear: What is quality management?

1. Quality management includes a transparency of the actual state in terms of quality ("One has to know where one stands" and "One must be able to classify oneself in comparison with the best practices").
2. "Quality" is more than the satisfaction of the users or customers of the "product", but also more than the "quality of learning success", it also includes the commercial success (cost-benefit comparison) or the transfer or sustainability success ("What is really effectively achieved on a long term"), the latter is however the really important quality aspect, although in the current debate on education it particularly mostly remains blended out.
3. Quality requires a clear definition of one's own claims and criteria of success ("Quality model"), as well as a specific clarification of the processes and interfaces that are characteristic for the service, one provides. These insights did not only result from the ISO guidelines (International Standard Organisation).
4. It makes little sense to follow the rear-view mirror perspective (question: "Were we successful?"), A lot of groundbreaking in terms of total quality management is rather the precautionary perspective (question: "How can we foresightedly avoid quality defects?").

A systemic quality assurance in schools, which is both management-oriented as well as educationally adequate, can learn a lot from the international approaches and models for quality assurance. However, the approaches derived from these "elements of an adequate educational quality in schools" must, in my opinion, be newly combined and supplemented or specified. In the process, control and process quality of schools have to be equally placed under focus like was done with learning culture and teaching quality. Pedagogic quality is "square" in this sense, as the chart below (see Figure 1.2) illustrates:

The quality-oriented leadership of a learning school has to start at these four dimensions of quality control and process quality as well as learning culture quality and teaching quality. Here are four key questions that are of importance:

1. Has a quality system been established? (= Quality of management in the broad sense)
2. Does a strategic school development take place? (= Management in the narrower sense)



**Figure 1.2:** *Pedagogic quality dice (Arnold/Faber 2000, p. 107)*

3. Does a cooperation that is open to feedback and forgiving of mistakes prevail? (= Quality of education in the broad sense)
4. Is the teaching "good"? (= Quality of education in the narrower sense)

**Transformable school** The school of the future must present itself as a flexible operating and quality conscious institution that recognises the technical and social innovations important for students and enables them to prepare for this. This implies the need for schools to adapt to the changes taking place. To meet the new requirements, the conditions for a real school development must be created in schools. To achieve this, schools need assistance and support to effectively use the pressure for change from the external environment as well as from the schools themselves.

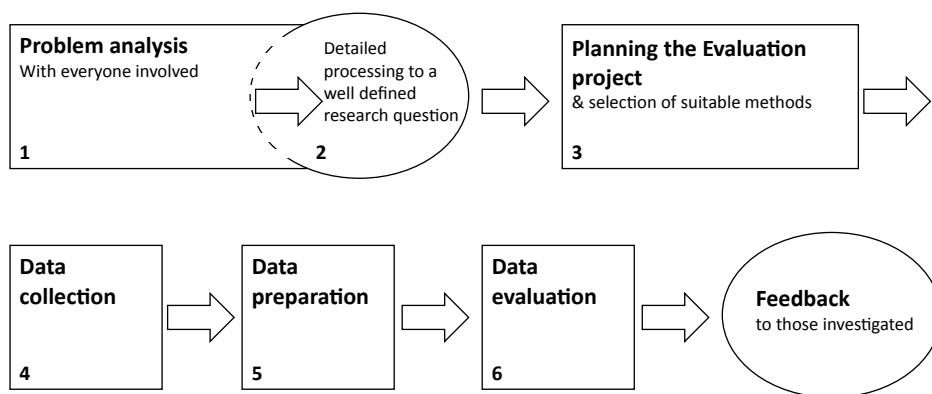
An essential aid in this context are executives that can lead as managers and make the change.

**Evaluation** Only by striving for continuous quality assurance can schools become learning organisations. Quality development is in fact a continuous improvement process, the development steps of which are necessarily connected to a learning process for all parties involved. The basis of this learning process is the willingness to learn to perceive one's own – school – work as objectively as possible "from the outside". Also in order to carry out a school quality management, data in terms of inventory and as a control dependencies are required. The collection of data through regular evaluation is therefore fundamental for this school development process. The evaluation takes over several functions:

- Controlling and accountability (towards the public, and others),

- Basis for controlling and monitoring of the school development process,
- Self-reflection and location specification ("How 'good' are we?"),
- Means of participation ("Everyone gets a chance to speak"),
- Learning from other schools and partners,
- Protection from one's own miscalculations.

Evaluation cannot be "imposed" from above, if one wants to achieve real acceptance and participation, and thus effectiveness of the results (in the sense of impulses to rethink, as a basis for control decisions, etc.). To ensure this and to receive honest statements and assessments in the evaluation itself, the meaning and usefulness of the evaluation have to be clear and understandable to all parties involved. For this purpose, establishing ties to an existing problem that is recognised as such by the stakeholders themselves, is a first and well-proven step in the three-step evaluation process in accordance with the "evaluation roadmap" (cf. Figure 1.3):



**Figure 1.3:** "Evaluation roadmap" (cf. Meyer 1997, p. 223)

The implementation modalities of concrete evaluation projects will still be dealt with elsewhere. Here it should only be pointed out,

- that evaluation requires a systematic and acceptance assuring approach, which must be professionally guided and supervised,
- that a crucial and effective evaluation is dependent on certain factors and requires a combination of internal self-evaluation measures and external evaluations
- that school principals are also "key motivators and pointsman" in evaluation projects, whose role is composed of a "combination of competence and diplomacy, creativity and perseverance, demanding and supporting, commitment and tolerance."

The necessary transformation of learning cultures requires – as we have seen – a new self-image, and a more pronounced orientation towards quality of school

teachers and management staff. To promote this self-image and to convey the necessary organisational skills, those involved must do away with cherished and "familiar" ideas. What is needed is a holistic understanding of school development, which overcomes the traditional pedagogical narrowing of the professional gaze. School development is in fact related to the system context of organisational, teaching and staff development. The school must change as a whole. This process must also be borne by all those involved in the schools. Only a working together of students, parents, teachers, school administration and the school board enables a positive development of the school. In the context of school development, principals play an important and new role. They are no longer just managers and administrators of their school, but must also fulfil other tasks, which differ greatly from the traditional ones.

Mnemonic sentence To organise school development professionally by learning culture change, management staff must be capable of pedagogic leadership which comprises among others the following functions: clarifying goals, developing teams, supporting staff, managing school, moderating discussions, cooperating and communicating, reflecting on one's own leadership and assuring quality. Pedagogic quality assurance requires a separate concept, in this case, that takes the management and education qualities into account in a differentiated manner.

## 1.2 Self-reflection, Role Distance and Functional Change of Managers

Leadership perspective Doability illusions, responsibility and organising claims are also not uncommon expressions of negative images of people ("People want to be led") or latent narcissistic needs. Let's face it: We all are controlled by our internal pictures of successful action and our needs for recognition. And these images are historically marked, learned from role models and it is often frightening, how this internalised view of the world has become a second skin. This "power of inner images" is also impressively confirmed by the results of recent brain research (see Le Doux 2002). We can only get "out of our skin" with difficulty, i.e. the pictures we make of the reality and the possible or impossible changes of these which we bear in us, determine our actions and nail us down. Innovation is hardly possible without an opening of such set ways.

Listening attitude Subsidiary leadership needs to break away from such traditional ideas and claims of one's own leadership. To achieve this, leaders need to slip out to an extent from their (second) skin. They must realise that their "belief" in the doability of co-operation and in the necessary centrality of their own roles were nothing but "footbridges in rough terrain", but while constructing their footbridge, they did not see the paths and shortcuts that the site itself had in readiness for them, and which the natives were already using for years. Leading can thus hinder self-leadership or attempt to replace it, but it is still dependent on recognising the self-leadership potentials, promoting and using them. Pestalozzi already reflected on such counter-productive effects of well-intentioned leadership and presented it self-critically in the quotation mentioned below from the writing:



"How Gertrude teaches her children". "I found weakness nowhere else, but (...) in myself, as far as my wanting to lead where there was no need to lead, was concerned" (quoted Litt 1965, p. 26).

With these considerations, essential aspects of a concept of subsidiary leadership are already outlined. Their "problem" is in fact not so much the impatient question of what managers should do instead – we will come back soon to this – but rather the question of how to deal with their own doability and dominance claims. The process requires, as we learnt from Carl Rogers, a "respect for the complex processes of life" and a "listening attitude". In addition, a confidence in the constructive forces of the living is also necessary. While for most of us "chaos" represents a vision of horror that we associate with words such as disorder, confusion or complete chaos, we know from chaos research, that this is not so. Rather, there is such a thing as constructive forces of the living, that is why waiting and carefully sensing the inherent forces of systems as well as learning from the system are often more important prerequisites for successful action than setting goal, intervention and control.

Leadership and expertise

The concept of "empowerment to self-leadership" however furthermore shakes the professional self-image of many managers, whether in business or in school. Namely, it assumes that although managers need to have some understanding of the particular "issue" in question (e.g. production of sewing machines, however they can assert this knowledge and any knowledge advantages in this technical issue to a lesser extent when dealing with their counterparts and their superiors. However, they are then successful if they manage to develop the potential of their team such that they themselves almost become superior to him in terms of expertise. This constellation is inevitable in the knowledge dynamic sectors of the economy. Managers who still rely here on their substantive superiority and take them as a model, are "left behind" in the truest sense of the word. As a manager one is today, namely, only then successful if one continuously and permanently succeeds in optimally combining the content skills and problem-solving potentials of employees. Managers are therefore responsible for developing the competences of the department or the team. For this purpose, it is necessary on the one hand to recognise the potential in the skills of one's own team, on the other hand, it is necessary that leadership allows the development of this skill potential. Today, leadership is therefore no longer primarily management of facts, but human resources development.

Both guidelines on facilitation orientation and the potential orientation are characteristic for an empowerment to self-leadership.
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Mnemonic sentence

What does *facilitation (enabling) orientation* mean in detail? The concept of facilitation orientation summarises, first, that cooperative success cannot be "made" or "generated" through leadership. Quality and professionalism of managers are rather directly measured today based on whether and to what extent they have freed themselves from the generative illusion of the engineer and machinery image of leadership. The generative concept of leadership is based on simple input-output considerations, which first begin with the basic hypothesis that the output of a social system, i.e. of a team or working group,

Generative vs. facilitation

is dependent on the input that the executive makes. Therefore, the input can be increased or varied if the social system does not produce the desired effects. What the manager has to take note of in detail and what motivation and incentive strategy he has to employ are already available today in entire libraries with a corresponding literature guide. Although many of these concepts operate with systems-concepts, they however all have a generative orientation: Leadership is presented primarily as the activity of individual executives, and it is done more or less openly as if there were ultimately – if it is just ”done” cleverly enough – also ways of bringing a social system to do what one wants. It is sometimes even promised that one could make it possible for a social system to ”want” to do what it ”should”.

**Discover motivation** The facilitation oriented concept of leadership is quite different. It does not start with the question of how a social system is to be controlled, but rather tries to understand how a social system controls itself. It therefore does not even attempt to develop a sophisticated strategy for motivating employees, but rather assumes that it first has to deal with ”discovering” the motivation of these people. Similarly, the functions to be fulfilled by a manager are defined differently. It is not about setting goals, but about the clarification of objectives. This wording makes clear that though there are constraints, the goals that a company or an organisation has to achieve cannot be ultimately determined from above, without the employees having the opportunity to participating in determining, specifying these goals and correcting the target planning and also linking their own targets with this objective plan. Only if the manager succeeds in ”organising” this goal clarification in this sense of participatory dialogue, will it be possible to create a structure in which the inherent forces of the system are placed at the service of achieving goals. If everything comes from outside and people are referred to only as plan and instruction receivers, one should not be surprised if with time, they restrict themselves to the execution of the basic necessities.

**Credibility** The task of the manager is mainly to put across imposed ”constraint targets” (in the economy such as certain sales increase quotas, in the school such as curriculum specifications) in such a way that it is compatible with the expectations and experiences of the employees. Thus it cannot be the case – as often happens – that the staff should only be ”won over” or ”persuaded”, rather it is more important that a number of feedback chains are used to achieve a comparison between one’s own viewpoints and organisational viewpoints, this is however easier said than done. For such a process to actually succeed, it is necessary that anxieties, objective arguments and suggestions that employees have, are polled before the actual target specification and included in the process of target specification on the management level. Decisions will therefore start with a search-and-collection phase. What will be collected, are views, opinions and suggestions. These bottom-up activities essentially and generally precede the development of the first top-down decision proposal. If one does not heed this fundamental pre-eminence of the collection of opinions, and take the experiences and reflections of the employees as a starting point, there is a risk that the employee orientation will end up in a burdensome, but ultimately ineffective superficial practice whose alibi is quickly seen through. Facilitation orientation,

however, requires a level of credibility of the leadership action. And to this credibility also belongs a lived conviction of the fact that even those who are active "on site" can make important suggestions and participate in the decision on the feasibility or non-feasibility of planned activities and projects. Finally, the entire cooperation climate must be changed into a facilitation culture. The decision processes are more participation-oriented. Decisions to be taken, and objectives are seen from the outset, where possible, as a task to be developed in a cooperative manner open to dialogue. And based on the extent to which such bottom-up decision-making structures are established in the obvious lived cooperation culture of a company, the division of labour also changes between leaders and followers as well as the responsibility profile of managers.

Executives who lead in a subtle manner, visibly and credibly exercise a cooperation, in which the employees can contribute as much as possible and as fully as possible and decide. They know that in principle all decisions to be taken must be first thrown open in a preliminary form of "discussion".

Mnemonic sentence

#### Activity 4:

- a) Identify key constraints that must be considered when developing your organisation.
- b) Set objectives for your organisation that should be strove for, from your personal point of view.
- c) Now think of objectives that are relevant for the management of your organisation.
- d) Where do the results of b) and c) overlap, where do they differ? Can some of the differences be resolved by clarifying the goals? What goals are feasible under the constraints in a)?



### 1.3 Trust: The Emotional glue of social interaction

It is more useful in most cases, to be able to present the entire problem as transparently as possible and with the pros and cons, as well as to openly "simulate" various scenarios than to make sophisticated decision-proposals. subsidiary leadership is substantially more of moderation than of decision making. Executives are less eager to lead processes to the goal, but rather make sure that things develop on target. They do not *generate* the co-operative success, but *facilitate* it. At the same time subsidiary leadership creates a culture of trust and self-efficacy, which – once it has been arduously developed through a credible leadership action – becomes an invaluable asset and makes the creativity of all stakeholders accessible in the organisational development process. While in the widespread distrust of any culture everyone is anxious to bring in just as much into the cooperation as is expected from him, and

Leading through moderation

even the managers tend to take great care to ensure that no one interferes illegitimately and "to explain their jobs to them" – such an often used phrase – in trust cultures, this is different. Here the members of staff know from personal experience that it is about them and their work. And they also know that they are the ones who can jointly reflect on and determine, the objectives of the organisation, because they have experienced this. For this reason, it is only in a culture of trust that the staff are really willing to make their creative potential available and to participate in resolving problems. And it is always striking anew how rich and stimulating an appropriately done participatory decision-making process is, compared to the error-prone "lonely decisions." Such a culture of trust is a precious treasure that can, however, be destroyed very quickly again if other organisations fall back into the old culture of top-down dominance.

