INSIDE THE CHANGE

Key concepts and exercises of the new methodology of the evidential

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Content

Introduction 3

2. Human creation and connected issues 5

Some examples 5

Developments in social sciences 8

3. Creating a link between the inner and the outer world 12

Observation 13

Language 13

Judgment 14

Meaning 14

4. Core concepts of the methodology of the evidential 17

Process, dialogue, and biography 18

Starting points 22

5. Core exercises for the methodology of the evidential 25

Management 25

Leadership 27

1. Seeing the steering issue 28

2. Clarifying the steering issue 30

3. Clarifying vision 33

4. Improving work processes 36

5. Pointing out the steering principles 38

6. Setting up the inner team 41

7. Designing scenarios for the future 43
6. Horizontal leadership 45
Entering horizontal leadership 46
7. Practical applications 51
Processes of change in organizations 51
Coaching others 55
Education and training 56
Leadership 57
Advisorship 58
Professional skills 59
8. Results and discoveries 62
9. How to acquire all this 68
Finally 73

Introduction

In our search for new ways to deal with awkward, difficult issues of change in organizational contexts, we come up against people hanging on to persistent convictions and dysfunctional approaches, in spite of the repetitive experience that their endeavors to bring about desired and necessary changes keep failing. We trust that experts can give us the answers and we hope that the new hype can force a breakthrough; we are ever ready to believe it will work the next time. But we are not at all willing to critically look at the way in which we work in these persistent issues of change.

A lack in the approach usually pursued by experts is that the inner world of people involved hardly ever gets energized. We are busy changing outer circumstances and are surprised that, nonetheless, hardly anything changes in the processes, in people's behavior, in the living vision. We completely reconstruct the organization, we adopt new systems and buildings, slogans, mission statements, and still people go on in their familiar way.

We keep coming up against the fact that the relation between management and employee has not fundamentally changed in the course of our working life. On the contrary, I think there is a growing divide between the two and stagnation in the way we associate with each other, which causes so much difficulty between management and employees in dealing with complicated matters, now that so much continually needs to be changed. Managers pass on instructions for change, engage experts, and employees wonder what to do with all this. They improvise in their work whenever things do not work well, and they do not know how to explain it to their managers.

This divide is intensified by the fact that both managers and employees are busy with their own work processes, in which they have to work effectively and efficiently and do not really have time to intensively and peacefully discuss essential matters. Things are added all the time and hardly anything is ever dropped.

Moreover, changes are handled in an operational way, top-down and bottom-up, along hierarchic and functional lines. These, however, turn out to be not very suitable. It takes longer than planned, it costs more and does not yield the expected results.

Sometimes we are at our wits' end. How to go on?

In this book, we describe a methodology, based on years of research and experimenting, that aims at dealing with this divide and at fruitfully working on awkward issues in and of organizations, especially in complex and sometimes difficult circumstances. This methodology is connected to developments in social sciences that will be briefly characterized later in the book. It is also connected to longstanding practices of creative leaders and advisers who look for new ways in dealing with awkward questions.

2. Human creation and connected issues

A question that has occupied executives in organizations in many cultures for decades goes: "How do I motivate my employees in such a way that they, independently and out of their own responsibility, perform well, reach their targets, and take good initiatives to improve their work results?"

A question that has occupied employees in organizations in many cultures for decades goes: "How do I make my bosses listen to me, to us, so that we at last can tackle our real problems? What on earth are they doing up there?"

I keep coming across these questions while working as an organization development partner in large and small organizations for many years in many countries in and out of Europe. There is a divide between management and employees that cannot naturally be bridged.

Some examples

- *In a large social organization, the management from top to team manager has endeavored for years to change the organization, to be more focused on the client, to be more efficient. They are very busy. When it comes to a judgment on the management's performance by the employees, the annual measurement indicator of employee satisfaction shows falling figures. What on earth are the managers doing, the employees say. How can we win the employees over, the managers say.*
- *In our research into leadership, we use a questionnaire in many organizations in several countries and cultures in which executives do a 360 degrees examination of four core qualities of leadership: their process steering, their coaching of learning*

processes, their inspiring vision develop ment, and their interventions in unacceptable situations. Employees, colleagues, and their own manager participate in this. This examination strikingly shows a structural divide between the assessments of the manager himself and of his employees. The assessment of the manager himself that of his manager, and that of his colleagues are much closer to each other than the assessments of the manager and of his employees. The manager for instance considers himself as a good coach for his employees who stimulates their learning, whereas the employees think that if there is one thing their manager does not and cannot do, then that is coaching. But the opposite also holds true. The manager thinks of himself as not strong in taking action, whereas the employees are of the opinion that their manager takes action all the time.

- *Every day one is confronted with situations in which what is said differs from what is done. Decisions are taken that are not executed. Statements are made about mission and vision that are not followed up. Large projects are set up with good intentions that perish in the hustle and bustle and complexity of everyday life.*

These are just some of the observations, experiences, and research results that are shown by the problem in question.

The incessant effort to solve this problem also indicates that this is an insoluble problem, or, as Harry Kunneman calls it, a slow issue.

The endless torrent of projects to improve the relation between manager and employees, the unstoppable torrent of trainings and programs that aim at dealing with this problem, the incessant flood of change activities that, as research shows, usually fail or lead to unsatisfying results, the increasing attention for difficult issues, as in

PhD studies, are living proof that this issue is very much alive and significant and that we do not know how to deal with it.

In our own long-term drive to deal with this problem in a significant way, in practice and in theory, we have evolved to the following hypothesis:

The issue of the divide between management and employees can first of all be seen as an organization problem. In the organization, there simply is hierarchy, the drive to attain goals, an extensive scheme of systems, functions, tasks, procedures, and rules and therefore a difference in responsibility between manager and employee. The employee is the responsibility of the manager, is controlled, judged, and coached by the manager. This leads to a relation of top and bottom.

But the organization is a created cohesion in which the participants operate in a self-made coherence that is not natural. The organization is not a family with blood ties that last a lifetime. The organization is a transient affair, a part-time component of life, a possibility. In an organization, we do not have the natural cohesion of the family but temporary, volatile human connections. An organization is not preserved by itself and has no other sense from itself than the preservation and the sense we attach to it.

This means that the natural lasting hierarchy between parents and child that we know in a family, or the natural hierarchy between the oldest and the youngest that we see in natural communities, is not self-evident in our organized relations.

The boss can be the employee's son.

So there is a distinction between natural cohesion and organized cohesion. The rules of the natural cohesion may not necessarily work in the organized cohesion.

We could even say that, whereas in the natural cohesion there is an underlying harmonic principle and everything is in relation with everything else, this is not the case in the organized cohesion where on the contrary there are paradoxality, opposites, and polar relations.

This means that the established divide between management and employee is a clear expression of this paradoxality. So with increasing efforts to transform this paradox into harmony (the problem solved and the change effected), the paradox is experienced more intensely, resistance increases, and it does not work. This brings us to an important issue.

In organized cohesions, the inner experience of people involved is an essential part of the action that can hardly be expressed, especially in organized cohesions. This inner experience is not driven by 'harmony' but by 'contrasts'. We live, as it were, in not self-evident, complex relations that we do not know, do not grasp, cannot predict well, and that we cannot escape from (I'm leaving) or get on board of (I'm going to change it).

This also shows us that the increasing emphasis on change and renewal is an essential component of the organized existence, whereas in the natural existence, there is a drive to return to the source, to restoration of what is upset, to harmonic relations.

Developments in social sciences

If we want to gain a deeper insight into the outlined issue, the unequal relation between management and employee, and the way we can deal with that in change processes, it is useful to pay attention to the way in which we can explore and process this issue. For that, we can turn to important developments that have taken place in social sciences during the last decades. I would like to

characterize this development as the emancipation of social sciences from the context of natural science and humanities. Social sciences look for their own methodology that is adequate for research in the organized cohesions in which we increasingly live.

We can argue that man is falling from his natural relationships and is increasingly living in organized relationships, from birth till death, and all day long. The methodology of natural science and humanities that offered us assistance in creating and researching these organized relationships is not sufficient anymore today to control and research these complex, self-made worlds. We feel the need for our own social sciences research methodology that gives us a deeper insight in what is going on but also teaches us to deal with this organized complex life in a meaningful way. I would like to elaborate on this statement.

I will characterize the emancipatory development of social sciences as follows:

Science always had nature as its subject while humanities deal with man's spirit. Nature and spirit have their laws that we want to trace by research. This gives us insight into laws that help us to get a grip on nature and spirit. Technology, for instance, is a nice result of this.

At the same time, we increasingly get to live in a world engineered by ourselves. The natural laws of nature and spirit do not self-evidently work anymore in the organized human relationship that it creates. When we, for instance, transform oil into petrol and use it to drive our cars, we need systems to do so that can fail when used. We are stranded at the roadside and wait for road service. Or we have painstakingly constructed a quality system that should guarantee the control of product and process and we find out that nobody uses the system well but continues in the old way.

The first and most important discovery in social sciences is the notion that action and insight go hand in hand in the social, the interpersonal sphere. Research influences this situation and changes it.

The second discovery is that in social sciences a dialogue approach does justice to the situation. It is not a subject-object relation, as with spirit and nature, but a subject-subject relation. Constructivism shows us this. 'The who' and 'the what' are connected.

