Self-awareness and self-knowledge
in professions

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Something we are or a skill we learn

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Abstract

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This study explores how issues associated with the professional as a person can be dealt with in professional education. It has been done by exploring what participants learn in a course of personal development with psychosynthesis as a method and investigating whether they use these insights in their profession. Does learning about self actually influence your relation to work in e.g. terms of relational capacity, tact, authenticity and professional judgement? These are qualities mentioned in theories about professional knowledge and professional person. This competence is often described as something you are, and considered to be a talent and regarded as something that cannot be learned in training. Studies in professional education and professional knowledge most often focus on theories and acquisition of skills and less often on the professional as a human being. However, here the person is important in understanding how professional work is performed.

Participants are interviewed and asked to exemplify situations, which they handle differently after the education. Important is which parts of the training that participants experience as most helpful. A phenomenological life-world approach has been used when analysing the interviews and the results are presented in three parts, the first consists of individual portraits describing individual experiences of professional situations. The second part of the results is a systematization of the portraits in order to create a meaningful structure of the self-awareness and self-knowledge in professions. Three themes were identified, awareness of personal resonances, awareness of points of reference and situational awareness. In the third part of the results, a theoretical analysis was made.

The results show that the participants, in the process of gaining self-awareness and self-knowledge, experienced themselves as approaching professional situations in new ways. Moreover, they had gained theories and methods, which they consider as useful in understanding their every-day professional practices. They also show a change in their experience of "who they are" as professionals; this can be seen in the themes "awareness of personal resonance", "awareness personal point of reference" and in "situational awareness" At the same time, they learn skills from participating in a practice of the training itself. The process of integration was crucial, when theories and skills became integrated in the individual experience. Key aspects of professional development have been highlighted in relation to the professional as a person. The complexity of the area has is shown, but also the possibility of actively influence the development of self-awareness and self-knowledge through education. This study contributes to actualize processes of personal development in relation to professional development.

Content

PART III

PART VI

Acknowledgement

As a child I had a dream of writing a book. I used to fill papers with zeros and ones and then staple the pages pretending it was a book. Now 50 years later my dream has come true, my book is ready. It is a book with a text hopefully more meaningful than zeros and ones. This work has been the most challenging and inspiring work adventure I ever had. It is about life and human development, and it shows how personal and professional matters go hand in hand.

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PART I

Chapter 1

Introduction

Know Thyself
(Oracle of Delphi)

The subject of self-awareness and self-knowledge has its roots in ancient times. According to the myth, Socrates told in his speech of defence, in the year 399 before Christ, the calling behind his thinking about the nature of knowledge. He was doomed to death by the Athenians, accused of introducing false Gods. According to the legend, a friend of Socrates asked the Oracle of Delphi about who the wisest man of the world was. The oracle answered that it was Socrates. Socrates himself thought that this was a strange answer, as he perceived himself as ignorant of many things. As the message came from the Gods, it had to be true and Socrates wanted to refute this message and challenge the Gods. He started his research by having dialogues with people in different vocations, shoemakers as well as judges, about what they knew. He came to the conclusion that people talked about things they knew very little about. Most important was justice, which in classical Greece was a notion for true insight about what is right or wrong in life. Finally, Socrates came to the conclusion that the Oracle was right even though she had expressed a paradox. He realized how little he knew and that made him the wisest, the most knowledgeable man in the world. According to this myth the words *know thyself* is the foundation of Socrates philosophy and the saying is also written above a door in the temple of the oracle in Delphi.

My own interest in research on this subject about professional self-knowledge and self-awareness started some years ago. At that time, I found myself in a blind alley. In my professional life, I had been working as a teacher in natural science for many years and in the later part of my career, I worked as a headmistress. After those experiences, I was filled with unanswered questions, contradictions and dilemmas that seemed insoluble. In the discourse of education in Scandinavia at that time, there was an increased focus on development and change where I saw myself as an eager agent of change and organisational development. My understanding of why change had to take a long time was

minimal. I was provoked by statements from colleagues like "we have already done that", "It does not work" or "we are not allowed to, the bosses say that". Later, when I was a leader myself, I would hear such statements as "you decide and then we do". That was a statement in contradiction to the discourse which I was inspired by, where co-workers were supposed to feel motivated by having the possibility to influence their work. Participation and influence was considered to be motivating in this kind of discourse. I saw myself as active and as a driving force; the potentials were in the foreground and the regulations and the structure were up for scrutinizing. Someone among the staff of the school where I was the headmistress expressed "In this school, all the doors and windows are open". Then, in that situation, I did not understand the meaning of this statement but the question stayed with me for many years. Now, I understand that a feeling of insecurity arises in an organization where the leaders are too open for changes and have too little respect for traditions and human needs. If everything is open for negotiation, nothing is sacred or taken for granted, a lack of stability emerges. For a long time I was convinced that it was important to create a vision or a common ground as a point of departure for the work. If everyone had the same thoughts about teaching and education then it must be a better school for the children. Even this assumption was challenged and things turned out to be more complex than I had expected. There were different levels of agreement to the vision and I noticed that the vision had a tendency to create a split between co-workers rather than unite them. In this blind alley, I decided to educate myself in leadership wanting to understand more of those dilemmas that I had met. I entered into two different trainings for leaders; one was a master's degree at the university, addressing leadership of pedagogical activity; the other was the psychosynthesis training, addressing personal development and personal leadership. With those educations behind me, I realized that I had a naivety as a leader; my ideas and beliefs clashed with circumstances in practice. I had overlooked the importance of the professionals' human needs. Connecting to the myth of Socrates and the words from the Oracle of Delphi, "know thyself", my story from professional life indicates a naivety of not understanding the complexity of the professional situation. Through that experience, my curiosity was awakened to further research of whether self-awareness and self-knowledge could contribute to professional competence; and if that is the case, how could the personal aspect be addressed in professional training.

I have chosen to approach the research question from a phenomenological life-world perspective. It is a perspective that takes the experience of the subject

seriously in providing an understanding for what appears in the world and in a professional situation. Husserl who called himself a phenomenologist investigated the conditions for knowledge and created an expression "going back to the things themselves". This involves the possibility to set one's own pre-understanding aside in order to find a more stable knowledge of a complex situation. The notion of self-awareness and self-knowledge, which is in focus for this study, is then connected to the possibility of utilising knowledge about oneself as a professional person. What could then the meaning of "going back to the things themselves" be if applied to my professional situation? For me, to "go to the things themselves, as they emerge" gets a deeper meaning in questions about the phenomena that appear in front of me. Which things appear in the present moment? What makes "things" appear in one way and not another ? How does my pre-understanding in terms of earlier experiences, acquired theories and methods in the profession influence my understanding of what appears in front of me in the professional situation? What consequences follow if I, as a professional, try to solve a chaotic situation in my professional practice with a certain method if the situation demands something else? Can a method rather be a hindrance preventing me from seeing what appears in the situation? Or if I have an idea or a vision as a leader in an organization which I stick to, how does that idea influence my openness to what might occur? What is then the nature of my openness to the signals in the organization? This phenomenological project is thus a question of how to prepare professionals in professional training to meet the complexity of a professional context by seeing through some of the entwinements in which they are involved. This can be achieved by learning about their own pre-understandings through acquiring self-awareness and self-knowledge.

Husserl's thinking was primarily a philosophical project and was not developed to understand professions or to do empirical research. However, a phenomenological "life-world approach" is developed for empirical research and could be used to understand the conditions of being a professional with professional knowledge (Bengtsson, 1999). In this study, the life-world approach is used in order to understand what professionals learn about themselves in a training focusing on self-knowledge and self-awareness. Because of my background experience I considered it of value to find an approach that could embrace the pre-understanding of the researcher. The interest in this project was to qualitatively deepen and widen the understanding of what it means to be a professional with self-awareness and self-knowledge. The processes of research have a hermeneutical character, in line with the life-world approach.

The subject of self-awareness and self-knowledge as professional skills will be related to research in professional development about what professionals may need to know. The subject will also be related to research within higher education and questions about how students can be prepared for meeting the complexities in practice. The concepts of self, self-awareness and self-knowledge will be explored in order to deepen the understanding of what to learn in a context of self-development. The object of research is specifically the experiences of six persons who have been participating in a two-year training in personal development with psychosynthesis as a method of self-development.

The disposition of the thesis is presented in the following section. In chapter two, the research question will be situated in a context of professional research. Societal changes will be described, ranging from modern to postmodern ideas about organizing work. The topic of self-awareness and self-knowledge in professions is related to theories in professional development dealing with what professionals need to know in terms of technical rationality or judgement. Some theories involving personal qualities as professional competence are described. The purpose of this study and the research questions of the study end this chapter.

In chapter three, research concerning self-development in relation to professional education is reviewed and will be presented in two categories. One category of research concerns self-development in relation to teacher education and the other category concerns programmes focusing on self-development such as in-service trainings in different professions.

In chapter four, the psychosynthesis programme is presented, starting with a biography of Roberto Assagioli the founder, continuing with a summary of the main theories and principles within the method. Psychosynthesis is an integrative therapeutic discipline and the presentation includes an account of the theoretical influences in the tradition. The chapter ends with educational facts and a description of the content of each weekend.

The first introductory part of the thesis ends with chapter five that compiles some critical aspects concerning what can be called the psychologising of society in general and of organisational understanding in particular. Questions dealing with this are the possibilities and the limitations of psychological explanatory models. Does psychology and ideas about development towards a higher potential build a ground for liberalistic and capitalistic ideologies in society. Does psychology replace the traditional forms of religion? What are the problems concerning legitimacy and what can be called layman-therapies? How can proper boundaries between different forms of practitioners and therapeutic schools be

established, when many of those forms still are considered as alternative forms of treatment outside the healthcare system?

In the second section of this thesis, chapter six and seven, the theoretical framework and method is described. Phenomenological life-world is used to understand what it means to learn in a professional education. Some concepts of the life-world phenomenology, important for understanding the ontological conditions, are presented; these include the natural attitude, authenticity and existence, spirituality and human openness, lived body, and inter-subjectivity. Further, a life-world approach is elaborated describing transformation of the self in education; outlining what is considered as professional knowledge. Ways of becoming a professional person in relation to the professional situation are also discussed. The difference between self-awareness and self-knowledge is investigated towards the end of the chapter. The research method is presented in chapter seven. The data is collected through interviews and the analytical process is described as being a phenomenological – hermeneutic procedure.

The results are presented in section three, in chapter eight, nine and ten. To begin with, the individual experiences of each participant are narrated and personal portraits are constructed, in which personal insights are traced to professional changes. In chapter eight, the result is arranged into themes is made, based on the six portraits. A situation of self-awareness and self-knowledge in professions is described and three main themes are identified as structures of meaning. In chapter ten the themes are theoretically analysed.

The discussion and the Swedish summary are presented in section four. In the concluding remarks, chapter eleven, I reconnect the research questions to the wider issue of different strategies for supporting professional/personal developed in vocational training. Further in the discussion reflections are made concerning the important elements in a training of learning about self and which kind of professionals that are formed in those kinds of discourses.

Chapter 2

Background

In this chapter, I describe social changes towards increased focus on individualization that has led to new demands on employees in organisations. My interest is professional development in a general sense, but changes in schools and school environment will be taken as examples throughout the thesis. In this study there will be a special interest for professional development concerning the human aspect of professional competence (Aspelin & Persson, 2008; Laursen, 2004; Polkinghorne, 2004; van Manen, 2002). This thesis does not consider theories about the concept of competence as such, or theories about processes of professionalization (Ellström, 1992; Sandberg & Targama, 1998).

Trends of individualization

Roughly outlined, the aim of this chapter is to situate the research-question of self-knowledge and self-awareness in professional theory. The subject touches many fields such as societal and organizational ideas mirroring changes in understanding the relationship between the individual and larger institutions of society. It touches upon research on professional development and education as well as professional knowledge and professional ways of being. The research chosen as reference are mostly related to the teaching profession but other professions could be mentioned as well.