- Vitalization of the contract    However, it is not only the task of subsidiary leadership to organise, objectives and decision-making processes as participatory as possible, rather executives need to revitalize the agreed targets. This means that they not only have to continuously provide clarity of purpose but also have to ensure that this remains alive in the minds – and some also feel: in the hearts – of the employees. Although this should not be about making an austere and stressful or even oppressive everyday working life kitschy, but it should promote identification and be motivating if one's work is shifted into a larger context or brought to awareness with a higher justification. Let us recall in this connection, Antoine de Saint-Exupery, who once said in a rough summary that for the construction of a ship, it was necessary to convey the longing for the expanse of the sea to the builders. This is also similar with subsidiary leadership. According to this concept, the managers namely execute less through direct target specification, because this plane passes over more and more into the self-leadership of the employees themselves, but act more through the animation of the shared mission and the enthusiasm for its value. In this sense, managers fulfil a visionary task.
- Feedback culture    Executives who lead in a subsidiary (supporting) manner, must however be careful to establish a feedback culture. In order to guarantee compliance with operational standards of quality in general in the face of increasingly complex processes, it is now often necessary to develop the quality awareness of all stakeholders accordingly. Every single person – according to the essence of total quality management concepts – is responsible for the maintenance of quality at his site of responsibility. The prerequisite for this to succeed is a comprehensive feedback culture. If everyone feels responsible for each of "their" quality, then feedback on deviations from the standard, will also be sent back to them. As in a cybernetic cycle, the individual can control his quality management only if it receives such feedback constantly. Feedback retains in such a context, the character of something normal and every day, they are undramatised. And the more feedback that become the norm in this way, the less agitatedly they will be seen. Hence the culture of trust is particularly characterised by the fact that more "comes on the table" about which one can then speak with fairness and less anxiety. For, feedback and culture of trust are ultimately characterised by the certainty that one – despite all the zero-defect strategy – cannot but make mistakes. Whoever wants the employees of his company to
- Total quality management

participate responsibly in the development and quality assurance work and, not only "function" in narrowly defined job descriptions, must ultimately issue the slogan "mistakes are allowed".

It is the task of managers, to promote such feedback culture by the fact that they not only give feedback, but receive them as well. Only someone who is willing to continuously "view himself from the outside" as a manager can ultimately credibly advocate for feedback and quality orientation to develop into essential features of cooperation.

Culture of trust

In view of the feedback functions of principals, Guy Kempfert and Hans Günter Rolff wrote:

Feedback tasks of principals

*"One cannot simply assume that in every school the announcement of feedback rules is sufficient to lead necessary discussions. That is why appropriate further training is needed for both the school administration and the teaching staff. Thus, the school principal can meet with a psychologist (several times) to undergo training, while for interested colleagues and all class teachers, there can be regular in-house further training in communication training at the school. This is not only helpful for the feedback discussions, but also promotes the general culture of communication amongst the teaching staff. This can, however, not be learned in a one-day seminar. Especially in this issue, one can see how important repeated events on this topic are, so that the techniques can be learnt on the one hand, and the entire topic accepted at the schools on the other hand. Thus there will no longer be isolated, 'psycho' colleagues that are noticeable by seemingly esoteric forms of conversation! Through this, both the communication skills and the understanding for their necessity in schools will grow over the years. After all, a good communication culture, which includes a culture of debate, is a prerequisite for a systematic school development, in which as many stakeholders as possible participate. For, a greater co-operation of teachers presupposes a higher level of communication than required by the previously usual 'normal' school development" (Kempfert / Rolff 1999, p. 106).*

As a side note: The concept of subsidiary leadership is obviously based on an optimistic conception of man which assumes that people principally prefer to live a self-directed life rather than "function" in predetermined paths. Does this picture of man not represent an idealisation? This question is difficult to answer because we do not deal with employees as a "tabula rasa". They come from schools and other learning processes, and have learnt useful and useless things alike at these places. Useless is certainly much of what one learns in the externally-controlled student role. But even in experienced subordinate relationships (e.g. during training, at work) far too many people learn that what matters is themselves, and not their ideas and imagination or only marginally. This means that in the academic and occupational learning cultures, that which is increasingly needed today in the workplace is still too largely forgotten or

Optimistic conception of man

”left un-nurtured”, namely the ability to self-direction and the awareness of self-efficacy ( ”It depends on me!”, ”I can contribute something”, ”It is also about my questions!”).



#### Activity 5:

What role does a culture of trust play when working on a school program?

”Little bosses” Another manifestation of the prevailing socialisation in subordinate structures is the ”phenomenon of little bosses.” Because of the experienced role models, staff can sometimes not deal with the self-directing and self-leadership leeway which the culture of subsidiary leadership gives them, and so they make use of it themselves to play the role of a superior manager. This may well lead to serious conflicts, which is especially the case when a staff who is otherwise extremely capable is involved. Finding the right response in this case is not quite easy. The more likely response which is that the executive now falls back into the old patterns, to now show, ”who the boss is” – a phrase sometimes used – is surely the wrong way to build a culture of trust and self-leadership. This can only be resolved in a one-to-one conversation and the open expression of the difficulties, which one has with the behaviour of the other person. Such a clarifying and explanatory conversation should not be done with labels and accusations, rather efforts should be made to portray one’s view of the issue as one’s own view, which – if done in a rational and understanding-promoting manner – could often awaken surprise and apprehension in the other party. The fact that in such a conversation more of I-messages (”I personally feel . . .”) than accusing you messages (”You probably don’t know . . .”) should be used, is in the meantime generally propagated in many leadership lessons.



#### Activity 6:

What characteristics of a ”structural subordination” do you find in your organisation?

## 1.4 Nurturing Stance: Paying Attention to the Potential of Others

Potential analysis What does *potential orientation* mean in detail? In the past various sources have indicated that the skills and qualifications of employees represent potentials for the development of the company. They are, to some extent, the conditions of technical change, i.e., for what can be technically recognised as possible in general and designed. Hence a systematic potential analysis must aim at recognising the existing development potential in the workforce and encouraging it. This initiative role needs to be increasingly adopted by the managers themselves today.

responsibility of managers to use and nurture the potential of their teams. In the modern human resources, the responsibility for human resources development has in fact been increasingly relegated to the departments. While previously a central department was responsible for personnel work in the company and another for the further training of employees, in recent years both functions have been increasingly merged with one another. Today, managers are responsible for both, both for the development of its staff and for their continuous further training. With this on-site responsibility for staff development, the companies are trying to make the skills development activities more practically oriented, one can nevertheless assume that departments themselves know in details which measures that are of use to their employees and which ones are not. While previously in the market economy, participant from the departments were sent to participate in workshops and seminars, none of whom, in retrospect, could rightly say what they gained from such events, today a different approach is adopted. The subsidiary leadership makes it possible to determine, at the team level, the problems that need to be resolved on a short, medium and long term and the skills that are of strategic importance for this purpose. In addition, such a dialogical training needs assessment gives the individuals the opportunity as well to communicate the training he or she desires.

By making the issue of skills development and distribution a common topic, it is also ensured – better than in the past – that what has been learnt can later be applied in the workplace. Since all parties involved know why a particular skill development was executed in the team (e.g. by sending an employee to a training), they at least also understand that these employees can and must apply this knowledge afterward also, and that things cannot remain as before. It is therefore more likely that by this dialogical training needs analysis (the discussion of training needs in and with the team) better conditions for transferring or putting what has been learnt into practice is created.

Promote transfer success

In a more systematic examination, one can assume that training needs is not something that is openly obvious, but is rather constructed in dialogue with team members. With subsidiary leadership being committed to such a dialogue on skills development, it is also able to analyse not only currently identifiable skills shortages, but it is also able to discuss future-related, and potential-oriented questions ("Which employee potentials do we want to encourage in the medium term?"). At the same time participants of such skill development dialogues also have the opportunities to reflect on their areas of responsibility in a comprehensive way and to draw appropriate qualification-related conclusions. Though such skills development dialogue is not designed to identify deficiencies in the qualifications of employees, however the manager also pays attention to the need to avoid stagnation and saturation, and everyone – even those who do their job very well – can practice lifelong learning. It may also become necessary in the sense of a long-term effective personnel development, to then entrust people with a new task when they have almost become perfect in the old task and have largely made the task accomplishment a routine. It is the duty of subsidiary leadership to intervene and reflect on new areas of responsibility together with the relevant staff members.

Avoid stagnation

Mnemonic sentence

There are two equally "fatal" hazards for learning organisations: one lies in the risk of not being able to timely provide the necessary skills, the other lies in the saturation of skills.

This saturation of skills occurs if people have become so good in their jobs, that they have ceased to strive for further optimisation and have also largely become blind, or obtuse to the changes taking place in their field (according to the principle: "We have always done it like this"). Subsidiary leadership in a learning organisation must recognise such potential standstill hazards in time and introduce as an early warning system, the necessary irritation, redeployment or retraining. In this respect, a first essential characteristic of learning organisations can be simply seen in the fact that they do not rest on their laurels and do not tolerate any forms of "having learnt enough". In contrast to traditional forms of leadership, subsidiary leadership is by no means satisfied with the fact that "everything runs without a hitch". Just such a situation is rather enough reason for them to think up ways of bringing about irritation, and the targeted transformation of stabilised states. Subsidiary leadership is thus a form of intervention and cooperation that diminishes standstill.

This systemic approach to the tendency to inaction is not easy and can fail. In this context systemists speak of system resistance and with it, they refer to the recent conservative tendency of systems to fend off the new. This conservatism, however, overlooks the aforementioned systemic insight that for the transfer to be successful, a lot has to be done in the application context. It is not therefore primarily a matter of developing the proposal in such a way that it "fits" into a given practice (and largely leaves it as it is), rather it is a matter of developing the receiving contexts (e.g. school, teaching staff) in such a way that they are generally open to the new. To this end, teaching staff need to develop into learning systems ("learning teaching staff", cf. Figure 1.4), and the success of managers in such learning teaching staff is measured by whether and to what extent they are able of developing and cultivating the openness of their application contexts to new ideas, strengthen willingness to change and initiate appropriate processes and accompany them.

The basis for such a systemic capability to develop one's own teaching staff and school reality is a modesty, not to say "humility" bearing in mind the finite nature of one's own designs, concepts and strategies. The other party – whether it is a colleague or student – is also in possession of a truth, his truth, and I can only cooperate with him to create a common reality. For this reason, a successful "transfer" is always a follow-up action, i.e., dependent on the appreciation and integration of the perspectives of those who are to be won over for the new. His success draws their source in this case from two conditions: from the determination of individuals to engage themselves for an innovation and their ability to draw from the experiences, needs and skills of teachers in the process. It is the task of a systemic school administration to cultivate this pedagogical unrest and to become worried in situations where, security, routines, as well as a "yes, but attitude" has become the order of the day.



<b>Open-mindedness check for the learning teaching staff</b>	
1.	What are the core "beliefs" among the teaching staff? (What do we all agree on?)
2.	Of what benefit are these beliefs (in relation to students, teaching, school policies, etc.)?
3.	What "damage" can these beliefs cause?
4.	Are we set in our opinions, or can we allow a "fresh line of thought"?
5.	What are we afraid of, what are our fears?
6.	When do we occupy ourselves with the new? Do we welcome it or do we reject it?
7.	What do we think we know better (than the young trainee teachers, parents and school board)?
8.	When do we personally change ourselves (everyone for himself) or amongst the teaching staff?
9.	What change duties are to be dealt with now?
10.	How do we let ourselves in for our own changes (through the new)?

**Figure 1.4:** Checklist "Learning teaching staff"

Such "alert" and adaptive collegial contexts are described in the innovation and organisation theoretical research as "learning organisations". The most effective promotion of transfer of the new (innovation) is done in such contexts – as already mentioned – by means of a specific preparation of the organisation and its members for change. School development requires a change management for this, i.e. the appropriate control know-how and appropriate techniques to weaken resistance to the system and increase the willingness to change of the parties involved. Such a change management cannot be guarantee alone by principals but rather, a broader anchoring of systemic attitudes and skills is required in which every atom of all human communication, cooperation and design is expressed productively.

#### **Activity 7:**

Perform the open-mindedness check for your teaching staff by giving them the 10 questions to answer for themselves, "supporting" their assessments with experiences, examples and facts.



In the first chapter, we have outlined a new understanding of leadership. Executives who want to lead in a subsidiary manner, need new and different skills, from those of managers who lead according to past understanding. It is particularly an emotional competence that needs to be developed. Executives learn to assume a reflective observer position. For, whoever knows the preferred forms of his worldview, is though not immune to repeatedly falling back to them, but he can deal more flexibly with them. This ability is ultimately also a prerequisite for dealing with one's own destructive emotions in a constructive manner. This can only happen through self-reflective learning processes. This requires that

we know how our perception works and we are willing to critically question our habitual patterns of behaviour. The aim is to act in a more conscious or mindful manner and lead. In the following chapter the idea of the emotional construction of reality will be introduced and emotional competence explained.

## 2 The Systemics of Emotions

It is not the oppressive circumstances alone, which rob us of our forces and leave us stuck, rather it is our "vision" of things as the philosopher Eptiket was already used to saying. In practice this means that we should not only reflect on the outer constellations, which make up our lives, but rather also to "fathom" and explain the inner images with which we have acquired them, for ourselves and for others. These inner images are emotional in origin. They are composed of the spontaneous moods, impressions and feelings that are always already within us. These are activated in certain situations and circumstances that are similar to what we have once experienced. The system and cognitive theories speak in this context of emergence – what an awkward word – that is, of a spontaneous process of order formation. A particular constellation triggers one of the early learned and engaged feeling and interpretation programs, and an order is created for us that we – if we observe ourselves closely – already "know".

Emergence

This cognition theoretic view can open up a new access for us to the understanding of our own situations. It is in fact just the insights into the workings of our cognitive-emotional perception, which makes us understand the "banality of ego states" anew and differently. And by understanding, how we understand, i.e. in what ways we routinely lay out our world, a different and more effective way of dealing with what oppresses us then becomes opened to us. Accordingly, the description of our distress is initially an expression of feelings and attempts to interpret that which takes place within us in certain situations, and they are also the "lenses" through which we view life situations and see just what we are able to see through these glasses.