The third discovery is that action and insight have a certain relationship with each other, that only afterwards meaning is added and that this addition is not unambiguous. People can observe and assess common experiences in a completely different way.

The fourth discovery is that everything in the social sphere changes and develops and that by continuous and regular repetition, certain laws are formed, temporarily and contextually, and that these laws form the social sphere in a dominant way. When we apply different laws, this entails different social realities. Guiding notions, values, and standards that are applied do not function absolutely from within but in a context of the people who apply them and who can change while doing this. But their implementation has certain predictable contextual effects that can later be observed and judged differently.

In dealing with the paradox of the human creation, with difficult issues, with slow questions, it seems important not only to include the observation of external phenomena, the so-called facts, but also to pay attention to the processes, the workings, the phenomena, experiences, judgments, and decisions that people take internally and which they live with. This is important because it is in these inner worlds that the work may have to be done, as far as the research of

and the dealing with divides such as those between management and employees are concerned.

The methodology of the evidential, as it is being developed, aims at dealing with all this. It provides an opportunity, a basis for researching and dealing with realities in the social and interpersonal sphere, and with the resulting creations.

Studying what follows in this book may lead you to the 'secret' of this methodology. It may enrich your own repertoire of research and dealing with the social, organized sphere.

The very first step we would like to take is to explore how we create coherence between the inner and the outer world and how these can blend in processes of change out of inspiration.

3. Creating a link between the inner and the outer world

Dealing with inert and complicated issues strongly calls foi inner thinking power, sensitive willingness, and creative vigor of individuals and of teams. It is insufficient to devise intelligent systems that can make change happen. First of all, we need to touch people's inner worlds, to affect each other there. This opens up the possibility to get into action and to create a new relation between the inner and the outer world.

We find the link between the inner and the outer world in what we call here the human soul. This human soul is an old and controversial concept. Does something like that exist and if so, what does it look like?

To answer this question, we choose the principle that, whereas the human mind and the human body are part of a natural, harmonically organized world, this is not true for the soul. The soul is paradoxical, contrary. That is what we want to show here.8

The following four principles are used as a starting point for investigating the paradoxality of the soul and the subsequent necessity to link the inner and the outer world.

- *Firstly*: observation. Observation is building a bridge between the inner and the outer world.
- *Secondly*: language. We use language to express the link between the inner and the outer world. Thirdly: judgment. With judgment we create a connection between the inner and the outer world.
- *Fourthly*: meaning. With meaning we create significance from the outer world into the inner world and vice versa.

These four principles are elementary for building bridges between the inner and the outer world when we work on difficult issues. This is where managers and employees meet or pass each other by.

We will clarify these four principles, each in their own kind.

Observation

We are equipped with senses. We can see, hear, touch, smell, taste. We draw, as it were, the outer world into the inner world with the senses. This is how it enters us. Our body is set up to process these observations. We are only vaguely aware of this. Processing our food, our impressions, experiences, our stimulants of the senses et cetera is a constant process of observation. Our skin, organs, nerves, blood are all part of this process of observation and digesting. Illness and health mirror this process of observation and digesting.

Language

With language we can express ourselves. We can make our inner world and what goes on in there perceptible and recognizable through the language we use. The words we use, the sentences we coin, the gestures we make, also the feeling we put into all these or the will that wants to reveal itself, all this is expressed in language. Words and sentences carry notions and ideas into the world that makes us give meaning to what we experience. Language makes us communicate and meet each other. Body language is part of this.

Judgment

The paradox of the soul is the reason that what we observe and what we express in language is not naturally related. There are contrasts, changes. Suddenly we see something differently, we see or hear something we did not notice before. We are forced to continuously consider, to continuously link the inner and the outer world. In the process we meet others who get us going. The creation of these relations is shown in the judgments we make. A judgment is creating a relation from a process of interpretation. This process is an interpersonal occurrence, a continuous consideration, and a reorientation, giving something its place. Judgments form the basis of decisions we take, actions we undertake and movements we make. They can be healthy, but also wrong. This is shown by how judgment works in the social sphere. Judgments turn out to be not absolute but relative.

Meaning

In order to avoid getting lost in this human world of creation, we will have to deal with the question of morality. Does it matter what we say, experience, do? What brings this about? Does it destroy others or does it lift them up? We enter a world of meanings that we will create ourselves. We fall out of the given natural morality and will bear our own responsibility for our observations, language, judgments, and decisions. In the social sphere everything that is permitted or forbidden, encouraged or repressed is not objectively given but needs to be determined between people who are involved, whose business it is. This generates plurality in morality. It requires a personal position, our own point of view, our own judgment and decision. For this we need to develop morals of meaning which to express this with. I morals. We morals.

Whereas in the natural and spiritual world we see perfection — everything is connected with everything — in our own world of creation, in the organization it is more a question of imperfection.

The situation that we can take as a starting point is that it is not right. We are handicapped in our observations, in how we express ourselves in language, in our judgments, and in the moral sense that we add. Aristotle saw it like this and it is described in the Old and New Testament as well. Thomas van Aquino, Hannah Arendt, Jürgen Habermas and Martin Heidegger, among many others, show it. In a practical way, it is mostly demonstrated by our incessant endeavors to make our lives right in organized contexts. It is nice when it works sometimes. A client of an organization can most acutely experience this.

- *For instance on your birthday, you are splendidly waited on at a dinner you have organized in your favorite restaurant. The food is good, it is not too expensive, the guests have a lovely time, relations have been intensified, the staff feels good while working, the owner realizes she is doing well. You have happy memories for a long time.*
- *Another example is completely rearranging the small back garden. Talks with the owner of the garden center go well and smoothly. He thinks along with your own design. When the job has started, the gardeners work well together in harmony, they know which steps to take, they consult you when necessary, use their own initiative and appreciate the coffee, cake, and drinks that appear regularly. You and your partner agree that a nice tip is deserved at the end of the job. You pay the bill with pleasure. You enjoy the sun sitting in your beautiful patio.*

But when you watch carefully, you see that a lot is wrong in the processes you experience as a client or employee. There are constant failures, expectations are not met, there are no results, or the result is disappointing. In the social sphere, this demands of us constant care and adaptation of what we are doing, of how this answers our desires and those of others, what the sense and meaning of it is, how to get on with it.

We can relate to that if we develop an awareness of what is important in the social sphere. A lot can be said about that.

Developing an awareness of the social sphere, of how we associate with each other, can bring managers and employees together. We can then make and see a fundamental distinction between how it works among us in a vertically hierarchical relation and how it works in a horizontal, non-hierarchical relation. In the vertical, it is mainly power, in the horizontal, it is mainly encounter. In the vertical, the functional dominates, we are oriented on output. In the horizontal, the personal dominates, we are oriented on inspiring input. Especially in processes of change, the real art is to mobilize the horizontal. This starts with a shared research of the question, with strong application of the four principles observation, language, judgment, and meaning.

In our work as leaders and advisors in processes of change in difficult issues, we have developed a methodology for people and organizations, which can help us to deal in a moral way with disrelations that we come across within and outside ourselves and which can also help us to change in an inspired, creative, and meaningful way.

4. Core concepts of the methodology of the evidential

In our research for a meaningful methodology to cope with difficult issues in processes of organization development, the interpersonal changeable, we first of all encountered three crucial concepts that deserve our attention in any situation, at any moment, if change is the issue.

> These concepts are process, dialogue, and biography They will be discussed in this chapter.

We also detected some essential scientific starting points used in natural science and humanities that can be useful in social research and can especially be utilized while dealing with difficult issues of change in organizations.

The starting points:

- We always assume issues to be an expression of disrelations that we want to set into motion.
- We start from what can be observed and always return to that.
- We verify our observations, our judgments, and our conclusions with other people who are part of the community involved, to check whether they matter.
- We trace the stories that are told about the issue that occupies us and listen to those stories with an ear to giving meaning.
- We watch out for guiding views that steer behavior in the situation and that are based on moral convictions.

We will expound on these starting points, too.

Process, dialogue, and biography

We live our lives in processes. Not only do we experience natural processes as sleeping and eating, but we also live in organized processes as working, traveling, and studying.

We look upon a process as a rhythmical repetition of activities that we perform, also with others.

Every process has beat, rhythm, and melody.

The beat is the tact of the repetition, the rhythm is what takes place between the inner and the outer world, and the melody is the issue, the theme ofwhat it is about. People live in cycles of beat, rhythm, and melody and they are asked to deal with these while improvising. Even if it is a repetition, this repetition is never exactly the same in the social sphere as the preceding cycle.

> *We have, for example, a meeting every Monday morning that lasts for three hours and deals with items on the agenda. We follow the agenda, we discuss various topics and various themes that are dealt with and attuned.*

We are confronted with the fact that we have to design, execute, and adjust processes. Whereas natural processes happen systematically — the sun rises and sets; human social processes happen according to the beat, the rhythm, the melody that we ourselves have put at their basis. It is therefore not an easy matter to establish and execute a good process. We can decide that the Monday morning meeting is too long, costs too much energy, and is not productive enough and that we want to change our meetings. For example, we appoint a

problem owner for every item on the agenda, discussions are limited in time, and we finish every item with a clear agreement.