Society in transition

This project started out in a time when school improvement was held in high regard. Thinkers of the time described a society in transition and an often cited book in educational settings in Sweden was *Changing Teachers, Changing Times* by Antony Hargreaves (1994). He describes how the centrally governed school system of modernity was replaced with a decentralized system of what he calls the postmodern society. He describes the characteristics of modernity as large scale organizations often hierarchically governed with fixed structures, built on ideas from the period of Enlightenment. These ideas were based on rationality, it was considered that science and technology would triumph over nature and improve the human condition. The economy of modernity is characterized by

rational concentration of production in factories, mass production and periodic bans. Organizationally, this is reflected in the large, complex and often cumbersome bureaucracies that are hierarchical and segmented in various specialized areas of expertise. Key words of modernity are characterized by systems, order, collective identity and institutions. Around 1960, according to Hargreaves, this thinking came to an extreme. Further, from a personal aspect the system of modernity had a price with a loss of magic and inspiration, resulting in feelings of alienation and meaninglessness in individual life. The changes in social condition can be summarized by the concept of post-modernity, which is the notion that Hargreaves used. He argued that in a time when old truths are challenged, objective knowledge is doubted and the authority of different belief systems such as religions and political dogmas are questioned. The development is supported by the emergence of information technology and individuals come to see that there are alternative ways of living a life. Even scientific truths lose their credibility when they are constantly contradicted by new research. Post-modern economies are built around small volume production. Production of services, software, information and pictures (symbols) become more important than goods and hardware. In a changing world, warehousing of goods is replaced for the benefit of flexibility and responsiveness to customers' ever-changing needs. In a political and organizational sense, the need for flexibility and a room for the individual could be met by introducing decentralized and flat decision-making structures. In the decentralized organization less specialization and rigid professional roles is seen and boundaries between specialties are not that sharp. Professional roles are shifting and a culture of collaboration is considered to better meet a rapidly changing, unpredictable world. In a personal sense, this restructured postmodern world leads to more freedom for the individual, but the lack of permanence and stability can create crises in interpersonal relationships, according to Hargreaves. Individuals are not anchored in traditions or obligations that can provide security (Hargreaves, 1994). Not all thinkers would be likely to characterize postmodernism and changes in society the same way as Hargreaves did, but still he tries to describe a paradigm shift that can be helpful in understanding societal changes and the emergence of individualism in society

However, Giddens (1991) describes societal changes from modernity to what he calls late modernity in somewhat other words. According to him, development occurs in the tension between the human need for autonomy and social belonging (Giddens, 1991). Self is not a fixed entity, new knowledge and understanding is produced, which affects the choices that form the basis for

future development. Humans conflicting needs for both autonomy and societal need belonging create internal conflict and hence anxiety. This existential anxiety and longing for unity is the driving force in people's development. According to Giddens, many questions have been suppressed in the rationality of modernity and need to be incorporated in the culture and integrated again in people's lives He mentions questions like personal beliefs, relationship to life and death, authority, uncertainty and unpredictability of life. He believes that the developmental trend in society is toward individualization and he introduces the concept of life politics, a concept that describes a system where the individual finds authority and makes lifestyle choices independent of institutional constraints. The formation of identity occurs in the earliest relationships with family, friends and the institutions that affect one's life project (Giddens, 1991).

School development in the Swedish context

An increased emphasis on the individual perspective in favour of the collective is seen in Sweden and these thoughts are possible to trace in an official document from the ministry of education (Ds 2001:48). A development towards a decentralized system is also seen during the end of the twentieth century. Political reforms were introduced in 1991 in which governmental regulation of schools was transferred to the local authorities. The assumption behind this reform was that global changes and a rapid rate of change in society demanded faster processes of decision-making. In 1992, a system of marketization was introduced in order to open up for choice and competition as a driving force to stimulate school-development (SOU 1991:94). A new curriculum of steering by objectives and result was introduced with the new national curricula (LpO, 1994). The central governmental level still had the responsibility to establish general and valid national objectives, but details were transferred to the local level. The local level is supposed to be an intermediate where national directions are to be interpreted in relation to local conditions. Other changes during this period concerned the on-going process of globalization and a new media culture, including immigration and increased mobility of the population creating a multicultural society, which was to be met with an increased focus on civic values in schools. It was also a process of democratization of the Swedish school system with an increased focus on student and parent influence through different projects such as user councils as a format for decentralised responsibility at the school-level (SOU 1995:103). Various efforts were made to stimulate school development, but the individual teachers' subjective experience of freedom is often less than the objective possibility of freedom, according to

research in the field. Together with these reforms towards decentralised responsibility within the school sector, a number of systems of evaluating quality and results have been developed (Ds 2001:48).

Reflective school

Lindqvist and Magnusson (1999) describe the process of decentralisation in schools by referring to governance philosophy discussing forms of organising schools in a way that gives the professional a larger impact in the development of school activities (SOU 1992:94). The assumption is that a professional teacher's activity cannot be governed by regulations, instead a greater autonomy is considered as important. They argue that the "reflective school" was influential in the Swedish context of school development at that time. The organisational theory that is most congruent with the principles of the "reflective school" is the theory of learning organisations, according to the authors. This model includes principles and attitudes such as 1) learning from failures, daring to experiment 2) the benefits of allowing creative chaos in finding new solutions 3) the potential in allowing multiple perspectives, where different professional cultures cooperate in finding solutions (Lindqvist & Magnusson, 1999).

This is a form of organization with a continuous ability to change, which is driven from within by professionals who have an interest and ability to reflect on and manage their own process of transformation, finding their own way to success. It is a bottom-up perspective where the issue is not only to conform to centrally determined changes. Instead, the organization must form a process of change; the involved professionals must have self-formulated ambitions, take initiative, experiment and evaluate these (Lindqvist & Magnusson, 1999).

"Learning organization" was popular in various types of organizations at that time and represents an alternative that balances the rational and the intuitive mind according to Senge (1995), the author of *The Fifth Discipline*. Learning organizations problematize the degree of freedom in the relation between the system and the individual. They have influences from the humanistic movement with ideas that motivation in work is based on forces like self-actualization (Senge, 1995). Existentialist influences are also seen in the assumption that when personal and organizational interests coincide, a strong commitment arises. Another ingredient in the theory about learning organizations is the importance of the creative potential in the meeting between different professional cultures and teamwork. An openness to scrutinizing one's own beliefs as well as a willingness to listening to each other is the base in a learning organization, according to Senge. Professionals create an understanding, a kind of empathy for

each other's situation (Senge, 1995). In the context of school development, several scholars were inspired by this model, which provides a bottom-up perspective serving the ideas of the decentralized organization (Fullan, 1996; Scherp, 2002, 2003).

A visionary picture of a future individualized school is published by the Ministry of Education in 2001 (Utbildningsdepartementet, 2001). In short, this vision can be summarized in values like consideration, respect, and inspiration. A stimulating working environment and a positive learning climate are mentioned as important. Everyone's integrity should be respected and each individual should be able to feel confidence and security. The atmosphere in this school has a vibrant activity, with an emphasis on individualization, autonomy and self-realization among teachers and pupils. Relationships are supposed to be of high quality. The approaches of teachers are shifting according to students' need. The expert, lecturer, mentor, supervisor, evaluator and the method developers are equally present. The teacher is together with colleagues and a specialized team is the teacher responsible for pupils with special needs. The teacher often has sectorial responsibility, such as for a particular subject area or a team or project. According to this vision, success requires a staff that is personally involved and that the leader of the school has a clear leadership with high expectations on staff. Good leaders emphasize their own learning, to be able to challenge their employees' beliefs about learning and teaching. Developed democracy, good capacity for learning and communication are key concepts of the ideal school (Utbildningsdepartementet, 2001, p. 5-7).

Present situation in the highly individualized school

The visionary picture of the individualized school presented above seems difficult to realize. Research in work health statistics on the health status of professionals in school shows an increase in the number of members on leave due to long-term sick leave from 3% in 1995, to 9% in 2003, which is a tripling in eight years (SCB, 2003). The institute for Work Environment Authority conducted a survey on negative stress and illness in work environment and the results show that the school was ranked as the second worst or the worst work environment. High demands, low control and lack of support at work were mentioned as the main reason of bad health (AFS 2001:2). Research shows that newly examined teachers have a high rate of drop outs (Fransson & Morberg, 2001). The researchers argue that increased support in the teaching profession is thought to improve the situation and would make the young professionals stay. AFA, an insurance company owned by Sweden's labour market parties, shows in

its statistics of the diagnoses, which form the basis for long-term sick leave, the mental diagnoses stand out most. These mental diagnoses constitute about 30% and include both exhaustion and burn-out (AFA, 2004).

Results from international measurements within 65 countries show that among 15 year-old students, the results in reading comprehension, mathematics, and science have decreased between 2000 and 2009 (Skolverket, 2009). One of the reasons mentioned in the report, understanding the low results in TIMMS and PISA, is the process of decentralization of the school system. Another reason listed in the report is the process of individualization. The aim of introducing individualization was to meet each student's needs. Instead, research shows how individualization has become manifested in students own work, when responsibility moves from teachers to student and from school to homes. Other possible explanations for the decrease in equality of the Swedish school is a process of segregation as a consequence of the free choice of school (Hansson, 2011; Skolverket, 2010:352). Difficulties in the discourse of change were pointed out by Hargreaves (1994). When describing a change from modernity towards a more individualized system of post-modernity he questions whether it is possible to systematize and regulate inclination and creativity through organisational reforms. He argues that the very nature of inclination, creativity and spontaneity is linked to the teacher's personal emotional life in relation to students and colleagues and cannot be regulated. Secondly he highlights the, up to now, unnoticed aspects of the teacher work namely the heavy load of administration, taking part in meetings, making plans and so on. The very process of change is something that puts pressure on teacher's work where expectations are not in match with the actual situation. In a postmodern society, old truths are no longer an alternative and professionals are expected to develop new ways of working collaboratively in the encounter between different cultures, according to Hargreaves. The intention was to reduce stress and increase motivation by freedom and autonomy. But still teachers experience stress from the intensification of work, which instead makes collaboration to an experience of forced collegiality. Collaborating can be experienced as a burden rather than a creative opportunity. The increased amount of administration that follows the process of individualisation is also a heavy duty (Hargreaves, 1994). Critics of the time, Carlgren (1995), points out that the idea of the reflection-based practice is congruent with the decentralized governing philosophy, but she questions how well it would fit with the ideas of measuring results and quality by numbers and statistics, which is quite another arena (Carlgren, 1995). In addition, a system with different platforms of interpretation paves the way for in instrumentalist

approach, risking fragmentation and a lack of holistic understanding (Ds 2001:48). The conflicting values within the different reforms at the educational arena are highlighted by Biesta. He suggests a return to the question of the purpose of change in itself (Biesta, 2010).

What knowledge base is required in an individualized organization?

The changes in ideas, sketched above, about how to create the good school have implications for the teaching profession. To be able to meet the demands of each individual according to the visions of the learning organisation, described above, flexibility and knowledge of many different kinds are required. Being a professional is to have all the general features belonging to the profession as well as the ability to adapt to the unique situation. Discussing teacher effectiveness, Biesta (2009) describes the tension between technical rationality versus a practice of judgement in relation to the normative character of the teaching profession. In discussing professional knowing, Biesta uses the terminology of Aristotle expressed as episteme (scientific knowledge), techne (applied scientific knowledge) and phronesis (practical wisdom). He also points out that teacher's expertise is of technical and instrumental nature in identifying the most effective means to achieve a particular end. He argues that effectiveness is a dubious word as the most effective strategy could be in conflict with other desirable educational aims. His point is that judgement and evaluation of means is highly value laden. A professional need to have general ideas of what is acceptable in human interaction and which matters that are educationally worthwhile. Teachers need to have ideas of what it means to be an educated person but also to have ideas about what a good society and a good life is. That means, according to Biesta (2009), that judgement is about what is most effective and what is educationally desirable. The notion he uses to describe wisdom is phronesis. His view of practical wisdom is not something one does, it is a virtue, something you are, a person capable of judgement. A wise person can see what is good for him and what is good for others in general and is concerned with both the universal and the particulars. Practical wisdom is developed through experience in life. In conclusion, practical wisdom is not the application of rules, but about seeing and responding to situations in particular ways and at the same time having an eye on what is to be done (Biesta, 2009).

One way of framing the interest of this project is to explore and focus on the potential of developing practical wisdom through self-knowledge and self-awareness. Does self-awareness and self-knowledge such as it is developed in a

psychosynthesis programme contribute to professional ways of being and knowing? And if it does, in which ways? In order to deepen the understanding of the relationship between the different kinds of professional knowledge, I will also refer to the evidence debate where issues of appropriate professional knowing are problematized.