### 2.1 Aren't we "lensing" – always!

The core of a systemic-constructionist view of the world is addressed directly to the thinking, feeling and acting of human beings. By focusing on the patterns and ways of expression of our construction of reality(s), it also opens – unnoticed at first – prospects for a different way of dealing with the mechanisms with which we create our reality. In the process, what is fundamental is the question of the interaction of thoughts and emotions in the materialisation of our interpretation of certain situations and the reactions to which we internally feel driven. When we have understood how our pictures of our counterparts or the interpretation of certain situations develop from our experience, we can increasingly apply a quasi-experimental ease towards that which agitates us. This is the requirement for us to become capable of also accepting other interpretations and feelings. It is also at the same time the condition for us to be able to recognise our habitual ways in the known emotional states and to avoid them.

Systemic-constructionist  
worldview

"Lensing": perceiving  
through spectacles of  
experience

A significant trigger, with the help of which we are able to manoeuvre ourselves into the emotional states of the familiar, are our thoughts. With their help, we think and ponder ourselves into our emotions. The thoughts that we think, are thus both an expression, as well as a trigger of emotions. In them, the joys and sorrows of our past commitments and encounters express themselves, i.e. we cannot help but scan the new we encounter through the spectacles of our experiences and always perceive selectively. It is this personal "lensing" to use a play on words, that must be recognised in its realities creating effects, before one can, in protected areas (e.g. through seminars, workshops or coaching), gradually get down to practising a seeing without spectacles or with other spectacles, whereby it is clear that: Without spectacles we see worse, but with them also. By handling one's spectacles more flexibly, one can deliberately learn to track the mechanisms of one's emotional construction of reality. Similarly, one can also learn to handle the second mechanism of emotional construction of reality (cf. Arnold 2005): the catastrophizing. Harlich H. Stavemann writes about the "catastrophic thinkers," as he calls them (Stavemann 2001 p.74):

*The second mechanism of emotional construction of reality: Catastrophizing "They show us how one predicts the consequences of certain situations in an extremely pessimistic way and harbour catastrophic expectations. The emotional reaction then follows promptly. The mood is lousy. Anxiety and depression hang heavily like lead in the air" (ibid.).*

By catastrophizing, our thought processes gradually drive us into the approved pattern of feeling which is well known to us for a long time now. From them we "may" then again interpret and feel the world through our above-mentioned "approved" spectacles. Often, we seem to be virtually driven by an "addiction" to use these spectacles, and this addiction is what ultimately makes us unhappy and unsuccessful and remain so. We then practically attract the misfortune. Perception means to primarily establish a balance between our own interpretation and emotional patterns, not – as the Western equation of autonomy and subjectivity suggests – the quest to develop a viable production of our identity and our actions. We want to remain as we are, and in no way be, how a suitable organisation of a situation expects us to be. Because of this internal control of our perception, we often misunderstand what we encounter as the new edition of an old impudence, which it is probably not at all: "Now construct beautifully let's see".

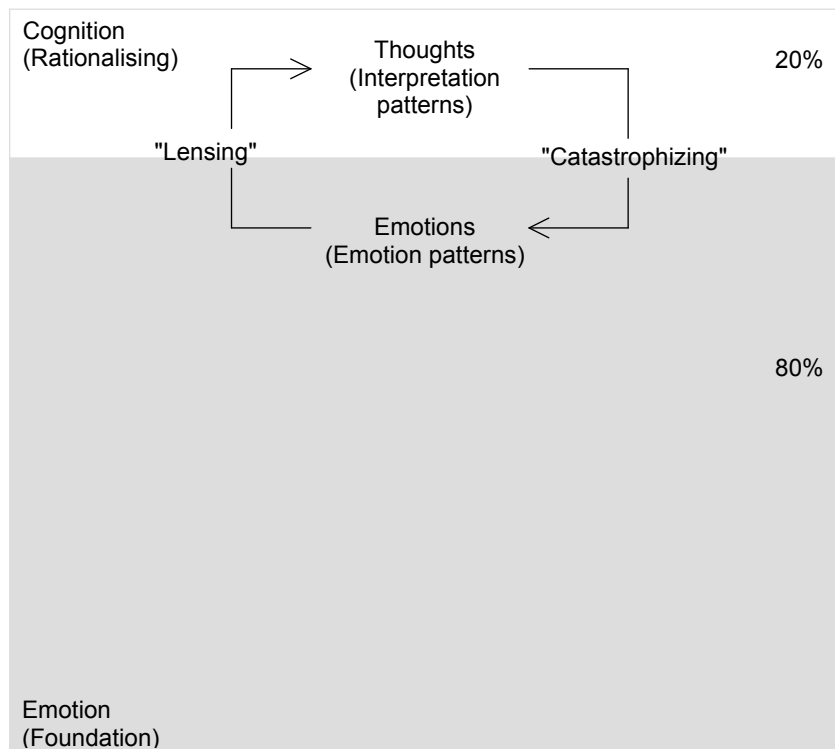
Perception short-circuit

The phrase "suitable organisation of a situation" makes it seem as if there were an observer at any point, who could distinguish between "suitable - unsuitable". This observer does not exist, i.e. we ourselves are the ones who always have to re-make this distinction, we can learn, however, to protect ourselves from us or the snapping of our primary constructive short-circuits. Major instruments are the decelerated observation, but also the "seeking observing" (Arnold 2008a). In this sense, C. O. Scharmer writes:

*"Leaders need to deal with their blind spot and shift the inner place from which they operate. (...) In order to activate the deeper level*

*of knowing, one has to go through a three-step process (...): observe deeply, connect to what wants to emerge, and then act on it instantly” (Scharmer 2008, p. 33f).*

This means that it is we ourselves, who have to repeatedly exert ourselves to ensure the appropriateness of the interpretation and organisation of the situation. We must, so to speak, self-critically face the inevitability of primary constructive meddling in our experience of certainty and learn to distrust our perceptions. Different from what the proverbial saying tell us, it seems, the first impression of a situation or a person is rather false, that is, inappropriate. And we constantly find ourselves in the danger of acting wrongly towards our counterpart – our partners, the students or employees, since the impression that impress on us – from within ourselves! – has nothing whatsoever to do with the current situation (cf. Figure 2.1).



**Figure 2.1:** *Vicious circle between thought and emotion*

Because of this mechanism of action of our perceptions, there seems to be two stages involved in giving up this emotional construction of reality:

2 stages involved in giving up the emotional construction of reality

- The mental work and
- The emotional work.

In both cases we find ourselves in a reflective observer position towards the impressions, opinions, and emotional states springing at us. We drag, to an extent, a stop & think loop between the interfaces, in which emotion and cognition influence each other and define each other. The thoughts are therefore

Stop & think loop

not free, they give us rather too often merely the illustrative material for the production of catastrophes, which (can) then occur. With their "help", we remove ourselves from the here-and-now of the given situation, as we selectively comment and also perceive it merely in parts. There is the popular saying: "We make mountains out of molehills!" We often give rise to these mountains through our thoughts and then complain about the fact that this "mountain is as destructive as an elephant in a china shop" and lead our lives by the repetition of experiences. We then feel, what one feels in such re-constellated situations, however our common sense does not notice this subtle forms of emotional construction of reality. We consider real, what we have brought (about) through feeling, and we think we feel what is real. Our world thus retains its justification and allows us to remain competent in acting, while stop & think loops remove the resoluteness from our set ways of reacting. We could even think something different, and then our emotional state would be another one.

Mnemonic sentence

Do not trust your intuition, it is usually nothing more than the spontaneous revival of old habitual patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. Fresh thinking, feeling and action is not intuitive, but the result of a reflexive process of weaning oneself of intuitive certainty foundations.

### 2.1.1 Mental work

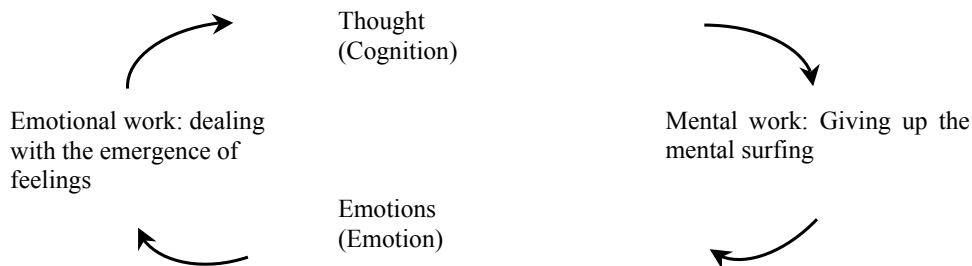
Thoughts can trigger off feelings

Thoughts can trigger off feelings. Even the smallest clues are sufficient to remind us of past – similar – situations, and we then recall the emotional interpretation, which fitted well to the situation at that time, but not to the current one. By doing so, we hardly take the current situation into account, since this is different. But we can make it possible for it – due to our schematic emotional reaction – to feel like it did at that time, and maybe we are indeed "successful" in reawakening that past suffering in this way again. We then feel, as we have always felt, and often it is precisely the feelings that we have tried so hard to avoid, that occur again. The emotional construction of reality seems to have something inevitable about it: If we do nothing, then we have the thoughts that we have, and usually we do not even notice that it is these thoughts and interpretations with which we create our inner reality, which besets us, and drives us to corresponding – rash and repeatedly inappropriate – behaviour in the outside world.

We create our own inner reality for ourselves

We then feel e.g. very clearly, the plausibility of being betrayed, we become distant, because we feel the situation accordingly for us – and sometimes the counterpart feels misunderstood in his real intentions. "One cannot *not* misjudge!" – According to Watzlawick it could be freely ascertained ("one cannot not communicate"). But one can deal differently with what seems to be so and not differently for one, if one is conscious of the fatal mechanism of the emotionally generated self-fulfilling prophecy. We then understand the core of our efforts in wanting to be right. This effort is based on the desire to feel ourselves as the person or the one that we "are". And we are the totality of our emotional experiences, i.e. we are the mentioned emotional body, which also makes its own impressions, but which only with difficulty is capable of even

thinking or acting against its emotional views in isolation. In our emotional body we feel ourselves, when we experience plausibility. It is only with difficulty that new feelings enter in our lives which cannot be reconciled with the core pre-establishments of our lives. The early disappointed or even abandoned person will only learn to really trust with difficulty and whoever grows up without any real bond, will very reluctantly confide in another human being in his adult life. And even if he meets a person who is completely open to him, the inner bondlessness itself will ultimately tend to, for example, keep one's own ambiguity in relationship issues alive even if it is through the constant fabrication of potential alternative options. For, such a person is made up in his emotional core set ways of bondlessness: he cannot bear bonding – or better expressed: commitment – from the depth of his heart when it is offered to him. This example shows that it is one's own emotional core set ways which offers us the inner plausibility criterion by which we organise our lives to the minutest degree – often against one's own desires, pronouncements or even attempts that seem to have no end (cf. Figure 2.2).



**Figure 2.2:** *The self-validating circularity between emotion and cognition*

To feel differently and not repeat old things, places us before the great challenge of bearing *emotional insecurity*. We find ourselves in this insecurity when we learn to distrust our spontaneous tendencies, not to immediately enter into the mental surfing – which is mostly supposed to just streamline the feelings that arise spontaneously for us, or which are simply induced by thoughts – and not to altogether take our assessments as important and not act based on them too. Gradually, an attitude can arise in which the premature and misplaced thinking comes to a standstill. We are aware of it: It could still be quite different – and it is also so when we try to orientate ourselves towards what "really" is, i.e. what the other party actually wants to tell or show us. Emotional change begins in the head, not in the heart. Mental work is an essential expression of emotional competence. By observing how internal monologues, chains of thought, conjecture and hasty conclusions make us fixed in the way we feel and thereby determine our behaviour, we can choose to stop this thought interference or otherwise deliberately trying to think something else. Thus we become freer, and something new can also arise emotionally, that is our-in-the-world feeling changes, and we experience "familiar" situations anew in what they mean or how they can be meant.

Giving up the mental surfing

What is to be done? The starting point for this sliding into our emotional lighting are usually our thoughts. These manifest themselves in words and descriptions, which we ascribe a meaning already lurking in us before the

situation experienced as distressing. Through the constant repetition as well as their thematisation in unending dialogues with people familiar to us or even therapists, we can try to think through the problem trance and do not have to then wait for long for the matching feelings, and we however overlook how banal the workings of the triggering acting voice and mind games actually are. José Saramago writes in his novel "A time without death" (English title: Death at Intervals):

*"(...) Apparently you do not see that the words are just labels that we stick to the things, they are not the things, and you'll never know how the things really are (...) because the names you have given them, are nothing more than the names that you yourself have given them" (Saramago 2007, p. 89).*

Function of emotional  
construction: Uniqueness

These considerations describe the banality of our mental surfing, with which we can work ourselves and others up into emotional states. They are our words with which we focus what we encounter – and "sum them up under a single heading" – and it is our external and often inner dialogues through which we try to an extent to give legitimation to the trusted emotional states in us. However the thoughts articulated in the process are just words, descriptions, sources of meaning, which may be appropriate, but do not have to be so – often they contain overvalued appraisals, which stem from a lurking fear. These familiar ways of feeling, often lead us to well-known, but inappropriate responses. They fulfil only one function: With them we establish our uniqueness. Although this procedure is absurd, it is however abridged. Feelings take the place of a thorough analysis of the situation and then offer us a quick clarification, as we think. In this rapidity of the emotional construction of reality seems to lie the important moment for the survival of the intuitive expression. In situations of danger, it was for the prehistoric people – or even the forerunner animal – a rule for survival to immediately react – otherwise everything else could be fatal. This primacy of immediate intuitive emotional reaction determines even today, our feelings and actions, although the complexity and dynamism of modern living together, leads us basically to more varied and more confusing situations, than that of a stone-age I-or-Thou alternative.

By constructing the world that we encounter in an intuitive-emotional manner, we manufacture for ourselves certainty. However, this certainty is based in reality on a highly unproven hypothesis, namely, the assumption that life always imposes itself on us in the same way. The recurring conflict with various colleagues then seems to us, like an expression of the incompatibility of the circumstances, which are just the way they "are" for us, that is for our inner logic of reality construction. The same goes for close relationships in which we often find ourselves in similar emotional states, even though the partners are different. We put ourselves in the usual conflicts in communication relationships according to our own inner stipulations and we respond according to what is lurking in these feelings, and not according to what can match the intentions of the other person. Thus, we are constantly suspicious of the other party, since we expect that he or she will tell us what we have as a deep fear in us. And the other party always does us this favour, because we always focus on his



behaviour in a selective manner so that we can understand it, and because we can only understand what is ultimately in us. And so we downrightly think and feel what we hope to avoid.

However the danger which we suspect, must not really set in, if we don't do our part. Here, the first variant of an emotional competence sets in: giving up the mental surfing by watching ourselves consciously to observe how we lay out our intellectual explanations and justifications, assume causes, and make attributions. We try to observe our thoughts as what they are: constructs that we create through our own brooding, assessing and catastrophizing. With them we bring ourselves into an inner position towards the event, which is usually associated with more negative and destructive feelings for us. But even the euphoric interpretation often works in such a thought-induced manner. *However, it is possible to break the vicious circle through other thoughts.* To achieve this, what is helpful are internal dialogues with oneself, in which one remembers the familiar interrogation tendencies of one's perceptions and bring oneself, to some extent, to even "get one's mind onto other things". This switching of thoughts requires some practice, but it can gradually lead to an alternative reality perception or the perception of another reality, which I call the cautious thinking (cf. Table 2.1).