You could say that processes happen casually. You do not see them, but they are there. Things, problems, contents often take up our attention; we do not always have eyes for how a process works and is designed. Since in various processes we are also parallel and at the same time restrained, disrelations are bound to occur. We execute a work process, a family process, and a personal learning process all in one day and have to switch over from one process to another with each transition. We do not always succeed. We get into trouble. Our behavior in the social sphere is largely determined by the way in which a process progresses and by how processes relate to each other. This does not only apply to the actual activities but also to our corresponding emotions and thoughts. If the process is not right, we will show strange behavior. This applies to the smallest details. No water comes out of the tap when you are in the shower, you keep missing every train connection, a colleague makes the same nasty remark about the same item on the agenda in a meeting over and over again, and so on. Look in the mirror to see how you react. Tension between the inner and the outer world is building up.

We are not alone in these processes. We meet others, for instance in a client-supplier or a boss-employee relationship or among colleagues. We work with others, we relate to each other, we are dependent on each other in this regard. This can be a struggle, but it can also be wonderful. Do we understand each other, do we mean the same thing, do we scratch each other's back and do we respond to each other?

We are in a continuous dialogue with others. This certainly also applies for the way in which we attach importance to what we experience and do and what happens to us. We carry on a dialogue

with each other to find out how things are, what they are about, what I think about them. You can describe dialogue as 'helping each other'. It is not one serving the other, no, we serve each other. It is two-way traffic. In our cooperation, we are, for example, not just client of the other but also supplier at the same time. It is a real exchange relationship. But we also experience power relationships where one person determines things for the other. We also experience learning relationships in which we examine and discover together. The quality of the dialogue has a big influence on the quality of experience. We bring the inner and the outer world together in a combined action, a vibration, and an energetic back and forth. We take in and emit, we feed and receive, and we support and are helped.

By traveling through processes in dialogue with others, for hours, days, weeks, months, years, we develop our own life story, our own biography. We write with our finger in the soil, we trace a line in time; we land in other people's lives. The biography, the life story is the context of our appreciation. What happens to us, what we undergo and create gets a place in our biography and accompanies us in our memory and our conscience. It feeds the soul and forms our own personality. Our biography joins biographies of others and also biographies of organizations. We become part of a larger totality. We find our associates whom we share interests with, whom we set out with, whom we exchange insights and experiences with. Every biography is unique and a part of a larger totality at the same time. We are formed by our surroundings but we also create our own situations and meanings that take up a place in our own life story. Man increasingly creates his own biography. We are no longer only the sons of our fathers and mothers, the children of our country, but we are who we ourselves have made and who have been made by others. In the biography, we process all life contents and transform

them into new meanings. In the biography we create meaning in our lives.

These three, *process*, *dialogue*, and *biography*, are important creative principles in the social sphere that we can use in giving form and meaning to our own lives and to the common lives that we live. They form the basis of the modern art of living in organization contexts. This applies specifically to our dealing with inert questions and difficult issues.

It is an art to create and execute processes in organizations that flow and yield results that we can elaborate on. Knowledge of processes is being developed that we can use while creating difficult processes of change, of learning, of work, of cooperation, of giving meaning in organizations.

It is an art to carry on a dialogue in just that context, to bring each other into play, to react to each other. As we succeed in this, synergy arises, an added value that adds to what is already there. This can be knowledge, skills, other relations, and good decisions.

Especially in processes of change in organizations, it is an art to create a biographical connection between our own lives and the lives of others, between our biographies and the biographies of organizations that we deal with.

You could pose that the better we fit in our processes, the more intensive the dialogue is, and the more meaningful it is felt to be in the context of our own biographies, the more we are present in the life of our organization and ourselves, and the more we can fulfill our personal mission as human beings. This is increasingly noticeable when people and organizations grow older. Then we see the fruits but also the missed chances and undigested failures.

As these three, *process*, *dialogue*, and *biography*, are taken into ourselves more, the inner and the outer world become more

involved with each other and the soul can flourish. This is meaningful and essential in processes of change in organizations and can bridge the gap between management and employees in the organized community, because we first of all meet each other in them and associate with each other from personal qualities. We can let go of the vertically functional association of managers and employees in the daily operational events and set out together in the process of change and development in a personal and horizontal way. Both, the operational and the change, can coexist very well in organized life as long as we have a common awareness of it.

Starting points

In order to develop an expanded awareness for starting processes of change in organizations, we recommend to work with certain starting points in organized life that have proved their worth in natural science and humanities; they can support and guide us in dealing with the organized social sphere.

Starting point 1: We depart from issues as expressions of disrelations that we want to set into motion.

It is for instance sensible not to regard problems as isolated matters, but as the expression of a disrelation between several realities. We keep going back to the question, What is the issue? Issues in the organized social sphere are not objective but subjective. When we examine the issue, we see that the issue changes, that it has several distinctive aspects. An issue is not unambiguous but is seen and felt differently by different people. Just being engaged in issues, paying attention to them causes something to happen. Relations are set in motion. All of a sudden, you see things a little differently, you value them differently, your opinion changes. This is a continuous and iterative thing. In this sense, questions get us further, but they

also keep coming back in different shapes. This holds true especially for fundamental, inner, and inert questions.

Starting point 2: We depart from what we can observe and we keep going back to that.

Issues can run off with us. We can cling to them. We have a strong opinion and judgment and sometimes the other one "has not understood". In the meantime, the issue goes on and new events take place.

What should we do?

We will have to go back to observation over and over again. What does it really look like? So-called facts play a major part. They are our real observations and experiences, but also added-up events that appear in statistics. A productive focus in the social sphere is perceiving how the issue develops, how it changes, what metamorphosis takes place, and often how the issue returns on a different level of awareness. By always returning to observation, we can get an idea of how and why an issue develops.

Starting point 3: We verify our observations, our judgments, and conclusions with other people who are part of the involved community to see whether it matters.

We are not alone in the world, but with others. We live in communities and deal with groups and individuals. It is useful to keep verifying how other people see things. This holds true mainly for people involved in the issue, such as clients or suppliers or colleagues. By exchanging how others observe things and whether they observe them at all, we put the issue in a perspective and are better able to decide whether it matters. I can see an issue that others do not observe at all or differently. By shared exploration and exchange, the various aspects of the issue come to light.

Starting point 4: We trace the stories told around the issue that occupies us and listen to those stories with an ear to giving meaning.

In our research, we have to do with stories that are told. These stories show us how people involved deal with the issue. Often we do not entirely understand these stories, but we can feel how the storyteller relates to the issue. We face individualized stories that can be different. Something we have experienced together can lead to two completely different stories. This is also caused by the fact that the inner and the outer world and their unique relation are expressed in them.

Starting point 5: We are alert to steering principles that direct the behavior in the situation and that are based on moral convictions.

Behind the perceptible phenomena, invisible dimensions will play a part. People involved are present with their own views, standards, and values and will first and foremost be guided by these steering principles, which in a certain way relate to other people's views or to leading principles in the organized community. Views, based on different steering principles, can clash and lead to confrontations. Conflicts are, for example, expressions of different conflicting views. The meaning- and sense-giving are strongly determined by the leading values and ideas of the people involved. These values and ideas can start moving or be set into motion, which can lead to completely different interpretations and assessments.

The three concepts *process*, *dialogue*, and *biography* and the *five starting points* can be applied and encountered in the core exercises that follow. With these core exercises, we can experience the concepts and starting points. It makes it possible to get used to them and to incorporate them in a stronger degree in your own organized practice. The exercises will particularly benefit those who are in command, who act in processes of change, and also teachers and

students who want to work with the issues and methodology expressed here.

5. Core exercises for the methodology of the evidential

In this chapter, we will describe the seven core exercises for the methodology of the evidential. These exercises make you experience the core concepts and starting points, but also the difficulty of working with these concepts and starting points in practical life. It demands quite something to master this methodology as an orientation for one's own practical way of acting and reflecting. You may easily understand it, but that is not enough. It requires exercising just like a musical instrument that wants to be played.

The seven core exercises, for that matter, form a good basis for leadership training. It is leadership that brings along a maximum of creating and also reflective experience in the changing social sphere. We call it horizontal leadership to emphasize that it takes place between people and also in the combined action of the inner and the outer world. We see this as distinctive from vertical management in which we described the divide between management and employee as our starting question. Horizontal leadership bridges this divide and also provides a useful possible answer to this basic problem, this difficult issue, and this inert question of organizations.

We will characterize in short the distinction between management and leadership before we start with the exercises.

Management

The common approach to the relation between management and employee can be seen as follows:

Managers are busy setting and realizing goals, detecting and solving problems, dealing with issues, taking decisions, coordinating activities, planning, making strategies, laying down rules, and introducing procedures — in short, building functional systems that lead to desired results. Employees play a functional part in this as the word itself expresses this. Employees are supposed to conform to the package of functions and tasks that are intended for them, cooperate with others, and account for the way they function.

In this sense, managers usually look beyond employees and see them in the light of the desired functioning of the organization.

Employees regard managers as people in charge, whom they are dependent on and who must create preconditions in order for them to function properly.

In this set-up, fingers are easily pointed at each other.