Technical rational logic and the logic of judgement in a practice of care

Polkinghorne (2004) who writes in the tradition of phenomenology describes the logic within the technical rational tradition. In this tradition, professional knowing should build on scientific theories, statistically tested scripted sequences, manuals and laid out programmes. He questions this development, especially in caring professions where relational aspects were previously considered as one of the key-elements, which now tend to be overlooked. He suggests another practice model that allows situated knowledge and personal judgement as an important base for knowledge. Practical judgement, as he calls it, is necessary in situations where practitioners make choices and decisions that are supposed to bring about the human good. He advocates a way of thinking that can deal with complex and competing goals, taking into account the timing and the context of the action, as well as the unique and particular characteristics of the situation in contact with the person for whom the action is undertaken. Polkinghorne suggests that the use of the Aristotelian concept of phronesis[1] should be extended with the notion of embodiment and reflective understanding for this kind of professional knowledge. He argues that phronetic thinking enables us to view people as feeling and concerned beings rather than as resources. It is a way of being with others that allows for needs and pains that call for a caring human response (Polkinghorne, 2004). He continues to describe the logic of judgment in that particular instances have priority over general rules and that the unique and special of a situation must be taken into account; a fine-tuned attention to situation is developed. In this process, according to Polkinghorne, the emotions of the professional provide guidance and motivations for actions; a kind of felt understanding of the situation is attained. Emotions are connected to personal beliefs and can be modified according to the attending persons beliefs about a situation. Full understanding includes intentional awareness directed to the situation and people use their creativity and

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[1]Phronesis is one of the three Aristotelian concepts for knowing often used in contemporary research in describing relation between theory episteme (the domain of 'knowledge') and practice, etechne (the concern of 'craft' or 'art') phronesis http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/episteme-techne

imagination in the process of sorting out different solutions. Polkinghorne wants to expand the phronetic reasoning with the notion of embodied reasoning. He motivates this by arguing:

> When engaged in it, agents draw on their values, feelings and imaginations. They incorporate their cultural understanding, personal experiences, training and applicable scientific findings. It is a deliberative process that occurs both within and outside their conscious awareness. The phronetic process makes use of all ones sources of knowledge in searching a decision of what should be done. Phronetic reasoning leads to personalized choices in which both the agent and the recipients of service are taken in account" (Polkinghorne, 2004, p. 131).

He also wants to expand phronetic reasoning with the notion of reflective understanding. Practice always takes place within a cultural background or context. He argues that in practice of care neither the practitioner nor the one who is served enters as blank slates. Both bring in their backgrounds, internalised cultural understandings and accumulated personal experiences. Reflection would be a means to look behind the immediate situation (Polkinghorne, 2004).

In the discussion about a practitioner with judgement, both Biesta and Polkinghorn highlight the point that having practical wisdom and a high level of phronesis is something else than acquiring skills or learning methods. It is regarded as something you are as a human, connected to a person's character and the context of his or her experiences in earlier life. People with a high level of judgement do not struggle with every decision, but have developed dispositions or characteristic ways of acting that manifest the human excellences (Polkinghorne, 2004). Other researchers using phronesis in their discussion on professional knowledge in different professions like teaching (Claesson, 1999), nursing (Benner, 2000) and with ethics related to different caring sciences (Holm, 2009).

Judgement in education

When it comes to the question of educating students in practical wisdom or phronesis, Polkinghorne (2004) refers to Aristotle who separated between character training and the study of ethics. According to Aristotle, character training mainly takes place in the interaction with parents/teachers during childhood. Children are open to modification, can learn to control emotion and direct their desires to appropriate objects. According to Polkinghorne, parental love is important in forming dispositions for attachments to others as well as to the community. Parents model how to live a flourishing life. Children who were abused lack this foundation, according to Aristotle (Polkinghorne, 2004).

On the other hand, Polkinghorne (2004) argues that phronetic reasoning, choosing the right goal and the right means for a particular situation, is not an innate ability, but one that requires cultivation. Studying the philosophy of ethics by intellectual scrutiny of values in life can provide a clearer understanding of the means for attaining a flourishing life. A person can become more accomplished in phronetic deliberation in reflecting on her own experiences. Practical perception can be sharpened by discussing a particular situation. According to Aristotle, the characteristics of people with phronensis are that they live complete lives, not denying their intellect or their emotions or appetites. They have developed dispositions or characteristic ways of acting that manifest the human excellence (Polkinghorne, 2004).

As mentioned before phronetic wisdom, described by Biesta (2010), is not something one does, it is rather to be described as a virtue, something you are, as person capable of judgement. As the interest of this study concerns professional judgement, it will be assumed that the phronetic wisdom of the person is brought into the profession. In the private sphere, a wise person can see what is good for him and what is good for others in general and are concerned with both the universal and the particulars. In the professional sphere general ideas of the profession can be taught in theories and methods but needs to be related to the particulars in every situation and integrated in personal ethics and values. Practical wisdom is developed through experience in life according to the reasoning above and the person enters into the professions with their experiences from earlier life (Biesta, 2010).

Biesta's research aims to engage teachers in professional development, learning about themselves, their values and ideals. He identifies the problem that many students have little awareness of values and ideals and he argues that these matters are hardly visible. Part of this knowledge is tacit and unconscious and he poses the question of how can we make the implicit more explicit (Biesta, 2009).

It seems as if the human aspect of professions is not only an old question but also of immediate present-day interest. It was debated by Socrates and Aristotle several hundreds of years before Christ, but none the less, it is a current question in contemporary professional research. It is a question of relevance in discussions about necessary knowledge that is provided in professional education, but also in discussions of appropriate ways of being professional. Professional knowing is mentioned in the sense of knowledge about theories and methods relevant for the profession, as well as methods in developing professional/personal judgement. Professional being and the process of becoming professional address issues such as personal character, identity,

emotional maturity and reflective capacity. The opposite, being a professional person unaware of herself, her character and preferences is in danger of being a victim of conflicting interests and ideals in the profession, not understanding the complexity of situations at work (see below).

Professional person – professional education

In professional research personal qualities have been highlighted as important in the teaching (compare with p. 11), including such matters as being able to integrate feelings at work (Goleman, 1995; Hargreaves, 2001), the necessity of ethical judgement(Eisner, 1994), the ability to take care (Noddings, 1992) and to build trust in relations (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Further, the degree of commitment and psychological presence has been emphasised (W. A. Kahn, 1990, 1992). In the following text, I will present four different conceptualisations of the professional person, which involve personal aspects and address aspects of judgement, practical wisdom and situational awareness. These conceptualisations comprise the "reflective practitioner", the "tactful practitioner", the "authentic professional" and the "relational professional"; characterisations that include different personal qualities and skills that the professional person needs in order to be successful in work. The purpose of this section is to give a background to how personal qualities are described in the teaching profession and how they are supposed to be developed in professional education according to the previously mentioned research.

The reflective practitioner – professional artistry

In the eighties', Donald Schön (1983) highlighted the dilemma of technical rationality, in which practitioners were viewed as instrumental problem-solvers who select technical means best suited to a particular purpose by systematically applying scientifically gained theories. He argued that problems are rarely clear-cut; they might be framed in different ways dependant of the disciplinary background, professional approach or the history of those who frame the problem. A problem very seldom falls into any category that could be solved by standardized methods or routines. According to Schön (1983), something else is needed like spontaneous and improvisational ability, invention and testing, wisdom and the ability of handling conflicting values. He argues that outstanding professionals are not said to have more professional theories than others have; rather, they have wisdom, talent and intuition, which he conceptualizes with the term artistry. He describes artistry as the art of framing problems, of implementation or of improvisation (Schön, 1983).

Artistry in education

Schön's theory in 1987 of how to educate students in artistry was based on the idea of learning through reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The practitioners involve experience, built on normative dimensions as well as normative dimensions of professional knowing. He discusses different forms of educating students in artistry or practical skills in line with the normative curricula in higher education such as practical training at a workplace, different forms of apprenticeships, learning by testing in practice. In developing artistry he gives the model of the "design studio", where students apply theories according to the principle of learning by doing in dialogue with what he calls a coach (Schön, 1987).

Tactful professional

Another way of being professional where the personal qualities of the professional are described is the tactful teacher. With influences from humanistic psychology, the tactful teacher is a person of significance in relation to his student. With the notion of tact as his point of departure, van Manen (2002) describes, in the spirit of phenomenology, a professional that takes the human needs seriously. In his research, van Manen has collected anecdotes describing positive pedagogical moments when teachers are in contact with pupils, feeling content with the situation, in a situation that touches something heartfelt in each part. Based on this research, van Manen describes the tactful professional as a person having a sensitive ability to see others through indirect clues. It is about making socially and psychological interpretations. The tactful person has moral intuitiveness and her own sense of standards and limits. Van Manen continues to describe tact as an improvisational skill, which means to instantly know and act with grace in situations. Tact is both a way of acting and a way of being in the world. He describes pedagogical tact as different from normal tact in that there is an asymmetry in power relations; adults have a certain responsibility for children. To be tactful in a pedagogical sense is to have an attitude of being of service to others, notice what is missing, being protective of the child, being oriented towards others. It is to overcome your own self-centeredness and openness to the essential being of the other person. Van Manen continues to describe the tactful practitioner in that he needs to have a certain amount of sensitivity to the situation and an ability to transform difficult situations. A teacher needs to feel a certain appeal to work with children and their wellbeing, which could be called a commission or vocation, and be able to give the child space and support for developing personal unique talents. Other aspects of tact are to prevent painful

experiences and to be protective of the child's vulnerable sides. Positive regard is supposed to heal wounded sides in the child. Tact is mediated through language, words, silence or tone of voice, gestures, and body-language. Tact is mediated through atmosphere or certain stillness (van Manen, 2002).

Tact in education

Van Manen further argues that tact is not a skill we use, it is something we are. He gives a reference to Herman Helmholtz who describes tact as a certain "mode of knowing and being". "Tact is not a simple affect or learnable habit but that it can be fostered through the more profound processes of humanistic growth, development and education" (van Manen 2002, p. 131). Van Manen does not say anything specific about how to develop tact in teacher training. He considers that it is impossible to tell the best way of teaching or the right morals and values that a professional may have. He argues that good pedagogy is to be in relation with the children and that a teacher knows by his or her own experience in the pedagogic situation if the actions were good. Further, he argues that when we, in ordinary talk, speak about embodied thoughtfulness, mindfulness, heedfulness of tact, we point out the way a person is in mind and body. Instead of having ideas about how to educate people towards tact, van Manen points out impossible attitudes of good pedagogues such as having an attitude that the future is hopeless, since a relation to children is always founded on hope. An impossible worldview is to refuse to take an active responsibility for the world and to deny equal rights for children to develop their fullest potential in relation to the rest of the society. He argues that it is anti-pedagogical to discriminate between groups. As far as van Manen takes the discussion about teacher competencies of tact and teacher training, the matter concerns personal attitudes and talents of the teacher students (van Manen, 2002).

The authentic professional

When Laursen (2004) introduces the concept of the authentic teacher, his intention is to conceptualise the relational and personal aspects of teacher competence. Laursen refers to Taylor (1991) when defining the concept of authenticity and wants to emphasise aspects of work such as creation and construction, as well as discovery. He points out originality, critical opposition to the rules of society and openness to horizons of significance as important qualities of the authentic teacher. The authentic professional, according to this description, has awareness of self and her own identity and self-reference in dialogue. Laursen (2004) conducted his research on a selection of 30 teachers

with a good reputation and found that competence of the authentic teacher was connected to a sense of calling and a personal intention with the work. Authentic teachers were able to communicate a well incarnated and integrated message to their students. The authentic teachers have communicative skills and an attitude of respect for the students as fellow human beings. They have an intuitive understanding of the professional situation and an ability to create fruitful institutional surroundings by nurturing relations to students as well as colleagues. They are also able to realize their intentions and take care of their own professional development. Discussing authenticity and professionalism, Laursen draws a parallel to the context of research on effective psychotherapy. There is a connection between the therapist being trustworthy and the client's willingness to do their part of the work. Equivalently, he suggests, a teacher modelling authenticity creates effective learning and supports the development of authentic pupils (Laursen, 2004).

Authenticity in education
Laursen (2004) argues that authenticity is about general human development and he refers to research within existentialistic therapy when describing the prerequisites for authenticity. Human development is to be able to relate to existential issues such as life, death, separation, freedom, meaning and purpose. People develop their value system in confrontation with life itself. Authenticity and professionalism are not in opposition to each other, they are complementary, authenticity is professionalism at the highest level, and there is no separation between person and profession. Authenticity is action in agreement with personal values, according to Laursen (2004). He also argues that it is possible to educate people in authenticity. He suggests important points that need to be developed in the teacher training. There need to be 1) opportunities to explore personal values, to reflect over purpose, intentions and motives of being a teacher 2) opportunities to test and detect talents and skills. It should possible to 3) develop openness to different types of information, even bodily perceptions 4) develop originality, creativity and integrity with courage to break rules and conventions 5) develop collegial relations. It should also be possible to 6) dare face the fact if the choice of being a teacher turns out to be a wrong decision. Laursen suggests a teacher education with a holistic aspiration including equal amounts of content/pedagogy and practice. Teacher competence would then be expected to be an integrated part of the personality of the teacher (Laursen, 2004).