Breaking the vicious cycle

<b>Exit from the mental surfing</b>	<b>Mental work: not think or rethink</b>
What are the spontaneous thoughts that befall me?	What remains for me, if I do not think so?
What assessment trends follow them?	Can I observe the situation without evaluation?
When did I have similar thoughts last?	Can I observe without tendency prophecy?
What were the consequences?	Can I consciously think of something positive?
Of what use are these thoughts to me?	Can I observe what changes in the process?

**Table 2.1:** *From mental surfing to mental work*

### Activity 8:

Call to mind a situation which recently engaged your thoughts, for example, a conversation. It should be a situation in which you conducted dialogues with this conversation partners in your thoughts (for example, you were considering what you will say to him if you see him the next time). Answer the questions in the table above for yourself!



*Konrad, a man in his mid-thirties, started working recently in a new company in the insurance sector. This was preceded by a prolonged period of job dissatisfaction and the search for a new job. In the company he was previously working, the difficulties had piled up in recent times and he had the feeling that colleagues were bullying him. What he particularly found painful was the disloyalty of a colleague with whom he had cooperated successfully and with mutual support in the past. Again and again he caught himself how he confronted these*

Example

colleagues in imagined conversations and asked for recognition and also courted gratitude. In this conversation some harsh words were also used which ultimately strengthened the feeling that an impossible injustice was done to him, which speaks for the lack of character of this colleague. Initially, Conrad refused to really face a sober observation of this mental surfing, too strong was the feeling of a justified anger at work in him. He felt he was right when he gave in to his thoughts, and at first he could not understand it when his coach urged him to simply write down these thoughts first and ask himself the questions: What are the spontaneous thoughts that befall me? What assessment trends follow them? When did I have similar thoughts last? What were the consequences? Of what use are these thoughts to me? He found it particularly difficult to carry out a sober reflection of the consequences of his indignation. And also he tried to close himself to the question of their "benefit" at first. "Of what use should his indignation then be to him?" – He asked the coach agitated. But after a while he realised that there was a tendency in his personality, which placed him time and again in the role of a tragic loser. "I have been wronged!" – that was the slogan that helped him to feel a deep sense of plausibility. After all, his whole attitude to life was characterised in some way by this sensation, he knew the feeling only too well, he was this feeling. The benefit which he denied for so long was that he could rediscover himself in the familiar good victim role, thus totally "remaining with himself" – at a great price.

After he was able to gradually accept this insight, he was able to scan the awkward situation more intensively to find out what potential they offered him of slipping into the familiar tragedy. He worked for his "Farewell to the victim role" (Kast 1998) laboriously, by first developing a quasi-experimental attitude towards his thoughts. He managed to improve every day in debunking these thoughts of their justification, or the slightest indignation and was just interested in knowing what came up in him by way of considerations, inner dialogues and catastrophizings when he left himself to his thoughts. Gradually, he stopped leaving himself to them just like that, but wondered: What remains for me, if I do not think so? Can I observe the situation without evaluation? Can I observe without tendency prophecy? Can I consciously think of something positive? Can I observe what changes in the process? Especially the question "Can I think of something positive?" was initially very difficult for Konrad, and he had to admit that he had actually learned to bear positive things only in small doses and was therefore only in the inner balance when there was also something to lament about in his life – a difficult insight that filled him with deep regret for all the missed chances of a successful life.

### 2.1.2 Emotional work

Emotions colourise our impressions. They behave "(...) towards perceptions, plans, actions, and so on, like colours or shapes do towards objects" (Dörner 2001, p. 565). Emotions, however, not only arise through thoughts. Thoughts can give rise to them, and trigger "thought-emotion programs, called DGPs (an abbreviation of the German expression) (Arnold 2008a), but emotions also arise spontaneously as the expression of complex physical processes. Most of them however are external experiences, which can affect us emotionally, or more precisely, which we allow to touch us emotionally. Before we know it, familiar feelings rage ("old acquaintances") within us, which can then lead us to strongly coloured emotional reactions, which in turn surprises the other party and cause his own DGPs to be triggered off. The result is an emotion-induced escalation in which the current relationship experience is characterised by a colouring or cloudiness that determines our true potential. We ultimately do not allow ourselves to experience new relationships, since old, but still familiar patterns perpetually interfere in the here-and-now-perception of our relationships. This emotional confusion mechanism is the root cause of many misunderstandings, conflicts and break up of relationships. We let go of what we believe to be unsuitable, instead of – which is much more difficult – "studying" our patterns of thinking, feeling and acting in self-reflexive work on ourselves and to confront the deeply effective learning process of a transformation of our DGPs, for we "are" not our DGPs, they stand in the way and prevent us from unfolding our inner diversity and authenticity. Only on the basis of a self-reflexive work on ourselves can something new really be created, that is also why it is only if we reinvent ourselves in this way that our life can thus present itself anew to us with the wealth of possible new wealth of relationships.

Thought-emotion programs

Through self-inclusive learning our emotional body becomes more familiar to us, and we can learn to deal with it affectionately but still in a sovereign manner like an old, perhaps a little quirky acquaintance.

Mnemonic sentence

Such a self-inclusive learning is also a precondition for any identity development on the one hand, and any innovation, which manages to bring truly new forms of perception and problem solving into the game, on the other hand. One can, however, invent oneself anew, if one knows oneself, that is, if one is aware of the mechanisms and preferred patterns, with which one emotionally constructs one's reality. By recognising one's preferred DGPs, one confirms to oneself the emotional spectacles through which one repeatedly views the surrounding social reality. To some extent one learns to become acquainted with the paint pots from which one serves oneself, when one starts to paint the reality in the here-and-now nature as well as in their constructive or destructive potential. This is the first step of a reflexive emotional work. Through this step, one enters new terrain. This terrain is full of pitfalls and temptations, of sliding back again into the old emotional familiar pattern – as well as equally indulging in the familiar responses. This mechanism inherently bears a certain tragedy: One falls back inwardly and as a result re-constellates not infrequently for himself outwardly that, which one really wants to avoid.

Self-inclusive learning

Spontaneous emergence of feelings

This emergence (spontaneous materialisation) of feelings is what makes the emotional unpredictable for us and difficult to handle. Emotions spontaneously illuminate our life, it then presents itself to us in dark or bright colours, relatively independent of the actual lightness or gravity of the situations in which we stand. This relative independence applies to the average day to day life, it does not apply to the existential experiences, such as death, experience of birth, love, separation or menace: In these situations, the emotions arising in people are similar, although even here the different temperaments, i.e. the specific "temperature" of the emotions, clearly emerge. Common sense knows the different moods of people and is aware of their natural growth – be it only in the assessment, that one would meet "difficult people" once again or see oneself perceived as such. People appear to us as "difficult" are those whose "overvaluation" (Riemann) in certain ways of responding, demands a certain measure of considerateness from their interaction partners.

Second way out: Naming the emotions

The second way out of the vicious circle between thought and emotion has to do with the spontaneous or even routine arising of emotional states: The emotions generated in oneself are monitored carefully, and named first in a practiced inner dialogue (see Arnold 2008a). This naming serves on one hand to achieve emotional literacy, but it also helps one on the other hand to view one's own inner happening from a distance. If I can identify the feelings, then I am though not yet able to dominate them, but they lose something of their aura of inevitability. Depending on the urgency or the harassment tendency of the feeling, vastly different ways of dealing with the burgeoning emotional states open up. The basis for this process of development of emotional competence, however, is first to develop a detached attitude towards one's emotional self, our emotional body, which exists largely independently of our thoughts and desires and constantly interferes in our relationships which we then always also become. Martin Buber described this interference by pointing out that the unconscious does not work in us, but between us. And mostly it is the people closest to us who time and again make us feel this emotional body and not infrequently do we then make them responsible for the associated feelings. A conscious handling of this mechanism requires an observer stance that knows that it is the emotional colouring of our relatedness to reality that makes the people and situations with which we have to deal with appear the way they do and not differently. By being able to develop such an observer attitude towards our own emotional construction of reality, we rob our perception of its immediacy and recognise that we always relate to reality in a twofold manner: Firstly, by exposing ourselves to situations and handling them and secondly, by giving expression to our own inner tendencies. These tendencies are of an inner emotional nature, they are the mode of illumination through which we become able at all to feel what we feel and recognise what seems to us as existing.

This insight puts us at a distance to our self-evident and as "comprehensible" perceived certainties of any kind and it is solely the experiencing of this distance that gradually leads us to adopt a different attitude toward our perceptions and our own emotional opinion of the world. We learn to develop, to a certain extent, a laboratory-like distrust for what constellates itself to us through this in the form of physically and spiritually noticeable certainty, when we perceive

a situation as it is and not otherwise as "given". The distance is associated with a self-distrust. We distrust the exemplariness and the resulting schematic nature of our routine self-in-the-world feeling, and with this distancing a new kind of freedom opens up:

By distrusting our perceptions, we free ourselves from them and receive – at least theoretically – the ability to think, feel and act from a reflective observer position. And at the same time we open up the possibility for the other party to appear to us more so, as he himself actually intends.

Mnemonic sentence

With this self-reflective – even emotional – distance even though one has not found the way to happiness or even to the objective reality of our personal or professional situations, we however begin to understand the reasons why thinking can make us sad, when our thinking or even brooding treads paths which it treads and leads us to the emotional assessments it leads us to and has always done. One has to fully take responsibility for this. This is very difficult and requires great effort, we are of course the ones who observe the mechanisms of the emotional in ourselves and try to change it. In addition, this step leaves us alone to ourselves and our feelings, and obstructs both the way into the lamenting pitfall, as well as the way of seeking understanding. Both paths lead us in a circle, and we become more and more of our emotional body. And then as emotional bodies we are leaders, teachers, or spouses and partners. Without really noticing this, we expect others to cope with this our emotional body by constantly confronting them with allegations of being the responsible party, and sometimes even suspicion, that has very little or nothing to do with their own motives and behaviour. Thus, we pay the high price of isolation, because we do not recognise the others themselves in their behaviour, but the reaffirmation of the emotional logic of reality construction that make up our emotional body. The other person then more and more transforms to the people of our past, and often we even start repeating old dialogues and even childhood dialogues in the original tone again with the current person. At this point latest, the need to escape becomes a matter of urgency, if we do not want to remain at a standstill based on these repetitions, but rather bring our potentials to expression in new relationships.

Self-reflective distance

*Peter B., director of a vocational school, observed during the course of his professional years that there seems to be a recurring pattern in his life, which leads him to repeatedly experience situations of a gradually receding acceptance. Initially, he always experienced feedback from the students or later from his colleagues, but during the period of the concrete cooperation, he observed that the other parties withdrew more and more, in some contexts, there was even open disapproval or even the termination of the cooperation. Even though he tried again and again, he simply did not succeed in achieving a genuinely sustainable or even the unfolding of his professional and personal relationship. In a conversation he noted: "In the end I'm always alone!"*

Example

## 2.2 Certainly it is, what one feels!

Importance of fear for our identity

We have no feeling for emotions. Often we perceive them as strange or at least unpredictable. The troubled heart or the disappointment weighing us down are phases in which we clearly function outside any state of inner balance. The same is true for the fear that occurs in so many facets, and influenced by our deliberation and also often by our decisions. Are we in the core of our being perhaps driven by our fear? And is it our fear that defines our being, because it can bring a characteristic, sometimes barely perceptible illumination into our lives? "Tell me, what you're afraid of, and I'll tell you who you are!" – This could be a first response to the question of our feelings and their relevance to our worldview, our identity and the way we shape our lives.

Example

*In a seminar with students who don't know each other, I conducted the following introduction session: Each participant was asked to choose a partner and occupy himself silently with this partner for five minutes. The task was then to give each other a "fear-focused feedback", i.e. to describe what ideas one developed of things the other person feared most. Although one can rightly ask how something like this can be possible, if one doesn't yet know the other person at all, the experience is amazing: The vast majority of participants were fairly accurate (though certainly not exhaustive) in articulating their feedbacks which surprised their unknown partner. We seem, therefore, through the subtle signals with which we articulate our appearance, our gestures, facial expressions and body language, to communicate already a great deal about the deepest motives of our selves, because it is with real difficulty that we can hide, what moves us.*

"Overvalued" reactions

People see the world with their own eyes, and often it is through fear that they see. They construct their world using the emotional states that are more or less their constant companion. In a similar manner, our quest for recognition and being seen or just our loneliness also shape, what we strive for every day. We notice this in particular when we encounter attracting feelings in ourselves or others in certain situations. Then we sometimes react in an "overvalued" manner – a word which beautifully expresses how it feels when emotions significantly guide our behaviour. Anyone who reacts in an overvalued manner, attributes more value (importance) to something than is normally the case. But what does normally mean? Where do we draw the standards for a "normal" reaction from ourselves or from our counterpart? "Certainly, it is what one feels!" – and if one has learned or had to learn to feel familiar and plausible in extreme situations, this so-called normalcy, if it exists at all, is then strange.

Basic emotional mood: formed early

The Emotional does not, however, only comprise of the great emotions, it also refers to the basic emotional mood of a person. And this works secretly. The plausibility experience of a person is not composed of arguments, but of feelings, our world is first and foremost an emotional one, before we begin, to explain it to ourselves and to others in narratives and stories. Anyone who grew up in a climate of isolation, for such a person, the world feels different than it is for

someone who felt himself welcomed and accepted. The same goes for people who had to gain their first experiences in traumatic or just simply boring contexts. Louise J. Kaplan, the renowned American child psychologist, speaks in this regard of the experiencing of the "constancy", which initially draws from the "dialogue between mother and baby" (Kaplan, 1989, p. 12), that conversation, which – as she says – "assures us our humanity" (ibid., p. 13). Only gradually does the growing infant leave the world of his mother and acknowledges his separateness and aloneness. In this phase an emotional need arises that can be satisfied or remains unsatisfied. Kaplan writes:

*"The three year-old boy has only a low degree of constancy – just enough to give him a sense of security in the world, although it is now clear to him that his self is separate from that of his mother. He can maintain the positive image of his mother, even if he is in kindergarten or visit friends. (...) The wellbeing of the infant arises from the fact that it has inwardly developed enough experience of a good mother and a good self to be able to function as an independent self even when he may feel hateful, angry, thoughts towards himself or towards his parents "*(ibid., p. 15).