- The manager says, his door is always open for employees with questions and problems. The idea is that the manager has the answers and the solutions. When the employee comes, the manager is absent or busy with other matters and meetings.
- The manager looks at the work of the employees and corrects it if he thinks this is necessary. The employees discuss amongst themselves the way the manager functions and they have certain opinions about this.
- The manager thinks that employees must improve their working methods and provides training and instruction. The employee thinks that the manager must create better preconditions for the work to be done properly.

When the issues are operational matters, work and production or service, cooperation, carrying out the work process, monitoring quality and result, then a functional hierarchic relation can work very well if everybody shows the demanded discipline. It requires a certain reserve; it requires a functional balancing of various interests, a careful handling of force and counterforce. Naturally conflicting interests can arise that must be settled hierarchically, for instance in appraisal interviews. For this purpose, organization-wide bodies such as work councils and unions have been set up.

Leadership

This operational, functional relation between manager and employee cannot function at all when it comes to change. Then, totally different forces come into play. First and foremost, we are all managers and employees, involved in and part of the change. And nobody really knows what the change will look like and how to best bring it about. A change also needs its own new process that is not a work process but one of investigation and development. It is all about finding the right input, the right ideas and contents that can bring us further. In a sense, we jump from a power relation to a dialogue relation.

When it is about change, we set out together, everyone has their own contribution, we develop our own roles, and we have arrived when we have come together in a new relation.

Then it is difficult for managers and employees to act in the operational infrastructure of an organization. The usual operational infrastructure with its goals and systems is not suitable for processes of change. They require a different infrastructure, which is horizontal and has its main accent in time. It is a matter of rhythmic dialogue and reflective meeting between those involved, in which they share

their experiences and findings and support each other in taking further steps. That is a job of investigation and discovery, the horizontal leadership process in which all participate. The necessary preconditions are found and set up while following the process. This is in contrast with the operational processes, in which we first create preconditions before we can produce something or render a service.

The distinction between management and leadership asks for a different repertory for managers and employees in operational and change processes. The following exercises offer the opportunity to experience and practice the repertory of change and of horizontal leadership. We call them guiding exercises to make clear that everything is directed at concrete people creating and realizing the process of change together step by step.

The seven guiding exercises are called:

1. Seeing the steering issue
2. Clarifying the steering issue
3. Clarifying vision
4. Improving work processes
5. Pointing out the steering principles
6. Setting up the inner team
7. Designing scenarios for the future

1. Seeing the steering issue

- The need for change becomes explicit and the steering issue becomes visible by showing the client situation / the process with the client, the decision maker situation / the process with the decision maker, the community situation / the

process of cooperating people and by examining their mutual relation/disrelation.

- A clear picture of the need for change and of the steering issue offers the opportunity to concentrate on the essential in the steering practice in the change process.
- Steering issues move about and look differently in the course of the process. It is therefore important to keep examining this triangle and identifying the observed disrelation.

EXERCISE

- A takes ten pictures in his own workplace that show the client situation, the decision-maker situation and the community situation of cooperating people.
- A describes what the pictures show without explanations or background information.
- B/C/D characterize what they have seen and heard, and on the basis of this they formulate they necessary change in A's organization and A's steering issue.
- A formulates the need for change and his steering issue on basis of the feedback.

CLARIFICATION

- A takes ten pictures in his/her own workplace and from these he/she chooses what he/she wants to show.
- This triangle approach, client, decision-maker and community, makes the steering issue the link between these

three. The descriptions by A make the existing disrelations audible and visible for B/C/D.

- By A just showing the pictures and sticking to only that without getting lost in all sorts of explanations and background stories (before I describe the pictures, I have to tell you about . . so not that), B/C/D are better able to see the core of the steering issue.
- By formulating the change issue and how A can steer this, the change issue becomes a steering issue. This creates an entry into the process of change and into the development of A's leadership process.

2. Clarifying the steering issue

- In order to clarify the steering issue and to get it into focus, this issue can be questioned.
- The aim is to formulate the various images and stories around this issue and to take a further step in the process.
- For this, essential leadership qualities are applied: questioning the issue, setting up and monitoring the process, discerning the essential, and finding the next step available to those involved.
- Questioning the issue sets it into motion and shows different aspects of the issue. This opens up the view to new steps that can be taken.

EXERCISE

- A formulates the issue and writes it down.
- B asks A clarifying questions for five minutes.
- A reflects with the help of B's questions. B deduces his questions from what A tells him.
- After five and ten minutes, C stops the dialogue of A/B and asks A to formulate the issue again. A writes down the new formulation.
- After ten minutes, D, according to his own views, summarizes the essence of what A has told them.
- D helps A to formulate the following concrete step. A writes down the essence as described by D and also the next step found.
- A ends up with three formulated issues, a formulation of the essence, and a next step after this process of fifteen minutes.
- Now the roles change.

Setup:

C

A B

D

CLARIFICATION

- Leadership qualities are experienced by explicitly introducing these roles into the process.
- A experiences: being able to tell what matters both expressively and concretely.

- B experiences: being able to question the other person to "make him tell things better" and not to "satisfy wanting to understand himself".
- C experiences: monitoring the process and time.
- D experiences: being able to see and tell the essence of the story and the issue.
- In teamwork, these qualities yield the following irreversible step by A in the process of change.
- In the practice of leadership, the parts of B, C and D are united in one person.

3. Clarifying vision

- Voicing one's own vision in a personal way can inspire someone else to go along in the process.
- Describing a vision in different ways reveals one's involvement: the I-quality of leadership is strengthened.
- Working with a vision is a leadership quality that, in a community, ensures a direction to be found and what really matters to be dialogued on.
- Describing a vision is also an invitation to others to make their own views more explicit and put them forward. Different visions create a better picture of the direction to follow.
- Different visions create a better picture of the direction to follow.

EXERCISE

- A describes his vision without interruption for a maximum of five minutes to B/C/D.
- B listens to the contents.
- C listens to the emotional value.
- D listens to the direction of the will
- After five minutes, B, C and D "gossip" about A's presentation of his vision. They do not look at A. A sits averted at some distance and listens.

- A listens and takes notes during the "gossiping". B, C and D give A a hint on how the vision presentation can go differently/better.
- A gives a second vision presentation with the same contents in a different way on the basis of the hint.
- B, C and D tell A how this has affected them.

Change of roles.

Setup:

A

B C D

(A standing, B, C and D sitting)

CLARIFICATION

- A experiences: being able to describe your vision expressively and inspiringly sets others in motion.
- B/C/D experience: listening to a vision and characterizing it makes you more aware of it. Contents, emotion, and the direction of the will are observed and lead to a useful hint on how A can describe it differently.
- B/C/D look for contrast. It is a challenge for A to describe his vision in a contrary way. This disturbs the customary pattern. If it was abstract, the hint could be: make it concrete with an example. This makes the person of A look stronger and the presentation less functional.

- Looking for the opposite of the used description helps A to mobilize another side of his personality from inside. The functional pattern is disturbed. The effect on B/C/D is stronger. It comes across better.

4. Improving work processes

- Important interventions in relation to the steering issue take place in the work processes. The work processes determine the behavior of the people involved.
- Changing and improving a work process leads to more meaningful and more effective actions from people in work processes. They can let go of old behavior without this being enforced by others.
- The people involved change and improve their work processes themselves. They do not outsource the change to experts, but do the change themselves.
- The people involved, in various stages in the process, join forces in improving the whole process together. This creates new relations between them.

EXERCISE

- A describes a work process that does not run smoothly on three levels:
    - Who is responsible for taking decisions?
    - Who works together at this stage?
    - What steps are taken in the work process?
- At first, all steps in the process are shown, starting with the interface with the client. After that, the people who work together are shown at every step and after that the person who takes the important decisions is shown at every step.
    - B questions A on these three levels of work process description: how is that happening in practice?

    - C writes down / draws on a flip chart what A describes.
    - D observes everything and can adjust the process.
- Then A puts red dots in those places where things do not work very well in practice.
- A develops a suggestion for improvement for every red dot in dialogue with B/C/D.

CLARIFICATION

- Picturing the work process in this way creates the possibility for those involved to get a clear picture of the whole process that they are a part of with their own work process.
- They can look at it together with the others and discuss it in a good way. Critical points can be voiced without others feeling offended.
- Experiments with the found improvements can be put into practice.
- This leads to a better insight for all into the overall work process and also into people's own work processes. Eventually, it results in a better flow of the whole work process and, accordingly, also of the individual work processes, in a better relation between people, and in an energetic decision-making of those who are responsible.
- Client, employee, and decision-maker all benefit from this.

5. Pointing out the steering principles

- Our actions are strongly guided by the notions we have.
- We have notions that guide our actions and notions that guide our thoughts and statements. They can be different.
- Tracing the steering notions in our actions makes us aware of what the principle is that guides us. These notions may have become counterproductive in the course of time.
- We like our notions, which become manifest in our demeanor, and do not like to say goodbye to them.
- It is the mobilizing of new notions, new steering principles that can change our manner of working. We can discover these new notions/principles by looking at the practice of people who can inspire us. We like to see and feel how things can work differently before we want to master this ourselves.

EXERCISE

- A describes a practical situation in relation to his steering issue in which the disrelation could be felt:
    - Where was it, who was there, what exactly happened? The description is concrete and precise. We see it happening before our eyes.
- B listens to the contents.
- C listens to the emotional value.
- D listens to the direction of the intention.
- They all characterize the described event.