Relational aspects of profession

In contemporary research in Swedish contexts, issues about self-development are dealt with in a work of Aspelin and Persson (2008), elaborating on the concept of professional/personal development. They challenge the idea of individualistic approaches or mere social approaches and want to highlight the relational aspects of profession. Their point of departure is Mead's theory about the self that is divided in "I" and "me"; the primordial self and the socialized self, seen as two sides of the same coin. This is combined with Buber's theory describing creative actions and interpersonal relationships as ontological conditions of being human. Professional development is described as student's creative response to the demands of the profession. They suggest that it is in the relation between person and person as well as person and the expectations within the profession that should be considered as the locus where teacher development would be understood. Further, Aspelin and Persson (2008) refer to Buber and his conceptualisations of interpersonal relationships. A difference is pointed out between personalized relationships (I-Thou) and impersonal relationships (I-It). In the context of teacher education, the impersonal relationship could be described as objects of the training which they call social expectations of the profession. Personalized relationships describe the relationship between unique human beings. According to this theory, the personalized relationship is of primal importance in education. (Aspelin & Persson, 2008, 2009). Through the expression "professionalism-in-relation" they describe the basic competence of teachers as the capacity to be in a relational process of interaction together with their student. This implies a capacity to side with the students and at the same time occupy the position of pedagogical subject. To be able to do this, the teacher needs to have earlier experiences of being in that position. This is a matter of the capability to shift between a pedagogical position and at the same time regulate the degree of closeness and distance in supporting the student (Aspelin & Persson, 2008, 2009).

Relational awareness in education
According to my reading of Aspelin and Persson (2008), they do not explicitly say anything about which implications such an approach would have on the formation of teacher education. Instead, they place a responsibility on the teacher students and their active participation in the education. They say, "What teachers primarily need to develop, according to this view, is the two-sided ability to respond creatively in the social life of the education and interact in such a way that social relationships occur and in a way that promotes interpersonal

relationships" (Aspelin & Person 2008, p. 44, my translation). Further, they refer to the authors Juul and Jensen (2003) and their ideas about relational competence. They argue for the importance of teachers' self-knowledge and present some methods that are inspired by the discourse of self-development. However, they consider that this psychological understanding includes too much emphasis on individual introspection rather than on relational issues (Aspelin & Persson, 2008; Juul & Jensen, 2003). In Aspelin and Persson's article about "professionalism-in-relation" (my translation), they argue that the capacity to shift between the pedagogical position and the student position is not fully developed initially; it is a capacity that is possible to cultivate(Aspelin & Persson, 2009).

Relevance for the teaching profession

Against this background, numerous difficulties still exist in professional life. The difficulties described by Hargreaves (1994) in the era of modernity have been replaced by other difficulties connected to the rapid rate of change in society, which creates unpredictability. The situation in the individualized school exemplified above describes a situation of complexity where flexibility is presupposed on behalf of the professional. In the common situation of conflicting demands in an ambiguous practice, the professional person needs to be aware of her own limits and strengths in order to navigate and not losing sight in the often complex professional situations. It is no wonder that statistically proven methods seem attractive instead of the stress of not having a simple answer. The point of departure in this study is that theories and techniques are important and necessary parts of a professional education. Still, how could we better prepare and support the professional as a person who can develop a practical wisdom and judgment? According to reasoning about phronesis and practical wisdom it is not a skill we learn, rather it is regarded as something you are as a human, connected to a person's character. Phronesis is awareness of how to live a flourishing life, it is about virtues that have roots in early childhood and family life, but that could be cultivated in ethical discussions. Concerning the personal qualities of the tact, authenticity and the relational professional, those qualities are supposed to be developed by personal growth, according to Aspelin and Persson (2008), Laursen (2004) and van Manen (2002). These researchers have somewhat different focus in how to teach these qualities in professional education. However, they all point at the possibility of human growth and human development, stressing the importance of addressing the whole human rather than the acquisition of theories and methods. In this study,

the interest is to explore what participants learn in training in self-development and if there are the strategies that can support self-development in professional education.

Self-knowledge is mentioned in the new Swedish governmental proposition of teacher training (SOU 2008:109). The proposition is suggesting an increased focus on didactics in future teacher training, but conflict resolution and leadership of the classroom will be in focus as well. In the proposition, one can read:

> Teaching is fundamentally a question of interpersonal meetings. A condition for successful meetings is that teachers and students can enter into each other's thoughts, feelings and intentions, as well as be able to take in each other's perspectives, understand what the other knows or does not know. Many aspiring teachers are naturally talented in creating warm and positive relations, have a kind of capital of relations, motivating their choice of profession. Others need more time to mature and learn more about themselves and about how they function together with others. Such mature self-knowledge is possible to develop in an education, which under expert supervision, will give room for good conversations and relational issues (SOU, 2008:109, p. 216, my translation).

This statement suggests that being human at work will be taken seriously and will be given a certain space in future teacher education. The citation above indicates that the capacity of interpersonal meetings is presupposed and is regarded as a natural talent of the teacher students. However, students lacking mature self-knowledge are given attention. There is an assumption that personal maturation is possible to develop by expert supervision. However, how that maturity is to be developed and the kind of "expert supervision" needed, seems to be an open and unanswered question. With an interest for professional development and teacher education, new demands within the profession would motivate a further close investigation of what is possible to learn in a training of personal development that is useful in professional situations. Therefore, it seems interesting to enter into the discipline of self-development where personal aspects are in focus in an education. It is reasonable to think that self-development could be important within caring professions such as in teaching, or in nursing where human interaction is important as well. Self-knowledge in these professions is more about a mature understanding of the professional situation.

The idea of personal development in relation to professional development

The purpose of this study is to gain knowledge about strategies for education in professional/personal qualities of the professional. Traditionally self-development is a common feature in the professional education of psychotherapists and in the professional development of managers. An education in self-development is often based on a specific theory, which may differ between educations in the field. Training programmes can have features of therapy individually and/or in groups. Mandell (2007) compiles the common assumptions of how the self could be used in professional practice as follows:

- The self is of importance because it is a dimension of the person through which theoretical and technical knowledge is mediated in a professional context. Who we are as humans becomes a part of the frame where the work is done.
- In order to create a working alliance it is important to have the communication skills and abilities to take in both verbal and nonverbal expressions, such as tonality, body language and dress.
- You need self-awareness of your values and beliefs, attitudes, openness, genuineness and warmth and a non-judgemental stance. These are used in the service of setting and maintaining boundaries, confidentiality and in modelling behaviour.
- Feelings towards the other, within a relationship, are expressed through the transference counter-transference system. It is your earlier personal experiences that come into the encounter and affect the real meeting.
- As a socially constituted product, subjectivity operates within discursive positions. The historical inheritance in different institutional and cultural identities embodies different power and one needs to be observant of domination. In this perspective, there is a need to be concerned with ethics.
- In therapeutic work, there are discussions of how much the therapist should include clients in the process. There are many theories that are used by different therapeutic traditions. One is the theory of the wounded healer, assuming that the foundation of being able to help others builds on your own experiences and awareness of your own wounds and how that affects us. Self-awareness and a well reflected personal process is important from this perspective, preventing the practitioner from imposing or projecting their own material onto the client (Mandell, 2007).

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The potential of consciously using self in the profession creates many new openings in the development of the professional person.

Purpose and research question

The specific interest in this study is to explore what participants learn in a course of personal development with psychosynthesis as a method. The aim is to understand self-awareness and self-knowledge as it is developed in psychosynthesis training. The focus is primarily set on if/how changes in awareness and knowledge about self can contribute to professionals' experience of work. Having this self-awareness and self-knowledge in itself does not say anything about the development of personal qualities of the professional. However, the interest of this study is to explore how learning about self, gaining self-awareness and self-knowledge, actually influences your relation to work; for example, in terms of relational capacity, tact authenticity and professional judgement mentioned in theories about professional knowledge and professional person. Participants are interviewed and asked to exemplify situations which they handle differently after this education. Interesting to know, is also what parts in the training that participants experience as most helpful.

Research Questions:

- What do participants learn in an education in psychosynthesis that they use in their professional practice?
- What elements of the training are considered as most helpful for their process of learning?

Chapter 3

Self-development in relation to professional education

In chapter two, the field of professional research was presented in general terms. In this chapter, research concerning self-development in connection with professional development is reviewed. Focus is primarily set on self-development in connection with professional development. This review concerns research in which ideas of self-development are brought into an academic discourse. It also deals with research on self-development taught in separate courses for in-service training. In the field of health and stress management, there are many more studies, but entering into that research would lead outside the scope of this study.

Self-development integrated in professional training

Starting with research concerning self-development as a part of professional training, there is one review from Zehm (1999) that traces the roots of the self-development perspective in the American and European contexts back to 1880. During the end of the nineteenth century, thoughts about the "progressive" society made an entrance into the field of education, a tradition in which each individual was considered able to develop their potential. According to Zehm, philosophically, these thoughts are linked to pedagogical principles connected to European philosophers such as Pestalozzi, Herbart and Fröbel. These ideas were brought to America by a paediatrician named Joseph Mayer Rice. He was influenced by the ideas of Fröbel who claimed that "growing consciousness of self makes human freedom possible" and that the main purpose of education should be to develop human beings "to become fully conscious of their powers" (Fröbel as cited in Zehm 1999). This was the beginning of the progressive movement where some progressives wanted to develop a science of education, based in psychological theories and social science. Already a century ago, teacher students were expected to receive training in scientific principles to validate educational knowledge. According to Zehm, John Dewy and William James, who were part of the progressive movement, warned teachers against relying entirely on objective science, arguing that they also need good intuition and

subjective knowledge to do good work (Zehm, 1999). This shows that the discussion about technical rational logic and the logic of judgement, described above, was also current during this period. Zehm describes the self-development perspective as fluctuating during the twentieth century, in concurrence with the technical rational approach to school effectiveness. He describes how crises in society may be associated with an increased focus on control and technical rationality (Zehm, 1999).

Describing self-development in connection with teacher education, Zehm mentions an early work from 1955 in which Artur T. Jersild applies thoughts about self-knowledge on the teaching profession (Zehm, 1999). Jersild's question was: "What does this effort to help students really mean in a distinctly intimate, personal way in the teacher's own life?" The hypothesis was formulated as follows.

> The teacher's understanding and acceptance of himself is the most important requirement in any effort he makes to help students to know themselves and to gain healthy attitudes of self-acceptance (Jersild, 1955 p. 3).

Jersild argues that self-understanding requires something quite different than the methods, study-plans, skills and "know-how" that usually are emphasized in education. Jersild argues further that methods and techniques used in an insensitive manner may even defeat their purpose. He suggests a more personalised searching, which will help the teacher to identify his own relationship of being a human who learns. It is a matter of experiencing meaning, anxieties, guilt, hostilities, conformity, freedom, creativity and awareness of your own attitudes towards authority and having an ability to share the concerns of the students. According to the assumptions of Jersild, it is through facing one's own hard struggles experienced through life that the professional will grow in compassion for others (Jersild, 1955; Zehm, 1999). A second book that Zehm mentions is *The Teacher as a Person* (Natalicio & Hereford, 1962) inspired by the work of Carl Rogers and his humanistic views, emphasizing the human aspect of profession. Another title mentioned by Zehm is *Expanding the Self: Personal Growth for Teachers* by Boye and Pine, published in 1971 (Zehm, 1999). In searching for these titles in library catalogues, they were not found.

Challenges in the self-development movement

Zehm (1999) gives various reasons why, what he calls the self-development perspective, has difficulties in breaking through. One reason is the structure of

the university, since professional education often is taught in courses and that there are too many interests competing for space in the curricula of teacher preparation programmes. Another reason could be the lack of common ground for definitions of self, self-development and questions of which dimensions of self that can be taken into account, together with the uncertainties about how to best impart self-development in teacher training. Zehm argues that an agreed conceptual frame for self-development would be helpful in the discussion of strategies concerning the selection of "appropriate" teacher students in teacher trainings. The author refers to research within the teaching profession that shows how teacher students with a difficult childhood can have difficulties in creating and nurturing relationships in the classroom. These students could be singled out, or be given extra support.

Zehm also points out some new trends in teacher education that are supportive to the process of self-development of the practitioner. Personal journals, self-assessment narratives, metaphors and pictures may have significant implications on self-development. Dialogues of different formats with mentors, supervisors, peers and others are also regarded as supportive for self-development. Another supporting structure for self-development in professional education is to organize coherent learning communities in teacher education. At the same time, this creates an opportunity for them to establish close relationships, with the possibility to grow together, examining and challenging each other's beliefs and understandings (Zehm, 1999).