It is this experiencing of constancy, this basic trust in one's own security, from which the human being steps out at the beginning of his life and tries to build up a separate identity, first emotionally. It is not only his own timidity and weakness, which may threaten the tentative groping into the new and himself. It is also the need of his surroundings – overburdened, lonely or absent parents – who confront him with other stipulations as those of his ego-search and ego-strengthening. Anyone who has had to learn at an early stage that he is responsible for the welfare of his own mother or father, must have usually found it really difficult to feel his own experience, detached from this task. Thus, *derivative forms of the self* arise which are frequently described in the literature as a "false self." Tilmann Moser says that people with such a self-opinion, must first be "emotionally grounded" (Moser 1996, p. 9), because for them their experience takes place "in an impenetrable atmosphere of suspense" (ibid. p. 29).

From such a state of suspense one cannot develop emotions for oneself. One can become older on such a hollow inner base, but not grow up. For, adulthood also refers to a state in which we finally grown out of the unreasonable demands and suggestions of others, and step into our own competence and self-esteem. The adult is responsible for himself. He knows his needs and is responsible for meeting them. He is affectionate and can cope with conflict, since he clearly feels his inner and outer boundaries. Those who, however, remain inwardly boundless, become insatiable in the forms of attention they seek, sometimes dominant and narcissistic, and yet in many ways, unsheltered and unprotected. The emotional security comes from a successful dissociation from the first protective person (see Mahler and others 2001). This dissociation does not often fail, and often this inner state goes with feelings of ineffectiveness, inauthenticity and associated non-recognition. The perceived life – as we learn from the emotional theories of psychoanalytic research – can only mostly be understood from the

perspective of the childhood and dissociation history of the individual. It leaves clear traces in the thinking, feeling and actions of adults, if "he was never lovingly set boundaries" (ibid., p. 36).

Mnemonic sentence      Certainty is an emotional experience of constancy. Man learns over time to rely on himself and his experience, and it is from this feeling of constancy that he illuminates and interprets his daily experiences.

Since it is only what has previously been able to develop that can illuminate, our current experience is always also outdated – it transports substances of our past experience. Our view of the now is always also a view from within our own past. So in the friend, we see emotional signs of past bonds, and in the demands of the supervisor, the early fear of failure. Encounters are therefore usually only authentic for one's own self; we are not capable of relating to the other person. Although we perceive his request and understand his call, they are however only plausible to us based on our own inner conditions. Separating oneself and starting anew therefore always leads one to repetitions, of what one thinks himself free of. The Japanese proverb quoted by Paul Watzlawick which says; "To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive" (Watzlawick, 1983, p. 66) can therefore also be interpreted as a description of this continuous relapse into one's own certainties. He asks:

*"So if not even revenge is sweet, how much less then the arriving at the supposedly happy end? Therefore: beware of arriving. (And, incidentally, why do you think Thomas Moore called that distant island of happiness Utopia, which means "nowhere" " (ibid., p. 70).*

We are emotionally at home "nowhere" than in ourselves. Only our own is constant and plausible for us, what we cannot recognise again, we cannot recognise.

Constant relapse into one's own certainty      It is therefore the recognition that guides our perception, and it is our own certainty of our own plausibility that determines our reaction. It is not "something", a situation, an argument or an action that are – more or less – plausible, but plausibility is merely a reflection of what is familiar to us in the newly encountered. Plausibility is the inner coherence, and not that which enlightens or convinces after the supposedly objective criteria. We perceive, the truth does not reveal itself to us – even if we behave towards others and other things as if our certainties stem from a higher validity. We argue and fight with others for this overall validity of our perception, instead of recognising how closely related we are to ourselves in this self-centred arrangement of our world.

"The leopard can't change its spots" – says the popular wisdom, but we always expect our certainty from the other person, we expect him to "match" our inner potential. He is responsible for what and how we feel, think and act. "If only he had ..." Or: "Why did he not...?" In the attitude of a surprised or even accusatory question, we see the cause of our feelings of inconstancy and adversity mostly in the other person, and feel how we feel, think what we think and do what we are accustomed to doing. These chains of an inner



associating are often associated with an inner dialogue in which we repeatedly lay out the reasons for our view of things, tossing the arguments back and forth until everything becomes consistent for us again. Then when we are back in our consistency at the latest, we are also again in our certainty, and then all the irritation is gone from us at the latest. But then everything remains as it was at the latest.

Hence irritation is the one – self-directed – source of change, the other is the "critical life event" (e.g., the blow of fate), that suddenly destabilises our familiar certainty. Irritation however can gradually give rise to a learning process that terminates with an innovation. Or expressed the other way around, without irritation there will be no innovation and no renewal in our pre-established routines. This does not seem to be so at all, that we are *completely* set in our ways through our experiences, inner images and fears even when more recent brain research repeatedly brings the very strong importance of early synaptic connections to our attention. It is not the skin, but the early synaptic connectivity, from which we can scarcely escape. There is nevertheless some evidence that our pre-establishments are always determined by the exclusions of their opposites, and are thus also closely linked in a deep way with this impossible. Thus, the strong opponent of racism is even racist deep in his soul, and the dictator also has democratic rules of coexistence in the depths of his soul. The alternative, against which a lot in us resist, are not solely alien to us, but also familiar. And it is only by bringing ourselves in contact with these already internalised tracks of the alternative, can we succeed in weakening our own pre-establishments and fundamentally examine the alternative. Not every alternative harms our emotional self-esteem. In this sense, the effectiveness of nonviolent forms of resistance against oppression could be explained by the fact that even the oppressors carry a picture of freedom in themselves to which he can penetrate and strengthen. Eventually, his own inner conviction exhausts itself and he is willing to accept the other and change his previous certainty through its opposite.

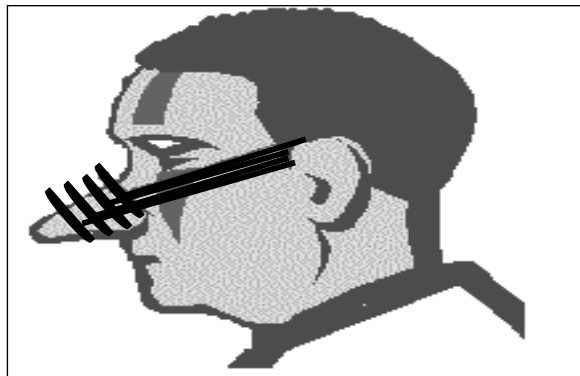
Irritation: sources for change

In order to initiate changes, the new must be made subject of discussion. It can only be articulated however when we can perceive something else other than what our fear of loss of plausibility perceives. The problem is, however, that we cannot but view the new through the spectacles of our experience – an unusual picture. This actually has to do with spectacles, several visual aids, through which we see at the same time (cf. Figure 2.3). The picture that appears to us here is thus broken in several places, or – in extreme cases – is in accordance with our own poor vision so distorted that we can recognise it. Others, who we would allow to look through these spectacles, would see nothing, because their eyesight is different and requires different refractions and distortions. An essential step towards the formation of an *emotional capacity for innovation* has already been achieved by our realising that we are looking through the spectacles of our experiences and that we cannot obtain a true picture of reality. By anchoring this insight into our consciousness, we train a *reflective observer position*. Eva La Scala writes:

*"During my engagement with systemic perspectives I gathered a*

Aim: a reflexive observer position

*collection of spectacles. If I'm not just too firmly held in the claws of a problem, then I try out different lenses and see my world through them. There lies the purple lenses problem, which searches for the causes, the green solution lenses, that designs diverse future perspectives and, there lie the pink optimistic and brown sceptical and gaudy paradox lenses. This gives me a playful approach to the daily demands; the "serious" reality becomes easier. I know that I invent the story of my life and I know that I can also tell it differently – I can change my views. I have many possibilities, a myriad of hypotheses, and more than ONE solution" (in: Renolder/ Scala/ Rabenstein 2007, p. 236).*



**Figure 2.3:** *The observer as wearing spectacles*

Re-constellating The *reflexive observer* differs radically in his way of thinking, feeling and acting from a *naive observer*. The reflexive observer observes in two ways: He observes the other party, but at the same time he also observes how his own re-constellates in the other party. It is this process of "re-constellation", and its importance for our thinking, feeling and acting in everyday life, our ideas about social harmony which is hardly taken note of. In everyday life, we feel separated from the other person. This other person meets with us, expresses himself to us and expects us to cope with his desires and actions. Our picture of the other person is that of a detached, reality that encounters us objectively. The fact that this other person can show us himself only on our own terms, that his actions do not affect us, but simply trigger effects in us, the substance of which was initiated earlier in us, is for many a new and even more annoying thought. If it's my very own substance, which is articulated in my experience, the cause and effect thinking reaches its limits. What is cause, what is effect? Is the action of the other person really the cause of my judgement, my feelings and my reaction? Or do I respond selectively to what it appears to me - perhaps in a way that even surprises or upsets the other person? It is this blurring of the distinction between the familiar and the unfamiliar, between subject and object, and their illumination that the more recent communication theories deal with. Their concepts are mixing concepts that help us understand how we react selectively and specifically to the other person, whereby this "reaction" is often more of acting than we are conscious of and more than we really want: I imagine my counterpart in my perception exactly how my emotional constancy "requires it".

Thus in the mortifying experience, not only the expectation is expressed, but always my own hurtful story. They are familiar feelings, which are triggered by the hurt in me, and their substance also results from my story, not only from the action of the other person. Each emotional experience will therefore only be clearer if we understand from which pre-made inner essences our emotional self draws. This emotional self has the unpleasant property that it usually only makes itself noticeable when we have contact with others and it always brings something into this contact that does not belong there. As a result our relationships become repetitions, and our encounters effectively secretly serve their own needs and not the contact with the counterpart. Only rarely do we give the counterpart the chance to show us himself the way he wants to express himself to us, our own emotional patterns interfere too quickly in the process, and initiates a subtle effect of our inner constancy program on the new events – often until the new is no longer the new, but familiar and well known to us.

The reflexive observer is aware of this inseparability of the familiar and the foreign.

Mnemonic sentence

Interaction and communication are, therefore, always ambiguous for him: We are in dialogue with a partner, (inter)acting and at the same time with the interpretation and emotional patterns of our experience. The reflexive observer knows that in the partner we not only encounter the foreign but also our familiar self, and he therefore tries to train his self-awareness such that he is capable of perceiving these traces of the self in the partner and can really free the partner from the responsibility for these elements of our perception. This emotional awareness is difficult to develop, to direct and powerful are our inner constancy programs at work. Within seconds, they provide us an intuitive assessment, which threatens to make us fixed, and from which we – but also the partner – can hardly escape. Even metacommunication is often not of much help in this case once we have emotionally fixed ourselves or have even been fixed. Also understanding the processes through which we construct the new from our old for ourselves, does not kept us from doing exactly that over and over again. *We can expose ourselves only on our own conditions to the new, and we construct our new reality, not just the way we build them based on our established pattern of interpretation, but also the way we can tolerate it (see Arnold 2005).*

Emotional awareness

It is these mechanisms, which nourish the repetition compulsion. Often people feel that a particular fate has been prepared for them, since they always seem to fall into similar situations, as if there were any subtle workings of a divine plan. The repetition is almost done with and by oneself: It is the way we look at a situation that gives this situation a meaning – a meaning for us. The possible meaning of our experience limits us, therefore, we see what we see, and so it brings us into the repetition. The situation, which at first seemed similarly threatening to us, can only show itself to us differently if we search for, seek, authorise and try other variants – and also believe what one seems to "show" us. It may indeed all be meant differently from how we understood it at first. In this our preferred manner of understanding, the impact of our emotional spectacles is reflected and it is through them that we re-constellate the world for ourselves, i.e. to create anew again and again in the deep familiar manner.

Emotional spectacles: our preferred way of understanding

Emotional awareness *Emotional awareness* is an attitude that knows of these connections and always watches out for one's own echo in the other person. Emotional awareness is the intentional shattering of one's own certainties, since these relics that make one fixed are from the past. It is also the attempt to allow what is presented to us to impress itself on us, without that certainty scissors of our own interpretive emotional patterns. Emotional awareness is also an attempt to interrupt the incessant flow of one's own experience using the stop & think loop and to examine the experiences with respect to its re-constellating content. Anyone who has tried once, to get rid of the old illuminating mechanisms that are burned into our emotional system, knows how tough and painful these cherished "habits" are, since in certain situations, we put in something that is absolutely not in it nor belongs in it, and one rather allows the situation get out of hand than detach oneself from the feelings and face the situation as such<sup>1</sup>. The whole process is usually associated with great pain and sometimes also social costs, though taking a more sober look at the situation, might actually show one that the experience could also mean something else and could also be experienced, emphasized or interpreted quite differently by other people. It is the primary impulse, which our thinking and behaviour follow, and this is an emotional impulse. We are impulsive in the truest sense of the word, and only the level-headed person is characterised by restraint and a "wait and see attitude, which, however, usually comes more from an emotional poverty, than from the expression of an advanced attitude of self-reflection and self-competence. For, these can only be achieved at the price of a really strenuous effort of reframing and re-feeling – an effort that fails often enough, but which can also succeed (see Arnold 2008a).

In his book "Emotional Intelligence" (Goleman 1998, p. 379), Daniel Goleman cited from "Self Science Curriculum, (Stone / Dillehunt 1978), in which the essential skills that make up an emotional competence are defined. In his book "Primal Leadership" (Goleman et al 2002, p. 314ff), he refined this list in terms of a definition of emotional leadership skills and further developed it. This forms the basis of the following questions for self-examination which were complemented, arranged and further developed:



#### **Activity 9:**

Work on these self-examination questions (cf. Figure 2.4) on emotional competence for yourself. "Grade" the self-examination questions as spontaneously as possible and self-critically without thinking twice. The spontaneous assessment is usually the correct one!

<sup>1</sup> Brain research draws particular attention to this self-referentiality of recognition. Said Manfred Spitzer notes that: "99.9% of all cortical neurons receive their input from other cortical neurons and provide their output to other cortical neurons (Spitzer 2002, p. 35). This is the neurophysiologic side of the "self-reference", spoken of by the constructivism.