- A/B/C/D formulate together the dominant guiding notions of Ns actions in the described situation. They write down the clearest guiding notion, the steering principle, in one sentence.
- A examines whether this notion guides his actions in more than one situation and whether this notion leads to adequate operations in situations. He may formulate a new steering principle which he already has living inside him/herself and which in similar situations could guide his actions in a more productive way.
- Finally, A/B/C/D explore how the described situation could develop if A was to act according to the new, different steering principle.

CLARIFICATION

- Guiding notions or steering principles are based on internalized standards and values. They also arise from repetitive practical situations that enforce a certain behavior.
- Various steering principles live within us that can fight for supremacy. We have acquired these notions from upbringing and schooling, job experiences, confrontations with different notions. Opposing steering principles that exist in the inner world cause stress, but can also lead to creative initiatives.
- In our inner world and in our demeanor, notions are more prominent, are strongly present in our actions, but there are also notions that are withdrawn in us. It is these notions that can come to the foreground when we have to take a new step. It is the trick to trace and apply these notions.

New notions that have an internal life get the chance to guide our actions.

6. Setting up the inner team

- Voices speak inside of us when we perform in concrete situations. We do not hear these voices or not all of them, unless we learn to listen to them.
- We can learn to hear these voices when they speak in concrete situations and events that we experience and also in moments that we reflect on them. We can set these voices up as an inner team and name every single one of them.
- Becoming aware of these voices and giving them names enables us to take more control over these voices. Thus, we strengthen the part of our "I" as the one in charge of our own life.
- Voices can contradict each other and this can paralyze our actions. They also phrase our dominant notions that can get into a fixed relation to each other and thus tie up our actions. Habits and fixed patterns are the result.

EXERCISE

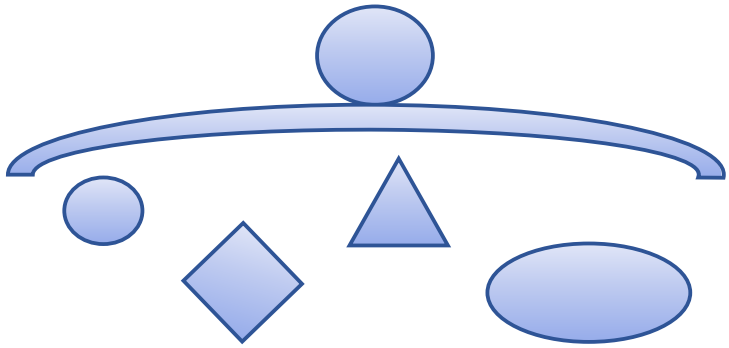
- Reflect on the voices inside in relation to the steering issue and how that is dealt with. Listen to the noise inside and try to hear and distinguish the various voices. Start with familiar voices that keep appearing inside.
- Give them names and draw them on a piece of paper. Set them up as a team. Pay attention to soft voices. Show the dominant ones.
- A describes his image of the inner team to B. B listens to A.

- After a short reflection, B can change the position of the team players. A observes B's intervention.
- After a short reflection, A tells B how his intervention worked.
- Then the roles are reversed.

CLARIFICATION

- Naming inner voices and setting them up as a team gives us more insight into what happens in our inner world while working on a steering issue.
- We become aware of "who" comes along in our inner world and how all these "who's" relate to each other.
- Voices can be traced back to persons who have planted these voices in our souls.
- The "I" can control these inner voices. This is important for a clear and cohesive inner world.
- Dominant voices can retrace their steps; soft voices can be heard well.
- This changes the way in which we act in situations. We show a different side of our personality and are able to react to the unexpected in a different, usually more meaningful way.

The team



Names of the inner voices

7. Designing scenarios for the future

- We can invent different pictures of the future, derived from what desires and achievements live in our inner world, and from the outer circumstances we live in.
- Inventing different pictures of a possible future gives us more insight in what can be our important choice of guidance that we have to make at this moment.
- This deliberate choice leads to an irreversible step, a possible turn, and a leap. We take the future in our hands.
- In this way we can deal better with what comes our way, too.
- Sharing possible pictures of the future with others intensifies our own clarity in this regard.

EXERCISE

- Sketch three scenarios related to the guiding issue:
    - Scenario 1: Things will continue the way they were for the next three years. Changes will come from outside.
    - Scenario 2: My big dream has come true and my surroundings have moved along with it.
    - Scenario 3: The unimaginable has happened; my surroundings and I have fundamentally changed.
- Describe each scenario as a day in the life three years from now. The central points that the scenario is attached to can be derived from the steering issue. It is important to give space to the what, who, where, and how dimension.

- Reflect on the three scenarios and ask this question: which choice do I have to make now for my steering issue in order to move ahead?
- A describes his three scenarios to B and tells him what choice they require, what decision must be taken now. Choosing between the scenarios is not required.
- B listens and gives A feedback.
- A incorporates the feedback and adjusts his decision if necessary. A formulates the steps set into motion by this choice.
- Then the roles are reversed.

CLARIFICATION

- If you deal with the future in pictures and question these possible pictures, an inner decision can mature and be made conscious.
- Once the decision is taken and the choice is made, the process can continue and clear guidance is possible.
- In the three scenarios, hidden desires that were qualified as impossible become more real in one's own inner world after all. They appear to be less far away than once thought. This opens doors that were perceived as closed before.

The seven exercises help us work on our capability in leadership in our own lives and in the organized lives with others that one takes responsibility for. We call this horizontal leadership. This is the kind of leadership that is required in processes of change and development.

Let's explore this further now.

6. Horizontal leadership

The exercises introduce you to the horizontal leadership.27 They are based on the three core concepts described before and the five starting points that were outlined.

Horizontal leadership bridges the gap between management and employees. We meet each other in our common research and our experimenting with new steps, in changing what exists, with the aim of continuing in changed circumstances. Independent of the operational assignment, we can join in the change and the leadership. In life outside of work, this is a common thing for most of us. We move to challenges, interesting encounters, new experiences because others also invite us to do so. Children, for instance, can cause their parents to intensely experience new realities in life. In working life, this is not so natural.

An example: an employee gets a good idea when meeting a client. The product they sell could be used by clients in a completely different way from the usual. The employee hesitates to discuss this idea with others. Then he tells a younger colleague about it in an informal setting. That colleague is amazed and thinks it is a marvelous idea. At some older colleague's farewell party, the managing director gives a speech and afterwards this young colleague gets talking to the managing director. He tells him about his colleague's idea. The director is pleasantly surprised and invites both colleagues to come by the following week. They have a nice talk and then the managing director promotes the idea with the specialists in the organization. The employee with the idea has been given a different image of his own organization, has a good feeling about his own professionalism and for the colleagues

involved it was a nice and meaningful experience. They experience horizontal leadership.

Entering horizontal leadership

The process of entering horizontal leadership with the help of the exercises can be described as follows:

In the culture of answers and solutions of our present order, in which we are bound hand and foot, we release ourselves and turn to those issues and questions that really occupy us. We are all inclined to think in answers, in solutions, especially when someone else is concerned. We are also inclined to interrogate the other person and to want to understand what that is about. This is followed by good advice and comments. We are much less inclined and able to direct our attention to the other person and help him to clarify his question. We are certainly not going to understand and advise, which is not very easy to do, but we ask for adequate descriptions that the other person can find in his inner world and can describe. This pictures the issue much nicer and allows it to develop itself; it looks different from what we first thought. This is particularly relevant with steering issues in change that involve others. How do we reach something new, how do we react to a problem, how do we investigate and experiment with new ideas and perspectives? When you work on steering issues, understanding and advising is less helpful than allowing the other person to express himself and thus finding the next step that can be taken. Solutions are not the main thing, no, the next steps are, the steps that can be taken allowing room for development. This leads to surprising results such as finding a new perspective, a different way, and an added value.

In the dialogue process of investigating issues and setting them into motion, not only questioning is an essential art, but formulating your own vision is also vital. What are the inspiring ideas and thoughts I have developed that can become part of investigating issues and setting them into motion? I have absorbed my own experiences; I have insights that can contribute to this exploration. An insight that is new for someone else can help him see a new perspective, discover a new possibility.

The way in which a vision is formulated and put forward has an impact on the way we hear it. We are inclined to make visions abstract and talk in a detached way about matters that actually touch us deeply.

Can we make a vision personal, can we keep it concrete and linked to our own spiritual resources developed by ourselves? General remarks do not help. It is personal insights that can make someone change his perception.

In order to actually reach a different, new step full of perspective, it is important to look for the spot where that change can really be experienced. We have to go to the processes in which the issue manifests itself. These processes have become disrelated, which requires an irreversible intervention in the process to change reality into another one. Can we change and improve processes? This is possible if we intervene in places and moments where the disrelation manifests itself. This comes close and requires us to expose what is happening and how. But by doing this and by introducing new actions, different connections, and choices into that place and that situation, new dynamics are generated, which make us see and experience the development of different relations, for example between client and supplier, between people who cooperate, between people who are responsible and make decisions.