Theory development – self-development in teacher education

A Dutch scholar and teacher educator who has been very productive in focusing on the professional person in teacher education is Korthagen (2004). By taking his point of departure in the movement of reflection, started by Schön, and the question of how to educate a good teacher, he suggests a holistic or realistic teacher education as an alternative approach to the dominant technical rational models of teacher education. Describing the developmental trends within teacher education, he contrasts the approach based on competence with a teacher education based on a humanistic perspective. The competence approach was according to Korthagen, based on the idea that it was possible to detect correlations of the observed behaviour of teachers to the student-outcome. This approach ends up, in long lists of competences that should be taught, and it made the understanding of the good teacher fragmentary. The other approach, as Korthagen was a teacher education based on a humanistic approach (HBTE), and it was seen around 1970, and more attention was given to the professional

person. According to Korthagen, this movement never became widespread but the approach led to an acceptance that competences now could concern personal aspects of the teacher, such as their love for children or their enthusiasm or flexibility. Korthagen wants to broaden the discussion suggesting that there is more to it than just competences and observable behaviour that can be influenced in a teacher training. He points out that there are deeper layers within the person that can be engaged. He introduces the model of core-reflection, based on ideas from "positive psychology"; in this context, the assumption is that psychological theories could be used in understanding professional-personal development. Within his theory of core-reflection he uses of the "onion model" of the self, which describes several levels within each person that can be addressed in education. Starting from the outside of the onion in the environment of the self, he describes layers in each person mirroring behaviour, competences, beliefs, identity and mission. These layers represent and contain deeper values of the person and his or her formation (Korthagen, 2004; Vasalos & Korthagen, 2005). In further articles, Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) developed their theory about core-reflection with the U-theory and the concept of presence. The U-theory is an idea about the process of reflection developed by thinkers like Scharmer (2007) and Senge (1995), active in the field of organizational development. When supervising teacher students, Korthagen suggests a model based on a combination of the U-theory and his model of core reflection. At the bottom of the U, the practitioner comes into contact with a state of being that they call a sense of presences, which describes a process of deep learning, where the professional and the personal selves are integrated in an understanding of the professional situation. Within this model of regarding professional/personal development, both a process of learning competences and personal qualities emerge. The quality of presence, which is a feeling and/or a state of being that could be recognized, is the indicator of alignment between inner and outer qualities of the professional (Senge, 1995; Sharmer, 2007; Vasalos & Korthagen, 2005). Korthagen and Vasalos (2009) include theories about mindfulness in developing practices of reflection and ways of using self in the profession (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009).

The research of Meijer, Korthagen and Vasalos has the character of theory-development and they write about a case of supervision, which exemplifies how to apply their theories in a supervision context (Meijer, Korthagen, & Vasalos, 2009 b). Another way of framing his theory of core-reflection is to learn from within (Korthagen, 2009 c). Again, he is taking his point of departure in a technical rationality model of teacher education in which experts are supposed to

know what teachers need to know. Taking help from positive psychology and theories of change, he points out the need to address the teacher students' own needs in an active learning process, since change is something that is difficult to manage. Korthagen (2009c,) argues that theories introduced from above in a top down process awaken resistance, resulting in behaviours such as fight, flight or freeze. Another perspective is needed in which the teacher students are actively involved by being engaged through their own experience of difficulties. He calls this perspective professional learning from within (Korthagen, 2009 c). Lunenberg, Korthagen and Swennen have dealt with other aspects of the professional person such as being a role-model (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007). Korthagen has also studied issues of self-disclosure on behalf of teacher educator connected with the moral task of teaching (Korthagen, 2001).

Personal development in healthcare teacher-education

A Swedish research project relevant for this study comes from teacher education in healthcare. It illustrates a teacher programme with personal development included as one part of the goals expressed in the curricula. In her project, Neckmar (1998) has studied the experiences of teachers of difficult situations in their practice, which they consider as both pedagogically and personally challenging. The situations occurred in their first year in their profession and the interviewees are asked to assess whether their teacher education had the ability to prepare them for these difficulties (Neckmar, 1998). I quote a list taken from the results, which show that among the 71 situations, eight different aspects of professional situations were identified.

Group processes   24
   - the climate of the classrooms,
   - resistance of the group, projections
   - process guidance of groups
Conflict resolution
Support of students' personal and social development   8
Nurse teachers' content knowledge   2
Nurse teachers' methodological competence   6
Supervision of knowledge development   4
Students with special needs   8
Assessment, failures and drop-outs   9
Cooperation with colleagues and leaders   10
                                                              (Neckmar, 1998)

According to these results, relational issues seem to be a greater challenge than the acquiring of theories and techniques in the profession.

The young professionals were also asked to assess their experience of their own personal development during the training. The results show a general positive impact on the personality; self-knowledge and self-confidence are specifically mentioned with an increased awareness of their own strengths and limitations. A greater clearness and ability to set limits and to stand for their own opinion were reported, together with a greater difference in communicative ability and critical attitude.

The elements of the training that participants experience as supportive to personal development and personal growth are: the manner in which work was organized, student responsibility, the method of pedagogic drama, personal development discussions and the attitude of the leaders of the course. Other issues that were mentioned were the importance of the supervisor of the internship and the ethical discussions in the training; the experience of filming a situation was also positive. A structure of the training that was mentioned as supportive was the small groups of collaboration.

Considering the question of whether the teacher education could meet the needs of the students in their process of self-development, the results of this showed that students had different opinions. Some were very positive and others considered that they did not find a clear structure for supporting personal development in the training. The conclusion was that a clear strategy was missing, or that the teacher educators varied in their teaching (Neckmar, 1998).

Research on self-development for psychotherapists

Helen Payne (2001) makes a review of research on the outcome of personal development groups for professional psychotherapists. Different therapeutic schools implicitly expect that personal development groups are essential to their professional development. She refers to Izzard and Wheeler (1995) when defining the assumptions behind the importance of self- knowledge in the therapist profession. According to them, having self-knowledge and self-understanding includes notions of self-esteem, self-concept, self-disclosure, sense of self, personal insight and personal growth. It can be defined as a skill, the ability to inquire into oneself "who am I". It also concerns, according to them, to have some ability to address blind spots in understanding self and others, to notice and take back projections, to recognise defensive structures, to notice feelings and be able to express them appropriately (Payne, 2001). Going through research from the sixties and seventies, Payne finds very little evidence

that personal development and therapy improves practice and client work. Payne finds some reports from the seventies, but then there is a gap with very few studies until the nineties. The conclusion she draws is that it is not clear if the assumptions about increased self-awareness would contribute or are beneficial in client work. According to Payne, more understanding is needed, identifying the goals, processes and outcomes for practice of such personal development groups for the counsellor and therapist work of trainees. Research work is needed, which explores individual trainees' perception of personal development groups and/or personal therapy. Payne suggests that further research is needed for the development of the curriculum of therapist training, as well as to understand the duration of personal development groups in relation to client-benefit. She also suggests a longitudinal evaluation of the importance of the experiences, the processes and the outcome of personal development groups (Payne, 2001).

Self-development as in-service training for professionals

Various training programmes focusing on self-development as a part of professional development have been given as in-service courses. In the following text, before entering into research around specific programmes, I will present some history and some critical aspects often discussed in this area. Yalom and Leszcz (2005) trace the development of groups for personal growth back to what they call "encounter groups". It started from the personal needs of professionals who, even if they were successful still experienced tension, insecurity or value conflicts in life. It was considered that keeping up a façade in society could be helpful in managing ordinary life, but in the long-run a separation between the intrapersonal life and the interpersonal life, would consume energy at the cost of authenticity and self-actualization. The goal of the encounter group was to create a setting where human relations were explored, where facades were challenged and experiential learning was in focus. The researchers trace the encounter groups to T-groups, back to 1946 and Kurt Levin with his group dynamics. At that time, the purpose of the T-groups was to prepare leaders to meet cultural differences. According to the historical account of Yalome and Leszcz, the therapeutic disciplines entered into the arena of encounter groups around 1960. They mention psychologists such as Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, Fritz Perls, Carl Rogers. They also mention the existential philosophers behind these psychologists including Nietzsche, Sartre, Tillich, Jaspers, Heidegger and Husserl. Ultimately, according to Yalom and Leszcz, the encounter groups were developed in reaction to the mechanistic models of behaviourism, the

reductionism of analytic theory where human consideration was missing (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005).

Research on outcomes of encounter groups

Turning to the research about encounter groups, Yalome and Leszcz (2005) carried out a study in 1973 in which students were offered three months training in a university course. Results show that even if many persons experienced change and experienced the course as highly beneficial (40%), it was reported that 8% were negatively affected by the training. The authors consider it difficult to draw the conclusion, from those results, that encounter groups generally could be ineffective or dangerous. They argue that there are different methodological concerns that have to be taken into consideration; for instance, the heterogeneity of methods and the leadership of the encounter groups.

Applying a factor analysis of leader-behaviour on the data of this study, the researchers show that encounter groups with an educational part are more successful than encounter groups only working "with the here and now". He shows that there is a connection between behaviour of the leaders and student outcome. A leader with greater concern and the ability to give meaning to experiences was beneficial for the student-learning (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005).

The results of research on effects from sensitivity training show that participants change their behaviour and have positive experiences as long as they stay in similar settings. However, difficulties arose when they came back to their workplaces, again falling back to old patterns. Other research shows different types of learning in group development and transformation of self- image (Burton, 1997). The encounter group usually comprises one or two weeks of training, where people from different organisations meet and there are several variations in methodology. These studies all show that there is more to it than learning, in order to achieve lasting changes (Derefelt, 1975; Ellström, 1992; Moxnes, 1997).

Personal development group versus therapy group

In their description of the encounter groups, Yalom and Leszcz (2005) touch upon the conflict between therapy groups and encounter groups, or what we call in this project personal development groups. Often the encounter groups were known as "therapy for normal", which is an expression that holds a number of difficult questions, such as what is normal and what is unhealthy. Within the context of personal development, it was said that sickness came from living in a technocratic society; in that case, this is the situation for all of us as members of

society. In the psychiatric context sickness is considered in a more strict sense to mean psychiatric diagnoses. Other questions in the discussion were about the qualifications of the leader and what was considered as an adequate education of the leaders. Yalom and Leszcz argue that the evolution of group therapy within psychiatric treatment has been highly influenced by the area of personal growth and vice versa, and that the polarization between the disciplines has decreased since the seventieth (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005).

Common factor analysis of the outcome of therapy groups

Considering research on the outcome of therapy in general, there is an extensive body of research done in psychiatry and in studies on health and life-quality, which I will not go into at any length as it falls outside the scope of my study which focuses on professional education and professional qualification with a special focus on teacher education rather than psychiatric health. However, since so much of the psychosynthesis training, the studied programme of this project, is based on therapy, I would like to present some results from research on therapeutic outcome. Yalom and Leszcz have explored the outcome of group therapy and identified the most "common therapeutic factors" mentioned by participants. Common factor research concerns factors that are ranked as 1) increased knowledge about yourself and your own personal responses, 2) learning to know your value for others, 3) assistance in correcting unwanted behaviour learned through experiences from family of origin. Further important factors were 4) developing social competence, 5) awareness of self and your own identity in relation to others, 6) developing trust in others and trust in the possibility of receiving help from others, 7) not feeling alienated and alone about your own situation. Finally, 8) knowledge about working in the field of groups also increased (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005).

Programmes in self-development

Below, research from three different programmes will be reviewed. The programmes are based on somewhat different theoretical content and are aimed at different occupational groups.

The programme of "existential leadership"

In a recent study of manager development, Thomas Andersson (2005) sought to understand what effect the participation of managers in a self-development programme, called "existential leadership", would have on the self-image of professionals in relation to their being/becoming a manager. The aim of the

programme is to "create conscious and mature leaders by focusing on the fact that leadership is a profession that means leading people", to "transform managers into leaders". The assumption behind the programme concerns "focusing on the leader's existential understanding of him or herself, i.e. getting to know and understand who you are and understand your existence and how you relate to others"(Andersson, 2005). According to the intentions of the organizers of the programme, the challenge is to get together the inner and the outer world of the professional and to support people in getting to know themselves better and use their inner talents. Issues explored in the training are, conscious presence, meditation, integrity, energy, responsibility, personal visions, driving forces and motivations, stress and relaxation, power, intuition and heart, creativity, coaching leadership, feminine and masculine, relations and meetings, decisions and an organic understanding of the organisations. The purpose of Andersson's study was to investigate the struggles of managerial identity in relation to the process of becoming/being a manager, and the personal conflicts involved within this process. By following the managers before, during and after the five-week training in personal development, it was possible to see how managers negotiated professional identity. The theoretical frame used in this study was symbolic interactionism, which is a perspective allowing for a process of change of self, that can be used when becoming a manager, according to Andersson. The result of his study shows that some of the participants found a new way of being, but that they experienced difficulties to negotiate the new identity when returning back to the organisation, meeting old colleagues. They also experienced lack of interest and support from the organisation. Anderson considers that this illustrates the importance of the context in identity development. His observation was that on the one hand, context shapes managerial identity; but on the other hand, context might operate to dilute the identity of the professional. Practical implications of this study, suggested by Anderson, is that management training concerns the acquisition of competences and techniques as well as personal awareness, it is still difficult to meet the needs of the organisation while managerial practice is more fluid and contextually based (Andersson, 2005).