Emotional skills	Questions for self-examination	Self-assessment					
		1= very good; 6=bad)					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Area: Self-awareness</b>							
Emotional self-awareness	Do you know your preferred emotional states and "guiding values" and do you perceive your inner signals?						
True Self-assessment	Do you know your limits and strengths, and do you observe your projections, ("I know that of course!")?						
Self-distance	Do you welcome criticism and feedback, and can you laugh at yourself?						
Confidence	Are you sure of your strengths and can you targetedly use them?						
Self-reflexivity	Do you know in which areas you need to improve your leadership abilities? Do you ask for help						
<b>Area: Self-management</b>							
Self-control	Can you control your negative emotions and impulses?						
Stress stability	Do you remain calm and collected in a crisis situation?						
Transparency	Do you act in line with your values and do you admit your own mistakes?						
Authenticity	Do you openly confront people who behave unethically?						
Adaptability	Do you accept the inevitable ambivalence of working life, and can you deal with something new?						
Performance	Do you strive constantly to improve your own performance, and do you set clear performance goals for yourself?						
Team Performance	Are you constantly trying to optimize the performance of your team?						
Initiative	Do you seize and create opportunities, and do you even break rules if necessary?						
Optimism	Can you deal with setbacks and see the positive things in them ("learning gift")						
<b>Area: Social Awareness</b>							
Empathy	Can you put yourself in the emotions of another person or a group?						
Integrativity	Can you get along with people from different social and cultural background?						
Organisation Awareness	Do you see through social networks and power relations and social forces and interests?						
Service	Do you make sure that your customers are satisfied and that their wants and needs are recognised?						
Accessibility	Do you make your staff available when needed, and do you show a personal interest?						
<b>Area: Relationship Management</b>							
Inspiration	Do you inspire your employees and colleagues with a compelling vision or shared mission?						
Influence	Can you win the approval and support of key persons for your initiatives?						
Employee Development	Do you understand the goals, strengths and weaknesses of your employees and give constructive feedback?						
Change catalyst	Can you identify need for change, can you also question the status quo and support new orders?						
Conflict management	Can you listen to different perspectives and integrate the differences in a shared solution?						
Teamwork and cooperation	Can you create and maintain an atmosphere of friendly collegiality with respect, helpfulness and cooperation?						

Figure 2.4: Self-examination questions on emotional competence

## 2.3 The Primacy of Emotion

Charlotte had been working as the assistant to the director of her educational institution for about two years. This was after a successful study of psychology and a long internship at the Ministry of Education. During this internship already, she observed that it was only with much difficulty that she could succeed in taking on a really tangible role in the team she worked with. She could not easily shake off the feeling of being the odd man out. With time, she also earned similar comments from her colleagues, as they asked, "What are you doing here anyway?" Or: "Okay let us also ask our observer," Charlotte was desperately anxious to put herself across as competent

Primacy of emotion

*and well-read, and thus hoped to be finally seen and appreciated as a colleague. However, the aforementioned feeling of "Actually, I do not belong to them" did not simply want to disappear. Finally, she developed her own explanation based on the assumption that the team she was dealing with was too closed towards new members and preferred to "stew in its own juice". When she received the offer, as Deputy Director at another educational institution, she did not hesitate for long and accepted the offer – after all she has not been comfortable in this team for a long time now.*

Self-archaeology Such situations in which we do not feel accepted as who we believe we are, are familiar to us all. We know it from our relationship and professional life. Again and again we draw up stories and explanations for ourselves that seem to make what we do or what happens within us plausible to us and our social environment. Most times we leave contexts, we cannot cope with. However, if we stay, we inwardly distance ourselves. And by distancing ourselves, our explanation patterns and our lack of resonance becomes set. We already know it – and we do everything to ensure that this knowledge does not turn out to be false. We would rather lose everything than to throw our cherished perceptions and habits overboard.

The success of this distancing is guaranteed: It allows us remain, as we are. For many people, no price is too high to ensure this. They quit their jobs, leave their families or stage a most bitter suffering of themselves only for a single reason: They want to keep what they have – even when they complain about it or have already inwardly freed themselves from it a long time ago. "Better a terrible end than an unending terror!" – seems to be their unspoken motto of life. How can this strange behaviour be explained? How can this self-injurious behaviour be decoded in the long run? What drives a person to hold on to what paralyzes one's own well-being and vitality? Something seems to be so essential in one's own misfortune that one can simply not free oneself from it. The well-known – bad – feelings have for those of us, who repeatedly hold on to such familiar positions, a stabilizing function in subtle ways, which confirms to us what we already knew, or thought we knew. The question "Since when do they have it?" We do not put ourselves in such situations. We complain and moan about more and more guilty ones, we feel victimized by adverse conditions and in this way, we retain our evil world for ourselves. For, it is fatally this evil world that is familiar to us and which we always perceive at each point in time.

Where does this innate tendency to stage our lives according to the patterns familiar to us come from? If one follows the relevant research findings of infant research, recent brain research and the so-called attachment research, the roots lie far back in our perception of the world. It is the early experiences in dealing with our caregivers, our early feeling of our own effectiveness or ineffectiveness, which define us. Some psychological theories speak in this context of "rackets" (inauthentic feelings or gimmicks learnt and reinforced in early childhood and used in a conditioned reflex manner to manipulate others - see Transactional Analysis Psychotherapy: an Integrated Approach by Petrúška Clarkson, 1992 p. 10): Everyone gathers certain rackets in his early years, according to which he

creates his own world and determines how he feels in it. Hence the unattached always feels uncommitted even if he stands opposite someone that is capable of attachment and desires attachment. "It cannot be what should not be!" – that is the disastrous mind set and pre-ordering of one's life in a particular lane through the rackets.

The rackets form our emotional body, i.e. our very special way of feeling in the world from time immemorial. With this we stride through our lives completely oblivious of the reality-constructing and reconstellating function of the emotional body which we are equipped with.

Mnemonic sentence

By perceiving the world as we do, as we have earlier learnt, it is familiar to us. In certain situations, we feel how we have learnt to feel in such situations – regardless of losses, – as one is prone to saying. This means that it is not the turning to or turning away from what presents itself to us that "gives rise" to these emotional states in which we find ourselves. That which presents itself to us is therefore also not to "blame" for how we feel. We are in fact – however unpleasant this thought may be for the one or the other – always responsible for the emotional reaction that we associate with a situation. It is our emotional body that expresses itself every time we find ourselves in the key situations, in which our emotional body is an expert.

The reasonable, albeit provocative question one should ask oneself in the face of unexpected or overvalued behaviours, should therefore not be, "Why are you doing this to me?" But rather: "Since when do I have this?" – what is meant is: "Since when do I have this peculiar way of reacting in these key situations and why don't I react differently?" Or: "Why am I doing this to myself?" These questions are uncomfortable. They divert attention from the alleged responsible party ("perpetrator") for my problem to myself and my reaction in this particular situation. In the process our emotional body or our emotional self becomes the focus of attention.

By asking myself since when I have this my way of feeling and reacting, I gradually begin to take responsibility for myself and my actions.

Mnemonic sentence

At this moment I am centred on myself and how I perceive and form the world. At the same time I put a stop to the search for the guilty and the accused and complaining. So I emerge from an inner childhood position towards the evil world, that treats me so unsatisfactorily, and become a self-reliant and internally grown human being. Suddenly I begin to grasp the fact that I have a sensitive part of me that can show me the world only on my terms and I can begin to understand that I can perceive other people simply by how they can inwardly endure these my terms. By leaving behind me this being wrapped up in a "thick cocoon of rambling thoughts, prejudices and solipsistic ruminations" (Varela & others 1992, p. 174) and detaching myself from the "habit patterns" (ibid.) displayed up till present, I will become increasingly free. This means:

*"(..) Being aware of the conditions and special opportunities of a current situation and being capable of unrestricted action – i.e. not being determined by clinging and selfish acts of will. This openness*

*and sensitivity includes not only the immediate sphere of one's own perception, it also enables one to respect others and develop compassionate insight into their conflicts" (ibid., p. 175).*

Cocoon of our habitual patterns

The emergence from the cocoon of our habitual patterns mentioned above is, however, no picnic. These habits highlight our world, which urges us in the most subtly way to make everything stay as it is. Thus for example, fatherless women generally approach men with another "basic trust" different from those of women who were permitted to experience having their fathers as a constant and reliable reference point in their young life. The same applies to the inner mind set of men as regards their comforting task towards their mothers, which has led, at an early stage, to a basic attitude in life that one could describe with the words: "I am responsible for ensuring that my mother is fine!" In later life, such men also strive to please their female counterparts, but usually without a real sense for themselves and their own needs. At the same time such an initial emotional task sometimes, sets an overconfidence in motion in them, that cannot meet up with what their bitter feeling emotional body registers – under the motto: "Ultimately it has no sense anyway!" And yet they try all their lives, repeatedly to manoeuvre themselves into situations that confirm to their emotional body what it already knows: "Ultimately, it makes no sense!" Such emotional certainties arise often spontaneously in connection with biochemical processes, which then has the consequence that we constellate the matching situation in our lives, for example by presenting our otherwise devoted and faithful partner as a potential fraudsters and prosecute him or we see in a constructive boss an unduly constricting authority – all emotional opinions towards the world, has a lot to do with our own restriction to a particular lane in life and less to do with the situation we are currently faced with.

Mnemonic sentence

If we ask ourselves who we are, we must also ask ourselves, therefore, since when do we have that which makes us think, feel and act in a particular way and not otherwise.



#### **Activity 10:**

Remember a situation in the past week, in which you reacted "automatically", i.e. without giving it a second thought. It should be a situation in which you were emotionally involved. Ask yourself the question: Since when do I have it? Why do I react like this in such situations and not otherwise?



## 3 Emotional Competence as Core Competence of School Leadership

### 3.1 The "yes, but..." Syndrome

We *are* our emotional self, we are therefore, what we believe to be, i.e. our confidence, but also what we can be, that is our emotional body. What we think we are, and what we can in fact be, that is what we want and what we tolerate, often seems to be separated from each other by an unbridgeable gap. And almost all of the problems that plague human beings are ultimately shaped by the unbridgeable gap between their own volition and their own ability. The will must be reviewed and the ability of our emotional body brought into awareness – only then will a coherent development be possible. This is the real theme of modern pedagogy, which sees itself as a science of biography and change.

It represents a first step towards the formation of an emotional competence, by undergoing a self-critical contemplation of the motives and tendencies that make up our own emotional body. In the process one's own *primary constructions*, i.e. our earliest single-track approach towards the world becomes object of focus. This is ultimately also an expression of different "basic forms of anxiety" (Riemann 1998). People try to avoid all that frighten them, and manage their anxiety. In the process, the primary construction plays an important role. This gives us a sense of security in social contexts, which is why we are always eager to repeat these familiar ways of thinking, feeling and actions. However these are always the expression of one's own emotional body and have nothing to do with the suitable reaction expected of the person we are interacting with or with the actual situation. Therefore this repeatedly ignites a dispute over the reality which – as we know – leads nowhere. In many coaching events for executives one can experience, how in such set ways of the parties involved, a battle ultimately sets in for the different needs for safety and security. The opinions and attitudes of the parties are never merely about "the thing" – even if it is asserted, and eloquently highlighted. Rather, this "objective" assessment that is expressed is consistently subject to an overvalued distorted perception, and the actions of the other party are seen as inappropriate as a result. They usually do not have the success of the whole as such in mind, but often use only their success, to do justice to their own inner standards of identity experience.

*Such set ways may lead to a self-destructive autism: One terminates the cooperation with the other party, attempts to discredit his otherwise good-natured and constructive boss – solely as a result of one's inner state of emergency, to also become something at last, to be how he would like to see himself "at par" – for reasons that have little to do with the actual party he is confronted with, but more to do with his own – hidden – primary constructions. It is repeatedly observable, that in leadership-driven conflicts, such things that drive us could also express itself brutally and ruthlessly. One then scarcely recognises the respective actors*

*since they act inwardly with a certain energy borne of grim determination that is obvious to everyone else except themselves.*

Obstacles to the future through the primary constructive set ways.

It is "one's own inner standards of the experience of identity", which begin to restrain the possible system development in such cases, not what lies hidden as potential in the system that wants to become effective in the sense of the "future as it emerges" (Scharmer 2009). Such actors responsible for obstacles to future innovations through their primary constructive set ways pose a difficult task for consulting, which is in a position to provide them with important ideas for their systemic management of the insights of an emotional constructivism. Without the self-reflexive insight into the subtle mechanisms of emotional construction of reality through the constant interference of primary constructive set ways, a synergetic development can generally not be restored, because in the mentioned cases, it is not just about mediating, but about "objectivity" and not infrequently about "restricting" in the sense of minimizing the disruptive influences of an emotionally distorted construction of a common reality.

Within a framework of a consultation, we were asked to accompany the process of organisational development. During the first contacts it quickly became clear that the "if" of change itself was already controversial among the leaders. Though they were all moved by the change issues indicated by the new rhetoric of management, however during the discussions, it quickly became obvious that there was a group who felt deeply offended by the mere mention of the right to change. In the "talk" of quality assurance and evaluation, they recognised a questioning of their engagement up till the present and they reacted accordingly in a restricting manner according to the motto "Wash me, but do not get me wet!". They followed the presentation of tools for model development, for the profiling of their own agenda, or for practicing the criteria and procedures for quality assurance with constant "Yes, but" statements, so that the change efforts, began more and more to resemble a helpless compulsory exercise actually supported by only a few. The questioning of their primary constructions in relation to the matter of the organisation development, threatened to bring the whole event to a failure. It therefore took some effort, through appreciative activities on the one hand, and through the slowing down of the entire development process on the other, to actually keep all involved in the process.

Mnemonic sentence

Managers and consultants must understand the effects of primary constructions on change issues and "tackle" the potential inhibiting and resisting impacts.

It is important in the process to put the existing attitudes and preferences of the actors as resources into focus and appreciate them. The fact that someone questions his previous professional commitment, and basically puts everything on the test, only because he is confronted with a better argument, cannot be expected, from experience.

Change can only succeed if the issue in question is also seen in relation to the information contained in questioning the primary constructions. Often the knowledge that systemic change involves the development or even transformation

of primary constructions is lacking. Those who believe that "Yes, but" positions could be changed by mere argument or even instructions will fail with his change issue.

Sustainable transformation and changes in systems can only succeed if the primary constructions, which make those responsible set in their inner possibilities, are also brought into focus.

Mnemonic sentence

Changes always affect the internal balance of the parties between preservation and transformation, on the other hand, as well as closeness and distance on the other hand. These characters position themselves in these fields of tension, whereby no somewhat better positions in terms of innovation, design and change are discernable. Rather, it is the flexibility to constantly balance out this new equally relevant internal reference points of our experience, judgement and action that decides whether the parties become rigid in principle set ways or seek refuge in a frantic action, whether they maintain a poor-communication distance in their business relationships or endeavour to follow the example of intimate friendships. All extremes hinder a vibrant development and impede necessary innovations (cf. Figure 3.1).

	<p><b>A Preserving</b></p> <p><b>Primary construction</b></p> <p>"The existing gives me security and protection. Anyone who questions it, threatens me!"</p> <p><b>Set ways in leadership</b></p> <p>"The existing is the best. Whoever change it does not understand the issue and must first prove himself!"</p>	
<p><b>B Proximity</b></p> <p><b>Primary construction</b></p> <p>"Only if I trust people completely and I am respected and recognised by them, do I feel safe and protected!"</p> <p><b>Set ways in leadership</b></p> <p>"I place great emphasis on the informal and familiar aspect of co-operation!"</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"><b>Balance</b></div>	<p><b>C Distance</b></p> <p><b>Primary construction</b></p> <p>"Ultimately, I really trust nobody. Therefore I keep people aloof!"</p> <p><b>Set ways in leadership</b></p> <p>"Being too close is exploited. Executives are unavoidably lonely!"</p>
	<p><b>D Transformation</b></p> <p><b>Primary construction</b></p> <p>"Only when things are constantly in motion, do I feel safe and protected. Stagnation means standstill and death to me!"</p> <p><b>Set ways in leadership</b></p> <p>"I am responsible for ensuring that no one rests on the successes and I constantly seek new challenges!"</p>	

**Figure 3.1:** *The balance of primary construction on the topic leadership*



### Activity 11:

Position yourself (only for yourself) in this field of tension of primary construction on the topic of leadership.