Where the processes give us a reality that can be experienced and observed, we find at the same time the inner world of people

involved including the notions that exist in it and influence their behavior. Facing steering principles and the way they work in the social reality is more often than not a painful process for the people involved. Light is shed on what was formerly invisible; it is confronting to be forced to face a different operation than the one people like to see. Inner notions, which are demonstrated in external behavior, make up the core of existence and are the main causes of disrelations. People with different steering convictions will influence each other contrarily. Those notions concern observations, judgments, and decisions. Changing steering convictions is difficult. It requires mobilizing from the inner world, a different conviction that is already there but does not come to the forefront. Those new steering convictions can be mobilized when others invite you to do so. We move because of others.

In our inner world, notions can fight for supremacy. We can see these notions as team players that play the game with and against each other. Some are very dominant and are in front, others are soft and sit on the fence. We can learn to direct those inner voices, these inner team players, by becoming more conscious of them, by listening to them and setting them into motion. It is our own "I" that can do this when this "I" learns to take up an autonomous and free position. We can encourage each other in this endeavor.

In this way we can create space in the soul that can be translated into possibilities for a future different from the one that seems to be inevitable. We can imagine future possibilities that we have hardly ever allowed ourselves to think about, let alone bring about. The future is not only determined by the past, "things are the way they are", but it can be opened up and in this way new directions appear, in which new realities can be created and experienced.

The perspective outlined here is between *two alternatives* that are both equally feasible.

One is that we are guided by what we term predestination. "I have no room in my life to realize my dreams for I am too busy digesting what comes my way. My life is determined by the notions and values given to me, the tradition I come from, the ideological notions I hang onto."

We remain within the scope that we encounter and adapt to it. We become products of our environment and of our heredity. With this disposition, we conform to the systems we come across. We become passive employees or managers who keep adapting and, if things get too confronting, resist. We dig our heels in, bury our heads in the sand and hide from view as much as possible. We complain and condemn when we are dealt with harshly, we are victims.

The other alternative is the unattached free spirit chasing his own wishes and nothing else and using every opportunity and all people he comes across. "Life is a kick for me and must be lived to the fullest in any circumstance."

We like living in virtual worlds, in tempting routes of looming chances and challenges, in quickly changing contexts, on the greener grass of our next-door neighbor. In the organization we work in, we jump from one nice project to another without ever finishing anything. As soon as there is resistance, we drop it and go looking for the next kick. We do not allow anyone to take us to places of trouble, but make sure that we always have an escape route. "Lots of work, difficult issues, important business - tomorrow is another day."

These two alternatives create different social realities. We come across them while meeting others and in the processes of change that we are involved in.

It is a challenge to take the road in between these two alternatives

in the organized social sphere, not only for the individual but also for the community of the organization. It requires training from us as individuals and as a community.

I have described this training in the book *The Art of Conscious Living*. My book *Organizations with Soul* describes in more depth my own underlying notion of the connection between the inner and the outer world as an essentiality for an organized life.

7. Practical applications

Possibilities for working with this methodology of the evidential, in an organization context, can first and foremost be found in development processes of people and organizations.

In these, we can distinguish the following application areas:

- Processes of change in organizations
- Coaching of others
- Education and training

We will elaborate on these three application areas and then pay attention to the following personal qualities that play an important part in this:

- Leadership
- Advisorship
- Professional skills

Processes of change in organizations

As a human creation, the organization is subject to continuous change. Since we have to do things over and over again, take care of them and give them meaning, and since this process is inevitably a little different every time, we find ourselves in a permanent flow of change. If no attention is paid to this phenomenon in an organization, we can see that an organization is quickly driven off its course, a multitude of disrelations are formed, and the organization will eventually collapse. The relatively short lifespan of most organizations suggests this.

In organizations, we keep taking care of what already exists and keep creating this again and again, and we keep looking for new and different ways of acting and reflecting in order to stay connected to

what is carried out in time and to be able to take a step into the future.

Research into processes of change and how they last in organizations makes clear that we are hardly capable of implementing these processes of change in a meaningful way. I think that the most important reason for this, and I base this on long-standing research and experiments, is the fact that we want to mold changes as if they were operational processes. If we do that, we immediately run into the divide between management and employees. We want to change in a hierarchic, functional-vertical relation with each other. But what works well in the operational process turns out to be difficult, if not impossible in processes of change.

What is the reason?

It turns out that changes are in the first place to be found inside the people involved: a different way of regarding issues, a different behavior, and overcoming inner resistance that comes along. Change is first of all a reflective process of starting to observe, to see, to become aware of things, to come to the point, to approach the core, to experience the disrelation. For this, we need a process of investigation and experiment, which is, as it were, at right angles with the operational process, in which we want to get results in a functional-hierarchic way by creating preconditions and systems and by setting goals and setting up work processes.

Especially in processes of change, we create the process as a unique cycle of rhythmic steps, in which we discover and shape the change while investigating and experimenting together. In this process, the point is first of all a dialogue between the people involved. When people work on the issue in a functional way, i.e. people work from their jobs and use power, then very soon all these people will build up much resistance with those who are told to change. When people are involved in the dialogue, share in search

and research, then change enters the inner world of people and they can make a connection between the outer and the inner reality. Change can be born. This has everything to do with the way people involved make the connection with their own biography and the way in which they have connected their biography with the biography of the organization. Here it also applies that when this connection is functional, "I am an employee and I earn my living here", the efficacy will be different from when the connection has a more personal developing character and people's own life impulses can be connected to those of the organization.

When observed more closely, processes of change develop horizontally in organizations. This means that changes really come about when people with different positions on different levels get together in a more horizontal dialogue about the question they share and in practice experience a different way.

Here again we see the importance of the starting points outlined before. Observation of an issue from various angles is essential for understanding that issue. Listening to the stories of the people involved gives the issue a multiple sense and meaning. Attention to differences in steering principles and in looking for appropriate notions to come to change intensifies the process and often makes it more productive.

> *One example is the experiment we have been carrying out regularly for years. Some organizations set up a process together where in each organization the managing director, department managers, team managers, and employees get together as an investigating team to find out in which way changes are made in their organization, what works and what could be changed. They do this on the basis of an issue that is considered relevant by all involved. They start their investigation with the views of the methodology of the evidential. For example: has this issue been examined before in*

the biography of the organization, which dominant steering principles are used to handle the issue and are they adequate, what does this issue mean for our clients and employees, do I have a personal biographical connection with this issue, who are the key persons who can move this issue along?
Back home they get into a dialogue about the issue with colleagues and other people involved without wanting to solve it at once. They share their experiences as a horizontal team. They also share their experiences as a team with the other teams from the other organizations. Investigating and experimenting help in getting to issues that everybody says we can deal with it in a different way. Quite soon it is decided to stop with what does not work. The employees make an essential contribution to this horizontal dialogue: they also have good stories. The managing director gets to know images and stories that are completely different from his own conception of things. Department managers and team managers develop understanding and practices that connect much better to what is really required. They leave the trap of up and down. They do all this together, in view of the client, who also gets to play an active part in this process of change.

We have reached a situation in our organized existence in which we are not only busy with our everyday troubles but in which we also continuously undergo and start changes. Every single one of us gets more and more involved in this game. *It is not sufficient anymore to outsource processes of change in organizations to a small elite that devises them for others and introduces them by way of power. No, it is essential that the people involved participate in the process that at first has a more reflective and enquiring character.* Changes are first and foremost born and shaped in the inner world, in the souls of people. After that, they appear in the conversions of the outer world in an iterative, cyclic, and rhythmic repetitive process.

Coaching others

In the context of organizations, we experience that we are not only related to each other in a hierarchy but that we, while at work, first of all are related to each other in a horizontal, dialogue way. This becomes more explicit and obvious in a coaching process.

Coaching is firstly something we do with each other. We coach each other at work. This applies for football players in the field, for employees in the team, for managers on the board. We accompany each other in the steps we take. *We give each other feedback, hints; we ask each other for support; we learn from each other.* This learning process is not something in the periphery that we engage in merely in the classroom, no, it is a crucial component of the community process in organizations. *First of all, we learn from our client.* Our client is the most important teacher. After all, it is the client who mercilessly experiences all ups and downs of our contribution. The client, and we are clients ourselves in many situations, is very sensitive to the disrelations he encounters in the supplying organization. Things are too slow, too expensive, too complicated.

We also learn from our colleagues. We counsel each other at work, we adapt to each other, join forces. Especially when this fails to happen, we notice how work stops running smoothly, does not progress, delivers less meaning.

In the learning process, our inner and our outer world are strongly interconnected. We are confronted with new assignments that we cannot master just like that. We enter into a learning process in which we can acquire what is new by means of exploration, touch, of internalization and externalization. We learn with and we learn from each other. It is often the master who leads the pupil to the source making him experience and absorb. It is the student who has to

surpass the master, stand on his own feet, and add his own value and meaning.

Coaching is a fundament for the development of mastership in a learning process.

Education and training

There are times when it is useful to concentrate explicitly on acquiring new skills.

- We want to learn how to play a musical instrument and regularly visit the teacher who teaches and instructs us.
- We want to learn a trade and follow schooling.
- We want to gain insight and go to university.
- We also want to acquire moral ideals and follow training. We want to get to know new impulses and visit a master.

We are constantly looking for places and moments in which we can acquire something.