The programme of "psychological and pedagogical development"

Sandvik (2009) studied the qualitative changes in professional competence after participating in a programme that consists of a series of seminars focusing on pedagogic and psychological development for kindergarten teachers. The

programme had a theoretical/educational part, as well as a counselling part where participants reflected together with a supervisor on their own behaviour, through filmed sequences of interactions with children in their professional practice. The theoretical foundation of her programme is built on Kohuts' self-psychology, The assumption in his theory is that the self is developed in interaction with another person. The child has inherent needs of being seen and taken seriously, of being unique and of being alike another person in order to develop a balanced personality. According to this theory, a teacher who had been engaged in self-development could more easily understand her own reactions and empathically meet the needs of the child (Kohut 1988, as cited in Sandvik 2009). Sandvik has in her doctoral thesis made interviews before and after the intervention and her aim was to describe and analyse the qualitative changes in the kindergarten teachers' "self-in-relationship" and the characteristics of the process of change. She used an phenomenological –hermeneutical approach in analysing the data and the results were presented in case descriptions, which then were further analysed and the result was then sorted into the seven themes of change that were identified. These themes were:

- An enhanced theoretical understanding (for self and self-development)
- An increased willingness to take on a children's perspective
- A changed readiness for action (willingness to be a self-object, supporting self-development of the child)
- An increased sense of self
- A strengthened professional self-confidence
- A changed didactical approach attitude
- A changed attitude in relationships

Sandvik concluded that it is possible to educate students or professionals, in in-service trainings, in their ability to be in relation with other people. The filming and the supervision contributed with a change of perspective that was beneficial to the process of becoming self-aware in the profession (Sandvik, 2009).

The programme of "courage and renewal"

An education focusing on self-development in relation to professions such as lawyers, medical doctors and teachers is the "courage and renewal" programme. The principles and practices of this programme were developed by Parker J. Palmer with the assistance of the Fetzer Institute 1994-1996 (Palmer, 1998; Palmer & Scribner, 2007). Focusing on the teacher profession, they provide a programme called "courage to teach", which takes its point of departure in

school reforms and policies saying that the knowing and doing of teachers are the most important parts of improving students' learning. They consider that recruiting, preparing and retaining good teachers are strategies for improving our schools and that policymakers within school reforms, need to take into consideration the conditions for teachers. Palmer's aim was to address the inner life of teachers, their sense of calling, and deep personal and spiritual engagement in their profession. The Courage to Teach programme consists of eight weekend retreats spread out over two years, when teachers from different schools gather around issues of identity, integrity and renewal. With the use of personal stories, reflections on classroom practices and insights from poetry, storytellers and various wisdom traditions, educators revisit the "heart of teaching" (Palmer, 1998). A call for renewal is also now connected to a discussion about integrative learning in higher education (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010). The movement of teacher formation has grown and courses are given in many cities in America. In a research summary, results from 14 different types of studies were reviewed by Poutiatine (2005) from a phenomenological perspective. Three of them are doctoral theses with qualitative approaches, the other studies have the character of evaluations. The surveys were sponsored by the Centre for Teacher Formation. These studies where qualitatively analysed and themes emerged answering the question "What can courage to teach do for teachers?"

The five themes of the results are presented below:

1) The development of professional teaching skills. Different abilities are developed, such as the ability to listen, to build hospitable learning environments, to use questions in students' learning processes and the professional ability to use reflective practices.

2) The development of professional teaching dispositions and attitudes. A development has taken place towards constructive collegiality, relational trust capacity, a better ability to take care of other people, increased vocational and personal clarity of purpose, improved self-acceptance, confidence and courage in both personal and vocational aspects of life. Improved leadership, clarity and capacity are also described in this category.

3) Professional and Personal Growth. The ability to identify your own and other's individual gifts and talents, as well as clarification and affirmation of personal beliefs about education.

4) Integration of personal and professional life. This category describes an increased ability to integrate personal and professional aspects of life and work towards

more authentic identity manifestations and a greater understanding of the significance that identity plays in vocational practice.

5) Personal and professional renewal and transformation. Participants increased their understanding of and capacity for developing and integrating experiences of renewal as a part of an on-going process of professional development. They experience that renewal is both sustaining and transforming in vocational life.

The conclusions drawn by the Centre for Teacher Formation from these results are that a programme in courage to teach will have a great impact on teacher's professional lives, although not all participants did experience a change in every aspect mentioned in the results. There was a comment that the outcome reported by the participants was dependent on how much they invested in the training, in terms of being open to the possibility of growth (Poutiatine, 2005).

Research in psychosynthesis for professionals

A study of psychosynthesis self-development programme groups in relation to professional development was made, which focused on the personal characteristics of the leader and on self-actualization (Cullen, 1996). Leaders who had taken part in a psychosynthesis education were surveyed through two different instruments. The POI (Personal Orientation Inventory) examines items in 12 different areas, which indicate the self-actualized person compared with the non-self-actualized person. Further, the instrument consisting of the Inventory of Self-Actualizing Characteristic is used. The result is based on 56 psychosynthesis students with professions within leadership, who have responded to surveys before and after training. Significant differences are noted before and after the education. The result revealed that the training was supportive in the participant's personal development process towards self-realization (Cullen, 1996). The text I have taken part in does not mention anything about the duration of this training and the full length text was not available.

Summary

This part of the research review shows that the area of self-development in relation to professional development is relatively unexplored and it has been difficult to find a range of relevant references. The research found was grouped in two categories: 1) courses in personal development within professional training and 2) courses that are given as in-service training. Concerning courses in personal development within the university, the course-driven organization is an obstacle since it is not known how such a course could best be implemented,

with respect to length and scope. Another reason is that there is no agreed theory in the field of personal development. Looking at the separate elements often used in the pedagogical methods of teacher training, approaches aimed to enhance reflection and experiential learning could be supportive for student self-development. A framework called "realistic teacher education", is based on thinking within positive psychology and self-development (Korthagen, 2001).

- Within the teacher training for healthcare teachers, research shows that challenging situations for young professionals often concern relational issues rather than theories or methods belonging to the profession. Some students experienced certain elements of their training as supportive for their self-development process, but critics among the participants of this study did not perceive that the teachers of the training had any strategy for the self-development part of the curricula (Neckmar, 1998).

- Looking into the field of therapist training, Payne concludes that there is a lack of evidence of whether self-development for therapists is beneficial for clients. She argues that many questions still remain to be answered concerning both research method and matters like extent of training or its relation to client benefits (Payne, 1999).

- Concerning research on self-development programmes, given as in-service trainings, this research shows that the educational elements of the training are important. Results even show that the ability of the group leaders in supporting participants in making sense of their suffering and the attitude of the leader is more important than the particular theory of the education (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005).

- Other results show that participants' experience change and find a new identity, although they find this difficult to maintain. The process of negotiating a new identity needs an interest and support from the leaders of the reception when returning back if there showed be any lasting changes. The encounter groups show similar results; changes are possible to maintain in similar settings, but difficult to maintain back home (Andersson, 2005).

- Research from the 'courage to teach' programme, identifies a range of benefits that persons can experience back in their profession. However, the researcher found that the level of benefits was dependent on the participants' openness to the possibility for growth, along with how much interested they invested in the programmes (Poutiatine, 2005).

- Other results from the pedagogical/psychological programme show how professional teachers develop their relational capacity and their willingness to be a self-object in relation to their pupils (Sandvik, 2009).
- Research carried out on the tradition of psychosynthesis shows that participation in this training could significantly contribute to the process of self-actualization of professionals (Cullen, 1966).

Contribution to the field of professional development

The main concern of my thesis is professional development and to actualize the possibility of educating students in personal competences such as tact, authenticity, openness and judgment of the professional person, which might be useful in the profession. Traditionally, personal aspects are dealt with in the discourse of self-development; my study will focus on self-development in connection with the method of psychosynthesis. The discourse of self-development includes many difficulties and is relatively unexplored, but it is nevertheless an area of knowledge that may be of importance when discussing how to support development of mature self-knowledge in a profession. The thesis may contribute to the development of a conceptual framework about what it means to be human in the profession. This may be important when it comes to professional education and how to approach these competences.

The questions that I want to explore in my research have not been formulated in the same way before. By choosing to approach the field of self-development from a phenomenological life-world perspective, searching for the meaning of having self-awareness and self-knowledge in a profession, an approach is implied that openly asks what participants learn when they learn to know about themselves. With the point of departure of the life-world, the focus is primarily set on changes in the relation between the professionals and their work. Through studying the lived experience of professionals in professional situations, insights and changes in the participants' experiences are captured. Having this self-awareness and self-knowledge in itself does not say anything about a development of personal qualities of the professional. However, the interest of my study is to explore whether learning about self, gaining self-awareness and self-knowledge, actually influences own relation to work; for example, in terms of relational capacity, tact, authenticity and professional judgement, as mentioned in theories about professional knowledge and professional person.

The study provides an inside perspective, through individual experience, of what it might mean in professional life to have self-awareness and self-

knowledge. These individual experiences are systematized, and a meaning structure of the phenomena self-awareness and self-knowledge is identified. The purpose of capturing the meaning of self-awareness and self-knowledge in this way is to identify crucial points in professional training leading to the development of a mature self-knowledge. This study may contribute to the field of self-development in relation to professional development in general. The result of the project will also contribute with knowledge concerning psychosynthesis training in particular.

Chapter 4

Presentation of Psychosynthesis Training

The interviewees have undertaken an education in personal development in which, the method of psychosynthesis was applied. In the following chapter, I will give an orientation of theoretical assumptions relating to what constitutes a self and what self-development is in this perspective. Following this, there will be a section exemplifying how an education of this kind could be organised. This presentation built on course descriptions from the organizer of the studied training. The purpose of this chapter is to give an orientation of the different aspects of the persons who are explored during the programme, in order to understand in depth the process of development that participants describe.

Psychosynthesis is an integrative therapy built on theories from psychoanalytic, humanistic, existential and transpersonal psychology. The philosophy of this education is based on the assumption that the soul is a substance; it is a unique inborn voice of each individual reachable by introspection. The task is to detect and to remove the things that obscure the real expression of the individual soul and make space so that the inner voice can be listened to. There is also an assumption that each person has a narrative, a socialised self, which is internalised in the individual from the culture. It is assumed that this identity can differ somewhat from the real self and that the task is to widen this identity by integrating suppressed parts from the unconscious. In this training, the present identity and the way it is shaped by own life in relation to family, society and culture is explored. The process in personal development is about creating possibilities for self-realization, finding a sense of meaning and purpose in life. It is about identifying and integrating repressed parts in the personality by identifying talents, abilities and potentiality and hindrances and limitations in a personality. The assumption behind this training is that by learning about personal identity, beliefs, desires and intentions, and by acquiring self-awareness, authentic and balanced responses to life situations will develop. The psychosynthesis programme is especially interesting to study as it has the character of "therapy for normal", it is oriented towards self-development, suitable for professional development rather than psychopathology. Participants come from a broad range of professions and they want to learn about themselves for both private and professional reasons.

In an interview in 1973, at the age of 85, Assagioli was asked about his reason for developing the psychosynthesis theory. His answer was that he wanted to develop a psychology that could take the individuality of each client in account. He studied diverse theories and made technical applications in order to be able to meet the needs of each client. It is each patient, each therapist, healer or teacher, each immediate situation and timing of the technique used, which will show if methods are harmful or helpful. This openness to different methods and techniques within the psychosynthesis theory gives a large amount of freedom of choice to the professional, but requires much practice and great intuition. According to Assagioli, psychosynthesis is an attitude of life in general of the professional, which focuses on the interplay, the bringing together of all the elements, often conflicting, into an organic whole. To describe this he uses an analogy with various cells of the body with its specific function, these are built into organs, to a body, contributing to the vitality of the whole organism (Loomis, 1973).

Roberto Assagioli was born in Venice in Italy in 1888. He grew up in an upper-middleclass Jewish family with a culturally rich upbringing, typical of his class at that time. He studied medicine and received a medical degree in neurology and psychiatry, he wrote a dissertation with his first thoughts of his new theory. In his thesis he presented a vision of a holistic approach to psychology with a focus on human experiences, human growth and the potentiality of living a more complete life (Sörensen & Birkholm, 2009).