## 3.2 Leadership as the Management of Primary Constructions – One’s own and those of other

To get out of this contradiction, there are basically three ways which one encounters in practice, however, they are rarely applied in their pure form, and one has to usually listen attentively to notice what position it is, that really determines the thinking, feeling and acting of the actors. The three ideal-typical positions are:

Three ideal-typical positions

1. "Remaining in the inner contradiction"
2. "Disguising the internal with the external"
3. "Expanding the inner possibilities"

### 1. "Remaining in the inner contradiction"

This position is frequently encountered when managers seek to be "modern" in their managerial activities. They adopt a new vocabulary, speak for example the language of a new public management, without being able to however really bring this in line with their primary constructions. It is especially hard for these persons, whose thinking, feeling and acting are set in one lane through A/B constructions (see Figure 5). They are overly attached to achievements and are constantly striving to resist the change. They sometimes argue and act in the process, like social-emotional leaders, i.e. in the context of a perceived or real majority opinion supported by an informal network in the system, as if it were really in any case a question of establishing a quasi grassroots consensus or broad support over the adequacy of leadership and control techniques.

Example

*"We are followers of a discourse ethics!"*

*In one case, the innovation efforts of management were repeatedly thwarted by a head of department, who presented himself in his remarks as highly skilled in making arguments. He repeatedly succeeded in questioning the moral basis of each project and to delay them or bring them to a halt. He always referred in these cases to the alleged majority in opinion of the teaching staff on the one hand, something he succeeded in doing credibly as the staff committee chairman and spokesman of the workforce, and on the other hand by pointing out that in an open system, the discourse of all actors, was the only legitimate way to regulate the "validity claims" of decisions or stipulations. This social-emotional leader published these questions and others – using the relevant vocabulary of change – independently,*

*and it also occurred that he slipped his own article into the box of the management, in which he objectively presented why a certain development project cannot function in the proposed form. For a long time, the management of the department unsuccessfully tried to win this "voice of the people" over with factual arguments, and offers to participate in their projects, but they were ultimately unsuccessful, as it became more obvious in the common process.*

In the course of time, it also became obvious that leadership had something to do with the handling of dissent, and it took a long process for the management to realise that they would not be able to achieve real development process with this colleague in the team, and therefore they effected his transfer. It was only then that the clarity of competences was restored to the extent that the team development amongst the teaching staff could be executed in accordance with the development measures. The affected colleague was then gradually led in a personal coaching to become aware of the primary constructions of the hindering behaviour he displayed. He recognised his own fear in the process, which formed the basis of the purely objective arguments he presented. After the coaching measures, he not only found the access to himself, but also the access to a real objectivity of his actions.

## **2. "Disguising the internal with the external"**

This pattern is always found where people still live in the mode of certainty and fight to be seen as being right. This way of dealing with reality is probably the most popular. It is always effective where the functional mechanism of the actors' perceptions have not yet become reflexively obvious to them, and so they therefore, implicitly assume that the way reality appears to them, is the way in which the reality is also constituted. They fight inevitably for this certainty, and anyone who aspires for something which contradicts their view, sees things wrongly, has a "false consciousness" or even does not (yet) have the expertise, which he ascribes to himself, this is why this self-reference is often accompanied with a selfishness, similar to the topic of Narcissism research. Under theoretical leadership perspective, the topic of Narcissism poses a problem in a twofold manner:

Widespread pattern

- Firstly, specific complications result if the executive himself is narcissistically disturbed and largely has no ear for the social field surrounding him thus holding on to his concepts, standards and ways of thinking, feeling and action. Management can then degenerate into a monologue – a form that remains, in extreme cases, almost without resonance in the systemic context. Such a kind of self-centred leadership can secure acceptance only through instruments of power, however this can quickly become a helpless effort in complex, semi-autonomous or system contexts that are largely dependent on the self-management of the participants.
- Secondly, self-referential certainty can also become a problem at the staff level, as the example of the hindered school development shows. Employees who know what is right for themselves, and rigidly cling to this

assessment, can only ultimately follow the provisos, which they themselves understand, which appears to them as the only permissible, since their reality represents indeed the reality. This autistic optics can then be a problem if disagreement with the management occurs and the members of staff are required to implement management decisions. Paradoxically, it is this letting go or "subsidiary leadership" which finds itself often confronted with rigidities that fight against adapting the organisation to allow for more transparency in management policy, in which self-management, responsibility for results and quality control are important standards of orientation. Leadership is then faced with the paradoxical requirement to enforce, with authority, a practice that strengthens the authority of the individual.

"Disguising the internal with the external" refers to a style of thinking, feeling and action which ultimately seeks, out of a deep fear, to cling to one's own things at all costs. In order to succeed, all factual arguments that one can imagine are brought up. Democratic theory discourses are brought up, recent findings of psychology are brought up or even quasi-therapeutic commentaries about the suggestion of the executives are spread solely in the desperate effort to cling to one's own view of things – contrary to all hierarchies of authority. The fact that this view of things does not only show factual dimensions, but also expresses its own primary constructions, remain mostly hidden to the parties. One fights on the factual argumentation level to preserve the plausibility of one's own primary constructions – a field in which one should not get involved as a manager. Primary construction-motivated debates namely have two disadvantages: They know only one output, namely the confirmation of the primary construction or a breakup of the relationship, and they foster the illusion that leadership and followership have always had something to do with the consensus of all parties, which – contrary to many leadership teachings – is not the case. Leadership is also disagreement management and setting clear target. Anyone who argumentatively disguises or has to disguise his inner perceptions with the external, is ultimately only limited in his communication or even consensus-finding ability. The only solution to a truly constructive systemic interaction between actors is the creation and use of spaces to expand the inner possibilities.

### **3. "Expanding the inner possibilities"**

"Voice of Judgement" It was in this sense that Peter Senge and others stressed in their book: "Presence. Exploring profound Change in People, Organizations and Society" (Senge et al 2005), the need to learn to rethink leadership by making one become aware of one's own "voice of judgment" (ibid., p. 30). According to Senge and others this is fed by the respective primary constructions of the actors. Their desire is to pave the way for a new skill in leadership, which they called "The Capacity to Suspend" (ibid., p. 29). In their explanation of it, they referred to the cognitive scientist Francisco Varela (see Arnold 2006) whose work also still awaits interpretation for the learning and skills development of managers:

*"Seeing freshly starts with stopping our habitual ways of thinking and perceiving. According to cognitive scientist Francisco Varela, developing the capacity for this sort of stopping involves "suspension removing ourselves from the habitual stream (of thought)" Varela called suspension the first basic "gesture" in enhancing awareness. (...) Suspension does not require destroying our existing mental models of reality – which could be impossible even if we tried – or ignoring them. Rather, it entails what Boom called "hanging our assumptions in front of us". By doing so, we begin to notice our thoughts and mental models as the workings of our own mind. And as we become aware of our thoughts and mental models as the workings of our own mind, they begin to have less influence on what we see. Suspension allows us to "see our seeing" " (Senge 2005, p. 29)*

This "see our seeing" describes the reflexive observer position, which is also and particularly at issue in management training. Anyone who knows the preferred forms of his worldview, and is also aware of the underlying primary constructions or fear-motivated defence mechanisms, is though not immune to repeatedly falling back to them, but he can deal more flexibly with the pre-established ways initiated by them (see also Caruso & others 2002). This ability is ultimately also a prerequisite for dealing with one's own destructive emotions in a different – more constructive – manner as was reported by Daniel Goleman in his seminar report on the Tibetan seminar with internationally renowned emotion and cognition researchers (Goleman 2003). In this extensive documentation, there is also a report on the lecture of Francisco Varela. He lectured on a "radical theory" (ibid., p. 434), containing the core argument that is centred on ascribing more importance to the consideration of subjective perception in the construction of perception and consciousness. Varela went even further: He called for a "research on the basis of I-statements" (ibid, p. 462) – in terms of a phenomenology whose implications has been thought of in its entirety on the other hand and in a well understood approach of Tibetan meditation techniques on the other hand:

Reflexive observer position

*"If one wants to analyse an issue, one must first suspend all one's ideas, all one's preconceptions, all one's habitual patterns of thought about it and simply look to see what exists, and proceed from that basis" (ibid., p. 466).*

This simple looking is not to be confused with a neutral view of what is happening. In the simply looking rather, one's own patterns of experience are activated, which one becomes conscious of, if one pays attention to how one's own thinking evolves. Only through an attentive observation of one's own "thought stream," as Senge and Others call it (Senge et al 2003, p. 37) can this be revealed. Simultaneously, this necessitates a "profound disorientation" (ibid., p. 38), "(...) in which our most taken-for-granted ways of seeing and making sense of the world can become unglued" (ibid.).

Peter Senge and others show in their aforementioned book, in which forms a fresh thinking, can reconstruct things, situations and relationships and pave

"Paying attention to our own reactions"

the way for a new consciousness. By fresh thinking, we free ourselves from the pre-established ways of our primary constructions and can understand our thinking, feeling and acting in a more holistic context. Their motto for this inner work is: "Pay attention to our own reactions" (ibid., p. 48), and they know that as such a key skill for leadership and followership can mature: "You can become less reactive and agitated" (ibid., p. 50). And in this way the inner potential can also expand, whereby the behaviour of the parties remains less rigidly bound to the pre-established ways by the primary construction. Senge and others advocate "Presencing", with which they describe an attitude of "retreat and reflect", which brings the individual more and more into the situation of being capable of performing "realizing", which follows the principle "act swiftly, with a natural flow!" (ibid, p. 88). This principle arises from a systemic-attentive attitude that leads to other forms of leadership than those that we normally expect of managers:

*"In a sense, there is no decision making. What to do just becomes obvious, and what is achieved depends on where you're coming from and who you are as a person. The rational calculus model of decision making and following through pays little attention to the inner state of the decision maker" (ibid., p. 89).*

Self-reflexive leadership  
action

The central issue in the development of managers is now whether and to what extent these transformations towards a more self-reflexive leadership action can be initiated and strengthened. In adult education and therapy, the contract clarification is of fundamental importance, it can be assumed that managers often come to learning events to perfect their technical leadership skills; rarely is a self-reflexive claim already pronounced at the beginning of a tutoring, so that an "explicit emotion learning" cannot proceed from an unshared agreement. For this reason, during the training of managers, the experienced leadership action – of the seminar leader – is of fundamental importance. They must, to an extent, disappoint expectations and make *the* non-directive and "self-inclusive" reflective train of thoughts in the course of the seminar become experienceable, which are also considered at the same time as elements of a "capacity to suspend" (Senge et al 2004, p. 29ff) that are to be developed. Disappointment of expectations a guiding principle of a reflective development of managers gives rise to learning opportunities in which skills can be experienced and practiced, with which overbearing certainties can be softened and know-it- all dominance and lack of resonance removed. This has to do with "(...) patience and willingness to impose pre-established frameworks or mental models on what we are seeing" (ibid., p. 31). In this sense, Gary Hamel speaks in his much-acclaimed book "The Future of Management" of the fact "that management innovation is hampered by a lack of imagination" (Hamel, 2008, p. 59) and shows through many examples that these mental limitations of many managers, can cost companies market shares, jobs and billions. He writes:

Inherited beliefs as a burden

*"When it comes to innovation, the inherited beliefs of a company are a much greater burden than the inherited costs. In my experience, only few companies have a systematic process that would allow them to question cherished strategic assumptions. Only a few have*



*taken decisive steps to open their strategy process to opposing viewpoints. Hardly any company welcomes innovations, which represent an interruption of what conventionally exist. What's worse is that usually the high-level executives, with their doctrinaire views, decide on what ideas to be implemented and which to be rejected. That has to change" (ibid., p. 85).*

### Practical Exercise 12:

Why is the disappointment of expectations a guiding principle of a reflective development of managers?



These considerations show that the way we think, feel and act then no longer exclusively becomes "our concern" at the latest, if we work in helping professions, or bear leadership responsibilities. Then at the latest, we will pay for what we offer with and through our person, and what appears possible, appropriate or acceptable to us because of our primary constructions – and this is not just congruent with the company's success because it is our uncompromising impression that we thereby use as a basis. Similarly, we are of course also in our most personal relationships subtly responsible for the fate which befall us and our counterparts – an equally unpleasant thought that refers back to us exactly and especially in situations in which we are most vulnerable. This being referred back to is one of the fundamental teachings of an emotional constructivism, an opinion even shared by modern brain and emotion research. In this sense, the progressive approaches to coaching assume that every successful coaching only works as a self-coaching. It is only this being referred back to one's own patterns of perception that opens up prospects for an abandonment of one's own primary constructive pre-established frameworks, as the work involving Francisco Varela among others shows (see, Varela et al 1992; Goleman 2003). Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche, one of those involved in the brain physiology work of Varela, summarises the findings of this research in the insight that "the feelings of limitation, anxiety and fear, are simply neural talk. They are essentially habits. And one can give up habits" (Mingyur 2007, p. 81). Initiating this change process and accompanying it is the aim of emotional training of managers.

Take your perceptions, views and opinions for what they are: "Pre-established frameworks or mental models" (Senge et al 2004, p. 31) and always try now and again to consider the explanations and interpretations of others as alternatives and allow them determine your actions. The others are also in possession of the truth, their truth!

Mnemonic sentence

### 3.3 Leadership and Followership in everyday school life - from a Theory of Emotion Perspective

Teachers are not executives, although they lead every day: They plan and arrange lessons, give instructions, organise support, evaluate and encourage – all activities to be also executed and are executed by managers. And yet there

is, in my opinion, a crucial difference between a pedagogical-didactic leadership of teaching-learning process and what teachers have to do if they are to lead teams of teachers as school principals and organise school development processes: *They must be able to think and act in terms of organisation and project, and in the process they should be capable of living a self-reflexive convincing authority which does not draw its roots from a pedagogic generation contract.* This task requires skills and abilities that are so far hardly initiated or even professionally anchored in teacher training. On the contrary: the model of didactic teaching guide, which can be considered the heart of professional teaching-learning action, rather tends to encourage the emergence of inappropriate presentation patterns. Their continued influence in shaping school management actions up till now, rather disguised organisation opportunities than made them obvious.