In the first part of our lives, this education and training play an important role. When we start working, it becomes less explicit. We are busy with all the hustle and bustle and assignments and forget to make room and time for training. This quickly yields an effect, we become emptier. It can even lead to a burnout, we are in the void, and our energy has gone. The answer is lifelong learning. Our biography requires it, mastering practical life requires it, and our fellow men demand it from us. We can discover that lifelong learning is not a luxury but an absolute necessity to keep the soul healthy. In my view, we have long passed the limit of what is humanly necessary (everything I need to do), in relation to what is humanly desirable (what I would like to do) in our complicated, technologically demanding time. The time and room we allow for acquiring new impulses, required changes, and our own initiatives is too limited in

relation to the constant operational, useful work and life efforts of present day life.

We will have to set up our own process of a permanent character, create space for sense-giving and explorative dialogue, pay attention to biographical questions and needs in relation to the requirements at work and in practical life.

In order to enable us to give time, room, and attention to these three dimensions of developing man and organization, leadership, advisorship, and professional skills are required of us.

Leadership

In literature, leadership is treated as something that is mainly connected with leaders and the way they behave. There is a strong psychological interest in leaders. Leadership styles have been derived from that. Leaders can have34 an authoritarian or democratic style, a laissez-faire or hands-on style. Leadership is attached to managers who have to manage their subordinates. We know the strong leader, the entrepreneur leader, the ideological leader, the head and the boss.

Leadership has always been closely linked to the community. First of all, leadership is very much connected to the community. Communities of people have leaders who show the community the way. This is an ancient phenomenon. Originally, leaders were priests, later they became political/social leaders, and today it is the CEO's and their managers who exert leadership in our organized society.

An influential dimension of leadership that does not get much attention is leadership as a process. Here it is not about a leader and followers in a hierarchic relation but about a community dialogue in which people look for and find the way in combined action. We call this horizontal leadership. Horizontal leadership as a process can be

regarded as the process in which renewal and change can be affected. We lead each other. We put this into practice in our own work by putting processes of change into the hands of the process owners who look for the way with the people involved in the community, not based on their functional existence but on their personality. Process owners do not have functional power, but they can and may as persons invite others to participate in and contribute to the process of change.36 This takes place in a permanent dialogue, in rhythmical permanent attention to subsequent steps, a personal biographic connection to the issue, to the organization community, and to the next step in the development. Process owners are connected to decision-makers who direct and monitor the process. Decision-makers take care of the decisions to be made, of emerging bottlenecks to be resolved, of confirming and implementing found and created changes.

In this way, leadership is a cause shared in the community that everybody can contribute to and in which everybody can take initiative, can play his own part, can look for collaboration with others. In all this, the client is in the center of our efforts.37

Advisorship

Organizations tend to become more and more complex. Boundaries are less clearly perceptible. In the same degree that organizations work more horizontally, for instance with clients and suppliers in conglomerates, with strategic alliances, with shared projects, they cross old boundaries and create new ones. This is shown nicely in the process of cooperation between advisor and client. Especially in processes of change, it has become the custom to invite advisors in who bring along the expertise for a successful change. In spite of this extensive advice, processes of change often fail. They end up where they should not be, they stagnate in complex

situations, and they die under the everyday pressure. Advising in processes of change39 seems to work better if the advisor does not act as an expert who indicates how things ought to be done and what should be the issues, but if the advisor enters the leadership of an organization and seeks a way together with the people involved in the community. Advising becomes part of the horizontal leadership. This means that the advisor moves along with the organization for a longer period of time and bears responsibility for setting up and carrying out processes of change without being on the payroll and having a management assignment.

It is also essential for a productive horizontal cooperation that the way of advising that is developed in the advisor's consultancy agency is in harmony with the client's question for an approach that fits the issue in question. Creative harmony between the advisor and the decision-maker as persons is also essential.

Just like a general practitioner can cooperate with a patient for a long period of time, an advisor in change can cooperate with a decision-maker for a long period of time. The personal chemistry, the personal efficacy, these are the things that matter.

It is vital that the advisor has a methodological awareness and is familiar with the newest methodical developments in issues of change and evolution. What's more, the advisor contributes to this development, has a strongly reflective awareness of what takes place and what is asked, and wants to advance, master it. In this way the advisor builds a reputation that attracts new clients.

This assists in the development of his agency or institution.

Professional skills

In the organized context in which we work and perform, we are identified by the function we hold and the profession we practice. The profession requires a certain expertise, knowledge of content,

skills, and a certain attitude. We grow in this, from pupil to associate to master. While practicing our profession, we notice that the social sphere is in the way. There is a lack of good cooperation; we do not understand each other and processes do not correspond. This forces us to pay attention to the social process that takes place. This becomes apparent for instance in the way projects unfold in the organization. A project group is assembled on the basis of professional expertise that is seen as necessary for the project's success. People get going, but very soon there's a fly in the ointment because for instance people do not really like each other or the manner of working is so different that it soon causes irritation. The project manager becomes more of a social mentor who has to keep people on the right track than being the most important specialist in the project team who must bring everything to a good end. A lack of insight and feeling for the social sphere causes projects to get out of hand. People leave, the project manager gives up, the decision-maker intervenes.

It seems inevitable that professionals of every signature must master a methodology for the social sphere to have any chance of being able to work in it creatively.

For *leadership*, *advisorship* and *professional skills* it is not enough to copy the behavior of others, to implement systems that must do the trick, to supply solutions that others must carry out. For all three, a creative process is required to which an innate personal way of acting and being present is contributed, on the basis of personally acquired understanding, competence, and basic attitude (moral values). This makes it exceedingly exciting and sometimes quite unpredictable.

This personal development requires a training route.

I have described a possible training route in the book *The Art of Conscious Living*. In the last chapter, I want to share a few thoughts about this.

First I will explore something about results and discoveries.

8. Results and discoveries

You may wonder how everything described here works out in the reality of organization changes. Trying yourself is of course the best way to find out. But we will give you some assistance.

Results in the social sphere unfortunately lack absoluteness. As I said before, objective rules are not at work in the social sphere, but the social sphere is determined by the quality of our social intercourse. This holds true even more for dealing with difficult change issues in the everyday life of organizations.

What can be described, however, are observed consistent workings in the organization practice when managers and employees pay attention to the methodological basis and apply ir'". We will explain these workings by means of ten contrasting statements.

1. When in a hierarchical relation between manager and employee the manager orders the employee to change, this will at once evoke resistance. When in a dialogue relation manager and employee look for what can be changed for the better with the interest of the client in view, manager and employee will be willing to cope with changes internally and realizing them externally.
2. Then change is regarded as something that can be realized by organizing it top-down through power, all impeding mechanisms will be intensified at once. Managers will become busier and employees will become more passive. When changes are regarded as a communal process in which all those involved search together and everybody is given his own assignment, people will get together and be able to perk themselves up.

3. When at the start of a change process a few persons or groups (for instance an advisory committee or a project group) discuss it and then want to convince others and urge them to change, people will resist. There will be no continuity in further steps in the change process and the change will not come about. When at the start of a change process all those involved communicate intensively with each other about what the issue is, how the process can go, who participates, why it is important for client and organization, then those involved can internalize this and from there contribute independently to and be involved in the change process.
4. When changing is regarded as the responsibility of managers and these managers approach it in their operational, functional context, then very quickly managers will be dealing with managers and the employees will wonder what the managers are doing together. When change is regarded as a leadership question in the organized community and a separate process is designed in which all people involved can be in an investigating and experimenting dialogue with each other, it will be possible to execute the change step by step.
5. When a change is approached in such a way that the management first of all must create preconditions before others pull themselves together (we form, for instance, expert groups and first train people), the change will take longer than expected, cost more money than estimated, and yield less results than hoped for. When the people are involved in research and experiments right from the start and from there improve their own work and work process, the change will be realized sooner and less costly than expected and with better results.

6. When changes are mainly changes of structures and systems, with the expectation that these will cause things to be different and better in practice, this will cause existing problems to be moved to different positions in the organization. When changes affect work processes, the inner notions of people, and also their biographical views of the future, changes will be endurable and visible and will work well in the operational process carried out by these people.
7. When changes are aimed at internal organizational problems all efforts for solutions will cause these problems to become bigger and stick even more. When changes are aimed at client and supplier processes and the internal organization can adapt to that, the problems will be translated into meaningful change processes creating a future.
8. When experts manage changes because they want to transform the reality of managers and employees, starting from their own expertise, this reality will in time become more complex for managers and employees and lead to sub-optimization at the expense of the whole. When changes are managed by leading personalities who have been asked to do so, who set up the process freely and independently, invite people in, and make decisions, then reality will be reformed and become more simple.
9. When changes accumulate in the form of ever more projects and assignments, the inner resilience of those involved will diminish, their attention will dissipate and less result will be achieved altogether. When the leaders and the members of the community concentrate on the essential issues, little by little other problems can also be solved.
10. When changes are regarded as system improvements and new problems are dealt with by way of new systems, the organization becomes a complex, vague construction. When

changes can be connected to the enterprise impulse, its core contribution to the larger whole, then the people involved will be able to see the use of it and to acquire an insight in what the enterprise is heading for.