He founded the first institute *Institutor di Psicosinteci* in Rome in 1925 with the purpose of developing, applying and teaching the various techniques of psychotherapy and of psychological training (Firman & Gila, 2002). During the 1930s he wrote articles in what later became his first book *Psychosynthesis and Techniques: A Manual of Principles* (Assagioli, 1965). During the World War Two, his institute was closed down. He was accused of being a pacifist, as he claimed that true peace only could be found within, not with politics, violence or legal means. After World war Two, he founded a new institute in Florence where he then spent the rest of his professional life. He continued to give lectures and write articles, during 1960s institutes were founded in many countries such as United States, Greece, England, Argentina and in India (Firman & Gila, 2002).

Assagioli learned and practiced psychoanalytic therapy and he was involved in exploring Freud's theories concerning childhood and the unconscious. However he wanted to structure the unconscious in a different way and he recognised the drives, impulses and desires of the human but also other qualities such as love wisdom and creativity (Sörensen & Birkholm, 2009). In his article *Dynamic*

Psychology and Psychosynthesis published in a collection of writings in the year 2000, he makes lists of a whole range of different areas of research which have inspired his thinking when developing his vision of psychosynthesis. These areas included psychosomatic medicine, psychology and religion, investigations of the super-conscious, psychical research of parapsychology, eastern psychology, creative understanding, holistic approach to the psychology of the personality, inter-individual and social psychology, psychiatry and anthropologic studies of man. The word synthesis is used in the sense of supporting the process of integration to "a harmonious personality, including both its conscious and unconscious parts (Assagioli, 2000).

Basic theoretical models in Psychosynthesis

Returning to Assagioli's original writings, he was very specific about the ontology of the self. He opposes the idea that the self only should be a psychological concept. In his view, the self is regarded as reality, rather as a living entity, which we can have direct and certain knowledge or awareness about. He is influenced by the philosopher Bergson and his expression of "immediate data of consciousness". Assagioli describes the sense of self, which at special times, when we succeed in interrupting the habitual flow of distraction and passions, gives us direct and clear knowledge of our Soul. This often happens in connection with the ethical conscience, aesthetic experiences and experiences of the will. Further, he describes the sense of soul, or the sense of self, as an experience of inner form, full of strength, beauty and joy, a form of light and fire which sustains the entire being. It is stable, always the same, often recaptured during a lifetime, forgotten at intervals, but always recognized with infinite delight and the exclamation "Here is my real being" (Assagioli, 1967).

Assagiolis definition of what constitutes the self and the structure of the human psyche is mapped by the egg model (Fig.1).

1) The lower unconscious

2) The middle unconscious

3) The higher unconscious

4) The field of consciousness

5) The conscious self or I

6) The higher Self

7) Collective unconscious
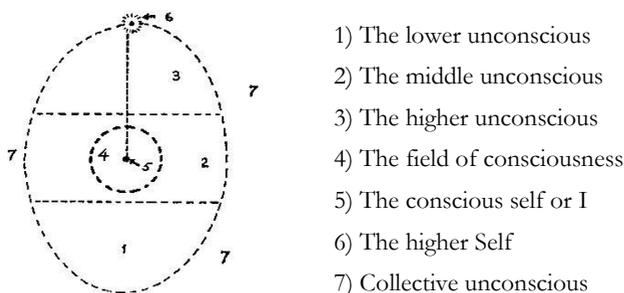
Fig.1 *Egg-model (Assagioli, 2000)*

He is in consent with the psychoanalytic theory of Freud that the human consciousness contains a lot more than we are aware of. In his articles *Dynamic Psychology and Psychosynthesis,* Assagioli (2000) introduces his chart of the human psyche. He structures the unconscious in three different areas. The lower unconscious contains the elementary psychological functions which direct the life of the body, the intelligent coordination of the bodily functions drives and primitive urges. Many complexes, charged with intense emotion, dreams and imagination are situated in this area, according to Assagioli. The middle unconscious is formed out of psychological elements similar to those of our waking consciousness, the middle unconsciousness is easily accessible to the waking consciousness In this inner region, our various experiences are assimilated, our ordinary mental and imaginative activities are elaborated and developed in a sort of psychological gestation before their birth into the light of consciousness. The higher unconscious is from where we receive our higher intuitions and aspirations; artistic, philosophic or scientific; the origin of ethical "imperatives" and urges to humanitarian and heroic action. It is the source of the higher feelings, such as altruistic love; it is the source of genius and of the states of contemplation, illumination and ecstasy. The higher psychic functions and spiritual energies are latent in this realm. The field of consciousness is the part of our personality of which we are directly aware and there is a stream of sensations, images, thoughts, feelings, desires and impulses which can be observed, analysed and judged. Assagioli describes the " I" as separate from the changing content of our consciousness The conscious self or "I" is to say, the point of pure awareness and can be reached by careful introspection such as meditation. He describes this difference by the metaphor of the white light area on a screen and the various pictures that are projected upon it. Assagioli's opinion is that the everyday-person does not take the trouble to reflect, to observe and discriminate; they drift on the surface of the "mind-stream". They identify themselves with the changing content of their consciousness rather than with the pure I. The higher Self (spelled with a capital S) is different from the conscious self of the personality. The Self is bigger than the self, and unaffected by the flow of the mind stream. The personal conscious self should be considered merely as its reflection, its "projection" in the field of the personality; the Self should be considered as a source or a potential. At the present stage, Assagioli considers that psychological sciences need to investigate this further. Human beings are not isolated according to Assagioli. The oval of the egg diagram should not be regarded as a fixed border. It forms a boundary like a membrane of a biological cell, which permits a constant and active interchange

with the body. Assagioli uses the term osmosis describing this psychological exchange that is going on all the time, both with other human beings and with the general psychic environment of the collective unconscious (Assagioli, 2000). In this diagram, Assagioli points out the following "facts", in his view, about the human nature.

- The seeming duality of the self, the apparent existence of two selves in us. The conscious self or "I" of the person is generally unaware of the true Self, which is latent and does not reveal itself.
- The unity and uniqueness of the Self, which in reality it is not two selves, two independent or separate entities. The Self is one and it is manifested in different degrees of awareness and self-realisation.

In Assagioli's opinion, these facts is the reason why people often feel disconnected, insecure and changeable in their moods, thoughts and actions. Life is a pendulum between experiences of separateness on the one hand and experiences of connectedness on the other hand in relation to the world (Assagioli, 2000). This theory is at the heart of the transpersonal theory of the primal wound. This is a theory about the reasons to and treatments of trauma, addiction and growth that is further developed by Firman and Gila (Firman & Gila, 1997, 2002).

Unifying centre

Assagioli describes this duality like a sense of variation between a state of belonging, feeling at one with the world, and a state of alienation. The "I" might feel at one with a loved person, or with a group of people, or with nature, or with God. At other times we feel alienated, we have a feeling of "non-I", we see an abyss without a bridge, between ourselves and others, we feel alone, like islands from another land. What has to be achieved is an expansion of the personal consciousness towards the potential in higher Self. This Assagioli describes as easily said but very difficult to achieve. It is a process with many intermediate phases, plateaus at various altitudes on which one can rest or even make new identifications on the way. The people that cannot reach their true self directly can create a picture and an ideal of perfected personality, which will have an intermediate function. This intermediary, unifying centre could be a parent, a therapist or a teacher, who is highly respected. It could also be nature, an interest or a religion, which could facilitate human growth and the process of self-actualization, according to Assagioli (Assagioli, 2000).

1) Conscious self or I
2) External unifying centre
3) Higher Self
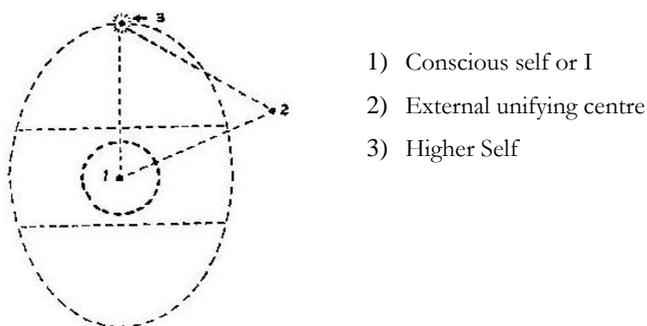
Fig. 2 *Unifying centre (Assagioli, 2000)*

The process of synthesis

Assagioli describes the different stages in the process of psychosynthesis.

1) The first step is to acquire knowledge of one's personality by facing the inner conflicting desires, fears and illusions in the lower unconscious as well as discovering unknown abilities. These are our true vocations, our higher potentialities that seek to express themselves but which we often repel or repress of different reasons. This analytic work will releases latent psychic energy.

2) The next step is to synthesise the different elements in the personality. The most effective method, according to Assagioli, is the process of dis-identification. This is based on a fundamental psychological principle formulated as follows. Every time we identify ourselves with a weakness, a fault, a fear or any other emotion, we limit ourselves. If instead, in the same situation, we can observe and say, "an impulse of weakness is attempting to overpower me", the situation is experienced differently. There is a vigilant self that does not submit to that feeling. It can objectively and critically survey those impulses and realize that this is not all of what he or she is. Will and choice are important in this process of dis-identifying. Practicing Buddhist "Vipassana"-meditation is used in this process.

3) The third step is the realisation of one's true Self in the discovery or creation of a unifying centre. The unifying centre creates a connection between the personal "I" and my higher Self; I attain a realisation of myself through the external ideal or being.

4) The fourth step in the process of healing the self is the actual Psychosynthesis; the formation or reconstruction of the personality around the new centre. This could take shape in a planned active process, or more spontaneously depending on the personality of the person. It is important is to

find a realistic and authentic vision in line with the prerequisites of the person. The synthesis takes place by utilizing energies released by the psychoanalysis and then by training underdeveloped functions, coordination and subordination of the various psychological energies (Assagioli, 2000).

The psychic functions and the will

In his article, *C.G. Jung and Psychosynthesis,* Assagioli compares psychosynthesis theory about the psychic functions with Jung's ideas. Jung uses sensation, feeling, thought and intuition. Assagioli adds imagination, impulse and desire to these functions. His point is that desires, instincts, impulses and aspirations carry a dynamic energy that impels to action. Will is also central in Assagioli's model. He points out a fundamental difference between the drives, impulses and desires on one hand and the will on the other hand. His meaning is that a part of the "human condition" is a constant conflict between drives, impulses, desires and the human will (Assagioli, 1967).

1) Sensation

2) Emotions and feelings

3) Imagination

4) Impulse-desire

5) Thought

6) Intuition

7) Will

8) I
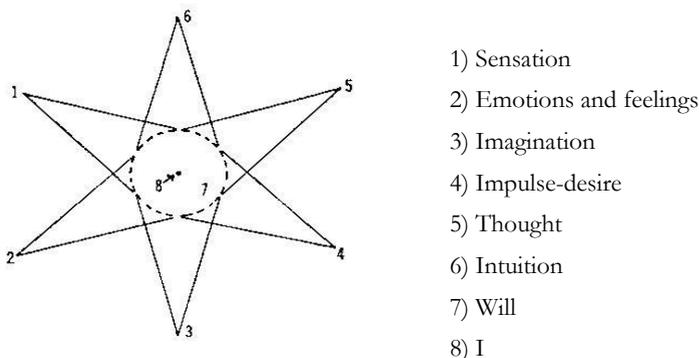
Fig.3. *Psychic functions (Assagioli, 1967)*

Will is something to cultivate, stimulated and use in personal development. Assagoli puts will in the centre of his model together with the "I", the subject. In reality, all functions are functions serving the conscious being. It is the "I" that feels, thinks, imagines, desires and wants things. Will is, according to Assagioli, a special psychic function which, together with "I", has the potential to coordinate and direct the other psychic functions (Assagioli, 1967).

Self and multiple roles

An important part of the psychosynthesis theory is that of sub-personalities. In the article *Life as a Game and Stage Performance* Assagioli elaborates on the art of

living. Every art has its own technique and mastering them is important in practicing life. Every one of us performs or "acts" a variety of "parts" in life. Such roles constitute the "plot" of our interpersonal or social relations. Most of the time we act our roles unconsciously without being aware of them, and we often perform them poorly, unskilfully, like bad amateur actors.

Developing the dramaturgic metaphor, Assagioli points out three important agents in the drama such as the author, the director and the actors. The author of the play should be the higher Self, who selects the theme, the task, or the play that the personality has to undertake and the parts that should be internalized. This is something that takes part without a clear awareness of the "I", since the higher self is operating from the super-conscious. The conscious "I" is the director. His function is to carry out the life plan, which is revealed to the "I" successively, through inspirations, inner promptings and the unfolding of life's circumstances. The successfulness of the play is mostly dependant on the director and on how he grasps the situation. The actors of the drama are the various sub-personalities created by each and every human being during a lifetime (Assagioli, 1973).