- Convincing authority The productive implementation of *convincing authority* requires technical expertise as well as integration and enthusiast abilities to be able to put in motion and accompany, in a team of teachers, systemic processes that foster the goal-oriented and quality-focused development in the school context. This endeavour is not particularly easy in academic circles. For, apart from the mostly insufficiently developed ability of the management staff, to convincingly act in project and organisation-focused terms, the clientele of the "followers" also present themselves often and with "good" – and internal – reasons as *cumbersome* since the authority issue for both sides – leader and follower – is diffuse, although it is indirectly a current issue for internal reasons, which will still be spoken of later.
- Self-image of teachers A lot also speaks for the fact that there is probably an occupational or professional culture-specific feature in dealing with authority. This seems to have something to do with the *psychic profile of the teaching profession*, that is, with the internal reasons for career choice typical for professional groups and the self-education of teachers. Such an approach to the topic of leadership and followership touches sensitive points, because the illumination of the *inner side of the profession* is understandably viewed as something that is personal and, therefore, removed from generalised scientific consideration, as if we were inwardly "whole individuals" and only socially influenced in our external roles. That this is not the case, has been impressively confirmed again and again not only by critical social research but also by psychotherapy research which states that people are rather controlled subconsciously "in their meaningful, motivated social action" (Max Weber) by pronounceable considerations, but also equally by unpronounceable ones, since unconscious motivations are controlled, so that something that shapes and influences the biography is enforced "behind their back". We are less "masters in our own house" than we think, and the "free will" is also an illusion, albeit without a way out to a different level of freedom, namely one of a more conscious, self-reflective freedom, which gives us the opportunity to recognise our own patterns and get out of them.
- Clinging to ineffective leadership styles What do such insights have to do with the topic leading and following? The answer is an emotion theory one: If it is true that in our conscious decisions, we are controlled and shaped by feelings and emotions, which are biologically explainable processes (see also Ekman, 1994), then it is also true for the career

choices and behaviour in situations, in which we experience leadership, respond to leadership or exercise leadership ourselves. Holding on to unsystemic – and thus therefore ineffective – leadership styles also presents itself to us as an expression of "internal reasons", such as blocking oneself to leadership claims of any kind. Since the perceptions, descriptions and interpretations of the parties, though apparently always refer to the shared reality experienced (e.g., a controversial management decisions), in truth however it follows the individual respective psychodynamic logic, an agreement is not possible, and the fight for the reality, in which one so masterly wears himself out in the vicious circle between "legitimate" anger, resentment, allocation of blame and intrigue, can only fail, as the following example shows:

*The fight for survival of an externally appointed Headmistress*

Example

*Mrs. B. was appointed as an elementary school principal four years ago. It was her first school management position, before then, she worked as a deputy headmistress in a different city. For many years, the management position in the primary school was left unoccupied. An experienced colleague of the predominantly female teachers was charged with the interim management of the school, and he was reckoning with an appointment to this post after the position is advertised. The other teaching staff also expected it. However it turned out differently. Despite the protests of many teachers in the school, an experienced vice-principal from another city was appointed by the relevant ministry, hence this principal was correspondingly received with a defensive attitude.*

*The new principal who knew about the circumstances surrounding her appointment, went on the offensive: She acknowledged the merits of the colleague who had run the school in the past few years as interim principal, she explained that she was willing to constructively work together with all parties involved and without reservation – even with him – and requested collegial support. By doing this she succeeded in cooling-down their anger to a certain extent, and made some of them more open-minded towards her, which found its expression in the statement of a colleague as follows: "We have to give her a chance, after all, it is not her fault that things turned out the way it did!"*

*Everything seemed like a successful new beginning at first, although some observed the work of "the new one" with a clear distance and even judged it very "strictly". Some unwell-thought actions such as the termination of a copy contract, which – as it turned out – was not at all possible or could only be terminated with huge transfer costs, were taken up by some members of staff with "relish" and was discussed in the staff room conversations with an overvalued attention – partly because they believed to have already found the confirmation of their opinion that it was wrong to resolve the succession issue of the acting principal with a new principal. Such little errors accumulated*

– also because "the new one" was not familiar with many routines and established rights and responsibilities in the school – and these mistakes increasingly dominated the collegial side conversations, but also the climate in the conferences.

*It was not long before scepticism became the widespread attitude of everyone towards "the new one", and they made it difficult for her to "trigger" off – even with enthusiastic ideas – other reactions than just "yes, but" reactions. Her attempts to gain acceptance, seemed helpless and always failed miserably, no one really listened to her arguments and proposals. And also the cooperation with the colleague, who previously managed the school as interim director, did not really function, partly because this colleagues perceived all attempts to allocate work to him as a curtailment of his competences and reacted accordingly in an offended manner. After a few months he reported himself permanently ill, a few months later, he applied for early retirement. "She has him "on her conscience" " – commented a colleague in the staff room amongst a round of smokers, and nobody said anything about it. The system was "in opposition". The fight for reality had failed, they were now all in a state of mutual frustration, guilt, apportioning blames, helplessness and paralysis. And the increasingly decisive attempts of the school principal to gain acceptance and form alliances, fell steadily into a fiasco of the "more of-the same" (Watzlawick) - namely, nothing.*

Becoming conscious of  
emotional logics

What should be done in such a – quite ordinary – case? And – so one must ask – what are the practical and workable conclusions that can be drawn from the previously outlined emotion theory considerations for dealing with, or even solving this dilemma? The response direction that should be pursued is based on the already prepared argument that a solution to the dilemma cannot succeed, if the parties do not become aware or at least gain a partial understanding of each emotion logics that determine their actions. This also means that a solution cannot (solely) be found in the entanglement arising here-and-now, but rather only if the parties tread (learn) a path, which on the one hand leads them away from the already underlying perspective that "the actions of the others are wrong", and leads them into the other deeper layers of the underlying reasons for their behaviour. The aim is to detect, by which particular subjective, "lenses" the individual constellates his "way of feeling the world" so as to gradually create an awareness for the fact that we do not encounter a difficulty in social situations only as difficult, but that rather this difficulty arises through an initially emotional and only in the second step cognitive lengthy assessment. This lesson is hard, because we have all settled ourselves with the counterfactual worldview, that the world is the way we feel it. We feel the actions of a manager as "impossible", "amateurish" and so on and that is why it so – for us. And since we have not learned to recognise such emotional constructions of reality and to effectively dissociate ourselves from them, we have also rarely come "to enjoy" a meta-factual worldview that allows us to really see and "take seriously" the wealth of constructive possibilities, which become opened to us, when we are able to leave the prison of our constant re-constellating actions. Certainly:

one cannot but re-constellate, i.e. we have no access at all to the surrounding reality other than through the lens of the familiar, which is why there is never a recognising but rather a recognising anew. But first we must know that this is so, and secondly we need to know that the attitude we adopt towards this reality surrounding us (e.g. the emergence or the authority claim of the new headmistress), only has something to do with this reality in the second place.

Through this example it becomes clear that: Many people have an, leading to virtually unravellable entanglements in all situations, in which they experience authority or exercise it themselves. This means that a solution to the dilemma has to be first initiated in each of the parties, namely by making effort to make the habitual unconscious motivations, become obvious through self-reflection and a clarification of a question that perhaps, initially appears out of place: *How do I construct the failure of this situation for myself? And: What is the "benefit" of this experience to me?*

Ambiguous relationship to authority

### Activity 13:

Think about it: Of what "use" is the failure of the new principal in the example to the teachers? What do they benefit from it?



### "You're o.k., I am o.k." (Harris)

The known communication-practical recommendation of Harris, "You're ok, I'm ok" (Harris 1975) is also of fundamental importance for an emotion theory analysis of interaction between leading and following in daily school life. With this rule, namely, a conscious "fight for reality" (Simon) is given up or relegated to the background. For this fight is namely not to be won. And an effective improvement of the cooperation in school teams or other teams cannot really be guaranteed by a referee coach, since it is not just about "being right". It is about the consistency of one's own emotional experience of the situation compared with the background of each subjective one's way of feeling the world, which is why everyone – according to their own logic – is "right". We feel, interpret and assess the situation as we "need" and can tolerate it. An awareness of this fact can occur usually only if it is possible to reconstruct the repetition track of this experience for each individual, i.e. analyse the questions: *In what situations in my life have I ever felt this way or similarly? What kind of situations were these? What did I want (from whom), in these situations? What did I get from it, what didn't I get?*

Give up the "fight for reality" (Simon)

The "You're ok, I'm ok," from Harris can also be "used" quite differently namely as an invitation to de-dramatise current communication problems. This means that one – even as a consultant – first has to try to create awareness that – "consistent" – communication cannot succeed, which is why people have to rely on dealing productively with inconsistency of communication because this is ultimately what is normal. Of course, one could communicate, making arrangements, etc., but wherever obvious emotional dimensions appear and serve as a hindrance, then it is necessary to acknowledge the complete diversity

and principal inexplicability of the consistency differences as existing and not to try to attempt clarification exercises of any kind.

”Emotional leadership” This also applies to and is primarily for managers. You must be capable of ”emotional leadership” (Goleman 2002), and this means that you must be aware of the formative and (re)constellating power of emotions, thus also be able to recognise the relativity of one’s own perception in emotionally charged situations, and be capable of redefining differing perceptions without judging them as correct, qualifying, and ultimately giving a ”sovereign” opinion about them. The ”defensive pleading” for one’s own positions is of fundamental importance.

For whoever acts out of a hierarchically superior position, disposes – whether he likes it or not – of a position which in itself alone, is able to mobilize all of those feelings in others that have piled up in them in their biographical dealings with experienced authority and which finds their expression in an unrecognised hostility towards authority, or an ambiguous relationship to authority. Though the manager is not responsible for those ”emotional lights” (= the lights, with which one illuminates familiar or emotional situations recognised anew) lurking in the persons associated with them, but this can be triggered or not triggered off. ”Defensive” perception and embodiment of one’s own leadership is a way of not using ”expected” authority. The systematic ”exploring” of strange positions which always represents emotional states, is another form of emotional or emotion-conscious leadership.

Inner systemic attitude What is essential? Ultimately, it is about an inner – systemic – attitude among managers which can be nurtured by doing a lot. This also applies to school managers. Although they should dispose of numerous techniques and ”tools” in terms of project and organisation design in school contexts, however, these tools will hardly be able to unfold their effects when school managers find themselves confronted – as described in the example – with expressions of an unrecognised hostility toward authority, which one simply cannot *do justice to*, because they lead to an inescapable double bond trap, whereby the conflicting expectations of ”lead let us see!” and ”But: Do not lead!” shapes the structure. Since such unconscious motivations are not reflectively available and cannot also be ”brought to light” by the manager himself, simply with a quasi-therapeutic gesture, an investigation of the conduct possibilities that are at all available should be carried out. A question that is difficult to answer since it can be assumed that the usual forms of coaching or team development can only penetrate to such motivations for actions with difficulty, which increasingly mutate to system resistors, but which are ultimately enshrined in the mind of the individual.

Simply appealing to the composure and self-reflexivity of the manager can only be of limited use in this case, although, of course, leadership crises, also almost inextricably get caught, because the described unconscious motivations are lurking in managers, and they express themselves in situations such as those described. Self-clarification and knowledge of the – unavoidable – emotional construction of the world are therefore essential elements on the path to a

self-reflexive management action. Only one who recognises his "echo in the profession," is able to tread "softly" or clearly recognise the part that his echo plays in the system reactions he encounters. And he is then also in a position to deal with overvalued appearance, in which seeking for recognition or early confirmations left open ("I see you!") become anchored to work for themselves and in the suitable context. Thus executives develop their leadership skills in their very core.

However such self-reflexivity alone still does not open approaches in the context of a system whose resistance is fed also from the inner life of the participating subjects. These must also be informed of the working mechanisms and re-constellating forces with which they emotionally construct their reality, so as to be able to break away from the plane of the "fight for reality" (Simon). They need to know about the inevitability of disguising internal tendencies with externals and learn to consider them without excitement – dispassionately – and without "correction expectations" of others. And they must be given the opportunity to realise that it is the breaking away from entangled emotional patterns which then opens the access to the real professionalism of their actions. For, school development, which really deserves to be called such, first begins only after "the games", as it sometimes called in everyday language, can be abandoned, and the joint effort be really focused on the program and the criteria and the related cooperation requirements.

Getting out of entangled patterns of emotion

It is therefore about emotional competence of leaders and followers. This can only develop if the teacher training as well as the school management training initiates targeted insights into the emotional substance of what makes the organisations. Insights alone are however also not sufficient, one's experiencing of the emotional construction of reality (also see Ackerman, 2004) should also occur. For this reason, the promotion of communication-related self-reflexivity also increasingly becomes a key element for "followers". The parties can only really give up "their game" which is associated with forming groups, disseminating slogans etc., if they have – partly shockingly – experienced for themselves that the situations over which they get upset, are emotionally created by themselves. They themselves are the ones that infuse the experience with the emotional substance, and the result is a perception, which only basically has to do with the colouring of one's own "to have" and so is therefore not "more correct", "more legitimate" or "more reasonable" that it should be shared by many. The "making less passionate" of one's own perception and evaluation, as well as the knowledge of their emotional constructedness represent important steps on the way to a self-reflexive observer position, and the ability to changed into such a position is not only a key skill, from which the success of social action "lives", it is also the major skill of communication-intensive occupations, which include the teaching profession as well as all managerial positions. Such a "making less passionate" is thus not only central for leaders – like the reference to the defensive pleading has shown – it also applies in particular to the followers in school contexts (teachers), especially as these inevitably lead (classes, learning groups and individuals). And this brings us to a central question that T.W. Adorno already pointed out in his "Taboos about the teaching profession": the "psychological deformation" caused by the teaching profession (Adorno 1970),

Promoting communication-related self-reflexivity

which Adorno sees constituted by experiencing the effects of excess of authority (in training and internship):

”Psychological deformation”  
through the teaching  
profession

*”Time and again we hear that (...), student teachers were broken during their training period, this was equal to casting out the momentum in them, the best thing they have. (...) One should have particularly paid attention to what extent the concept of educational need suppresses intellectual freedom and spiritual formation. This then comes to light in the hostility towards mind of some school boards, which prevent the teachers from scientific work in a planned manner, bringing them down to earth again and again, being suspicious of those who say, as they probably say, want to go higher up or somewhere else. Such hostility towards mind which teachers themselves experience, is simply continued in their attitude towards the students” (ibid, p. 85f).*

It is true that compared to the more than forty years old last finding certainly much has now changed, however many student teachers and teachers today still experience the start of their career and their profession as ”hostility towards mind” to speak like Adorno. However, this outlined link between one’s experience of authority (especially during critical phases of life) on the one hand, and its impact in an unrecognised hostility toward authority, which makes leading and following become a problem of school development, on the other hand is hardly existent in the public consciousness. It is worthwhile to further empirically explore this connection mentioned here in the future, so as not to want to set innovations in progress at the forefront of education policy, the success of which is already undermined in the bud in the hinterland of the teacher’s everyday life.



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