To illustrate the statements above, here are some examples:

- *A large drugstore chain in Germany decided to build a new warehouse for supplying half of its market. The new gigantic warehouse was realized in a shorter period than planned, with fewer expenses than estimated, and functioned better than expected. An investigation into the causes showed that a decisive factor had been that all internal and external people had been in an intensive and sense-giving dialogue with each other at the beginning of and during the process of development and implementation. This enabled all those involved to perform independently with a view to the whole and regarding each other. When the process stagnated or a result was less satisfactory, this could be traced back to inaccurate sense-making communication between people at the beginning and during the process.*
- *In a SIOO study of culture changes in fifteen Dutch enterprises of various nature (SIOO magazine, September 2010), organizations turned out to increasingly focus on client needs and company values. A common concentration on the meaning of change for the client process and for the enterprise impulse formed a useful support to realize the desired changes. The impulse to change was mainly caused by the search for openings in the future, how things would develop, rather than solving big problems. Organized top-down change projects turned out to be counterproductive. Horizontal dialogue intensified the process of change.*

- *German Sparkassen that have been working with this methodology for years turn out to perform more consistent and better than Sparkassen that work with projects and experts top-down. They are better able to combine daily operations and change processes and to realize changes in operations. An ongoing PhD study of decision-making and sense-giving in a large Dutch municipality shows that in big, complex changes a process develops considerably more smoothly and adequately when at the start of the process attention is paid to sense-giving questions in the decision-making. This applies certainly to processes initiated from the political context. When the sense-giving questions (why do we do this, do we want this) are avoided, they will come back all the more strongly during the process until they are paid attention to.*
- *When in change processes people of different hierarchical levels enter into a horizontal dialogue with each other when starting and realizing changes and when these people keep the dialogue going during the process, there is absolutely no need to overcome resistance, but there is scope for involvement. This has been shown in long-term experiments in horizontal innovation in some twenty organizations in The Netherlands and other countries. Teams of directors, department managers, team managers, and employees studied the way changes were handled and executed. During this study, impractical work processes were stopped and useful approaches were applied more often, all this in dialogue with all community members.*
- *In more than a hundred organizations in ten countries during a few decennia, process owners handled complex change processes very well. They were asked to do this by the top of the organization because of their personal performance in*

leadership and not because of their substantive expertise regarding the issue. These hundreds of process owners highly valued a good outcome of the change process managed by them. With a few exceptions, they succeeded (95 percent).

- *Over a period of fifteen years, hundreds of young employees in a large banking organization independently designed their own change project 'from A to Z' during nine months. The goal was results for clients, the team itself, other teams, and the learning process. 90 percent of the young employees succeeded in their personal project. 85 percent of them continued working in this way. Similar results were achieved in other organizations.*
- *In master classes 'Horizontal Leadership' in various countries, managers and professionals worked over a period of seven years on their leadership capacities and on realizing difficult changes in their own organizations, on the basis of the methodology outlined in this book. Hundreds of participants underwent a one-year learning and change process in which they documented the results of the processes they conducted and also their own learning process. They resumed all this in a final thesis and presentation. In these theses and presentations, the operations described before were experienced and investigated. Participants proved to be able to progress in their leadership and to decisively further change issues of their organizations.*

This suggests that the methodology described here enables people with different education, work assignments, age, sex, origins, and culture to take a leading role in change processes and to sensibly and effectively design and realize them together with other people. In all this, the attention for the client, the client situation, and the process with the client proved to be the integrating factor.

9. How to acquire all this

In this last chapter, I would like to give you a few suggestions that can support you in strengthening your own soul while applying the methodology outlined in this book. They are, as it were, little secrets that can help to keep your footing in the social changeable, to take up leadership, and to contribute in a meaningful way.

Secret 1: Do not worry about problems that do not exist but might arise, but get excited about present challenges you come across.

In these complex and demanding times, we are inclined to worry all the time about everything that we may come up against, that may go wrong, that needs to be done. Unpleasant things we have experienced also tend to cling to us internally. Especially these small painful bumps can keep us awake at night. When you become aware of the fact that very much distracts you from what really occurs here and now, when you concentrate on and pay attention to what happens here and now, you are closer to your soul and your talents and possibilities can play a more important part.

Secret 2: You live in several parallel processes in which you experience all sorts of things. You tend to take the troubles of one process along to the others. Do not do that. Leave the troubles in the process where they started. You have, for instance, quarreled with your boss. At home, you keep bothering your partner with your lamentations. But you do not address it in the work situation and you do not try to find a new way there.

This does not mean that you should not discuss it with your partner. You can do that of course, but do not leave it with him/her and certainly do not expect it to be solved at home.

When you are at home in the processes in which you live and you also are alert when moving from one process to another, you will be more present in the situation and better able to contribute. This means that you always have to be ahead and take leave on time. This is a sense of timing. Some people are always too late and lag behind. It is better to be a little too early. When you visit a client, make sure you have arrived a little before the appointed time. In this way, you can arrive and be present as soon as the meeting starts. This requires real steersmanship. In certain processes it can even be useful to be years ahead, to be aware of the fact that this will keep you occupied for years and that you will provide time and scope for it. You will find out that every process you live in has its own beat, rhythm, and melody. Balancing your processes will enhance the quality of your life and that of others.

Secret 3: Being in the situation with presence of mind allows you to respond to who and what is present and to what is happening. This encourages extra value, which is generated from the synergy that people create together. Do they react to each other, do they listen to each other, and do they show their will? Being deep in thought on your holiday plans, looking at your sms, preferring to be elsewhere while in a meeting, all this is a violation of this process of creating synergy and extra value.

Secret 4: Ask a question that matters. On the whole, we are wrapped up in ourselves. We are busy with our own (work) process. Suppliers and clients, for instance, pass each other by because both are engaged in their own process and do not bridge the gap to the other's process. We may encounter this ourselves every day. Asking a question out of real interest brings about a connection. We like to react to someone else's question and this generates a dialogue. We share something. We have opinions about others that we do not

communicate but save for the gossip circles. The moment we ask the other a question, our opinion can shift, 'Oh, he is different from what I thought, things are different from what I thought.' This opens up the situation and creates new options for cooperation.

Secret 5: Direct everything to the client. The client and the client's process is what we deal with and causes the fruit of our work to grow. The value of my and our contribution is mainly shown in our client's process. That's where we find the next steps and starting points for the development of our contribution, whatever the product, service, or process. The client is the integrating element; the proof of the pudding is in the eating. How peculiar it is that the client is often not in the picture when we are at work. We get excited but do not know whom for. Only in direct contact with our client we perceive the sense and nonsense of our work. You can devise what is good for your client for years, but it does not show until you meet him and spend time together. So go to your client, invite him.

Secret 6: Think before you act and keep thinking while you act. We are used to plan a lot of our activities. This is inevitable in busy times. We have appointments in our diaries, preparatory meetings, and coordination. But in the situation itself things often work out differently. Sometimes extensive planning can even be counterproductive for the process.

For important upcoming events it is useful to make a small prognosis of your expectations of what is going to happen and afterwards look back on what has happened. What was different and could I have foreseen it? This creates awareness of dimensions that were there but were not regarded yet. It is often necessary to adjust, too. Action all the time without moments of reflection, without attention to the question 'how is it going', can be fatal for the course of the event and the process.

Do not run on, but stand still regularly, introduce breaks; this creates space so that what is possible and wanted can originate. This applies especially to meetings with long agendas and many formalities.

Secret 7: The biographical dialogue. In the social world, it is beneficial to question the other about his biography, the story of his life. This story provides surprising insights in 'why things are as they are', 'go the way they go'. In the life story of the other, the question of sensegiving crops up at once. What is the other here for, what matters to him/her, where is he/she going? A biographical story and dialogue is always captivating and inspiring and can support teams of collaborating people enormously in following the same route. Often we discount this, we know very little about each other even though we spend much time together at work over the years. In the biographical context, we can experience that everybody matters, that everybody as a person is actually interesting and important and essentially irreplaceable. This counterbalances the functional way of associating with each other, where every functionary can be replaced by another one.

Secret 8: Give your vision at moments when it matters. Make yourself heard. Vision is not the same as opinion. We hear enough of those. They are often rationalizations, legitimizations, and escapes. Vision is something completely personal. It is what you have acquired, what you want to approach the issue and the situation with. Expressing your vision can have a very inspiring effect on others. You become visible, vulnerable too, which invites others to reveal themselves as well. A vision can develop. It is not an explanatory and conclusive statement, 'this is how it is', but a leading thought that can be brought along in the adventure we are in.

Inviting each other to contribute vision brings about an 'inspiring star' that we can orientate by.

When you play with these secrets, apply them in your life, develop them at work and in cooperating with others, you can experience not only how curing this works in your own soul, your own inner world, but also that it contributes to making the social situation, in which we relate to each other more open, more significant, and healthier. These secrets support your playing with the methodology of the evidential described here. In this way, it becomes and remains a surprising adventure.

Finally

With this book, I have intended to offer you an original and personal starting point for your work in the socially organized context that you find yourself in.

It would be nice if the book could contribute something to your personal development, the creation of the development or your inner and outer world. It would also be nice if the dimensions and qualities described here could find a place in the daily organizational troubles in a somewhat reinforced way.

In any case, I thank you, dear reader, for having occupied yourself with all this. I wish you a good next development step.