1. Lower unconscious
2. Middle unconscious
3. Sub-personalities
4. The field of consciousness
5. The personal self or I
6. The transpersonal Self
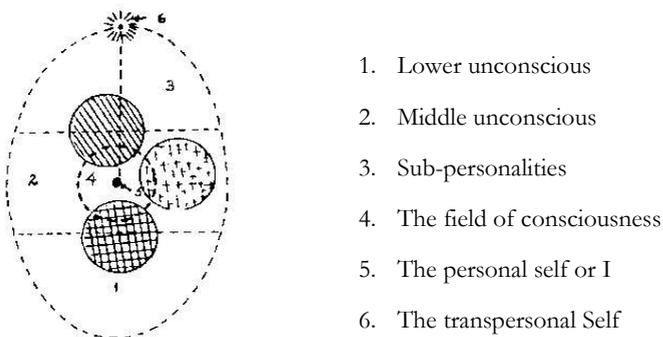
Fig.4. *Sub-personalities (Assagioli, 1973)*

Sub personalities are partly in the conscious area and partly in the unconscious area related to the super conscious or the lower unconscious. Assagioli emphasises that the sub-personalities are never fixed, they raise or descend during the activities that are taking place. Each sub-personality has its own specific function or mission in a person's family or in other social settings, in which it is involved in creating the parts (Assagioli, 1973).

Expanding the drama analogy, Assagioli uses the relationship between the author and the director, between the director and the actors and the relation between the actor and the personality. It is not unusual that there is a lack of understanding, a resistance and a conflict on the part of the "I." A skilful

listening and cooperation with the higher Self, the author, lies in the director's interest. In the relation between the director, the "I", and the actors it is a question of authority and of ability on the part of the "I" in developing, training and harmonizing the different sub-personalities. Another question among actors is about how to relate to the role character. The extremes would be full control with role-distance. The other extreme is to fully immerse in the role and act instinctively and spontaneously. According to Assagioli this is an act of balancing between the instinctual, natural and the control, the art. Self- awareness is thus built on undertaking a journey of discovery to learn about the different parts in the personality, its autonomy, and its psychological structure. Self-development is a process of learning to discriminate between the content in our consciousness. In this matter, Assagioli provides some important techniques and methods aiming to strengthen the I and its relationship to the higher Self. These techniques and methods also aim to strengthen the relationship with the actors in order to enable us to "give the best performance we are capable of in playing the part allotted to us, or chosen by us, in the great human drama"(Assagioli, 1973). The topic of multiple characters of the personality, called sub-personalities is further elaborated by (Rowan, 1990).

Self and system

Assagioli had a theory about the relation between the individual and society. He argues that psychosynthesis is no task that can be completed or final for the individual. What is true for the individual is also true concerning relationships among human beings. Assagioli states that there are no isolated individuals; each individual is interwoven into a network of vital, psychological and spiritual relations, involving mutual exchange and interactions with other individuals. Each individual is involved in various human groups, and groups of groups, in the same way as the cell is a tiny part of the organs in a living organism. Individual psychosynthesis is only a step towards inter-individual psychosynthesis. He gives examples such as the relation within couples, family, local society, nations or groups of people with the same profession or belonging to organisations. Assagioli also mentions the evolution of man in the system, or the psychosocial or the psycho spiritual maturity of the system (Assagioli, 1993).

Self and evolution

The evolution to maturity and to an authentic person does not appear in a straight line but in a cyclic manner, according to Assagioli. There are individuals, as well as groups, with noticeably alternating periods of activity and action, of

speeding up and slowing down, of maturity and of senility and rejuvenation. Assagioli also questions the thought of linear development as it puts adulthood far away of the childhood. He maintains that each developmental age is not left behind but forms an aspect in the present personality in discussion with Assagioli, John Firman sketched a circular model where the ages are present in us like layers in the steam of a tree. Following this, together with the theories of a unifying centre, the authentic personality un-folds in the presence of an empathic unifying centre, which facilitates the relationship between the "I" and the "Self". If at some age in a person's developmental process there is an failure in the relationship with a unifying centre, it will affect the psychological development and create a primal wound (Firman & Gila, 1997). A situation where this can happen is if a child is not seen as a unique individual on its own terms. If instead, the child is supporting the parent's needs, there will be a failure. Each one of us carries such wounds in our life and Assagioli points out that this part of the growth is a process of psychosyntesis of the ages in person's life (Firman & Gila, 2002).

Self-development and technique

The whole idea of psychosynthesis theory includes a strong belief in the agency of the individual and the idea that a person is able to live a better life. Based on the will and the conscious "I", the person can actively choose to take control over his development. The assumption is that a person has an authentic self, which is somewhat different from the survival personality, the in-authentic self. Personal growth is about developing inner leadership and personal authority (Assagioli, 1974).

> Psychosynthesis is a method of psychological development and self-realization for those who refuse to remain a slave of their own inner phantasms or of external influences, who refuse to submit passively to the play of psychological forces which is going on within them, and who are determined to become the masters of their own lives (Assagioli, 1974).

Based on the models described above, Assagioli has collected or developed new techniques that could be used in the process of personal development. Towards the end of his career, these techniques were compiled in cooperation with several colleges (Assagioli, 2000). He presents the process of synthesis in two steps:

1) Personal synthesis: these techniques aim at exploring the unconscious and support the handling of stored or blocked energies.

2) Spiritual synthesis is a deeper realization of the self, which involves the super conscious. Spiritual experience and spiritual drive are taken to be natural and deriving from the sub-concious in the same way as aggressive impulses or desires. Psychosynthesis uses theories from transpersonal psychology in realising the potential of the "Higher Self", spiritual qualities are presupposed, but psychosynthesis stops there and does not go into religion or philosophy. It takes the religious, spiritual experience as real and can support the individual to make better use of the techniques of their own religion. Assagioli's theory includes techniques aiming at transmutation and sublimation of sexual energies as well as techniques for meditation and reflection. His ambition was to create an open psychology where it should be possible to meet the clients' needs (Assagioli, 1965).

Psychosynthesis compared with other therapeutic schools

Russell (1981), a teacher and writer in psychosynthesis theory, describes its development in relation to western psychology. By remaining an open psychology, with no central organisation, it became adaptable to a wide range of personal and cultural styles. This provided a richness in development but also difficulties to define its limits. To position psychosynthesis in relation to western psychology, Russell differentiates between four forces in the development of psychotherapy. These consist of psychoanalytic theory, behaviouristic theory, humanistic/existential theory and transpersonal psychology. Russel also points out the eastern influences on psychosynthesis, from Raja Yoga and Karma Yoga.

The first force, psychoanalytic theory, is based on a medical approach with diagnosis and treatment through analysing childhood experiences. In comparison, psychosynthesis is regarded as a growth model, assessing strength and weaknesses and assisting in self-improvement. In that process psychoanalysis may be an important step when dealing with defences and resistances in the process towards health and growth. Psychosynthesis assumes a more differentiated unconscious than the theory of psychoanalysis. The process in psychosynthesis is to find talents and potentialities from the higher unconscious as well as removing blocks and hinders from the lower unconscious. Psychosynthesis focuses on wellness and growth which makes it suitable as an educational as well as a therapeutic approach (Russell, 1981).

The second force consists of the behaviourist tradition, which focuses on observable behaviour. In contrast, psychosynthesis explores the deeper levels within the person, the realm of feelings and images, beliefs and attitudes. Even so, grounding and behavioural change is important in psychosynthesis theory.

New insights are supposed to have impact on relations and practical life as the process of synthesis proceeds within a person. Psychosynthesis has also adopted second force ideas; the behaviourist method of systematic de-sensitization. Further, a technique for dealing with phobias has been combined with guided fantasy by psychosynthesis therapists. In doing this, Assagioli translated the eastern spiritual concepts into western psychological terms. Psychosynthesis de-mystified concepts like imagination, intuition and will, formulating systematic means to train these psychic functions. Nowadays behaviourists and psychosynthesis therapists share techniques under the label mindfulness.

In his description of the third force of influences in to psychosynthesis theory, Russell refers to Assagioli's own comparison of the many similarities with existentialistic theory in the introduction to his first book published in a collection of texts in the year 2000. The similarities were listed including such matters as the central concern with identity, acknowledging each person as unique, valuing growth, recognizing the capacity of individuals to discover meaning in life, recognising the individual responsibility and the motivation of the individual.. Further similarities were the recognition of the significance of anxiety and suffering in life, and seeing the future dynamically influence the present. Psychosynthesis differs from the humanistic/existential tradition in laying emphasis on the will-function as essential to the self. Will is central in fostering positive, creative, joyous experiences according to Assagioli. In psychosynthesis, loneliness is not seen as ultimate or essential. There are "active techniques" for transforming, sublimating, or redirecting psychological energies. There are techniques for strengthening undeveloped functions and for activation of super-conscious energies or latent potentials, according to Assagioli. We have the possibility to consciously plan and reconstruct the personality (Assagioli 2000).

Russell (1981) mentions other therapeutic schools in the humanistic tradition with similarities to psychosynthesis, but also with differences. He takes the example of rational emotive therapy where that focuses on the mind, developing new ways of reasoning with the aim of changing emotional reaction patterns. Psychosynthesis encourages new ways of developing the thinking mind, but also includes the training of other psychical function. Another example of a humanistic therapeutic school is gestalt therapy, which has emphasised work with emotions and the present moment. Psychosynthesis does not exclude working with the emotions, but emphasises work with the mind, adding the future aspect, the potential that is present in every moment. Gestalt techniques are often used in psychosynthesis in promoting awareness and a sense of

responsibility for one self and one's actions. The spiritual aspect of psychosynthesis extends this notion of responsibility by seeing the individual growth in a broader context; each person is an integral part of the larger family of humanity with the responsibility to promote the growth of others along with one's own (Russell, 1981).

The fourth force is the transpersonal psychology. Russell recognises some key elements in transpersonal psychology, which have been foreshadowed by psychosynthesis. He gives a few examples; the inclusion of earlier developments in a new whole, the joining of the spiritual and the scientific, the study of altered states of consciousness, and the fostering of growth beyond the personal. Russell identifies different directions in the movement of transpersonal psychology where some go deeper into altered states, meditation and esoteric studies. Some focus on the deeper experience and development of the heart, while others focus more on the spiritual aspects of the body. According to Russell, psychosynthesis continues to emphasize the exploration of the spirit through the way of the mind and the way of action. These aspects characterize the unique content of psychosynthesis as it aims to achieve a harmonious balance of love and will, the integration, synthesis, of all levels – physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. The transpersonal perspective in psychosynthesis gives the view that the personality is a vehicle through which the qualities of higher unconscious can be expressed in the everyday world. This personality is interdependent with all other personalities. In psychosynthesis, the idea of a transpersonal realm is regarded as a living experience within the person that can be integrated into the world of daily activities and relationships. It is supposed to transform the quality of life here and now (Russell, 1981).

Russell (1981) continues to describe the spiritual psychological aspects of psychosynthesis. Assagioli posited that the spiritual realm is not necessarily connected to any particular religion, although it takes inspiration from different religious traditions. Psychosynthesis encourages creative change in the synthesising process. Each step in the process is considered spiritual when placed in the perspective of being one element in the larger pattern in the purpose of life, when it benefits self and others, harming no one, promoting the wellbeing of the whole life. It means taking actions with integrity and a willingness to be firm in the face of injustice and courageous in times of struggle. To be spiritual is to live by values and attitudes, which are humanistic, progressive and democratic; it is to be actively concerned with the meaning and purpose in life and to relate one's personal development to universal development. The influences from the east, Raja Yoga, include meditation

technique, which supports the capacity for self-mastery and self-initiated change. Meditation develops the abstract mind and it is possible to train the ability of the mind to come to stillness, to focus, to concentrate, and to direct the mind into thinking creatively. Practicing yoga leads to new perceptions, new experiences new ways of being in the world. In psychosynthesis, specific exercises expand the ability of the mind to observe objectively and to direct attention and will. The commitment in psychosynthesis is to take action in the world, based on the insight gained through therapeutic work, exercises, and meditation; this is related to the tradition of karma yoga. Karma yoga is the yoga of work and action in the world. In this discipline, action is taken to consciously participate in a larger plan of human evolution. To be spiritual, according to karma yoga, is not to just sit in meditation and prayer, but to take the inner energies, insights, or qualities that are reached and apply them in the world of everyday living In psychosynthesis this is called grounding. The creation of joy, peace, or any other great quality while doing daily routines is a demonstration of spiritual psychosynthesis (Russell, 1981).

Further developments

Further developments within the psychosynthesis tradition comes from Assagioli's students who trained with him or with others who have encountered his teaching in other ways. To mention some examples of this development, one is John Firman and Ann Gila who have developed the theory and written the book about *The Primal Wound- A Transpersonal View of Trauma, Addiction and Growth*. They have shown how this wounding can be redeemed through therapy and through changing one's way of living (Firman & Gila, 1997*)*. The same authors have also written *A Psychosynthesis of the spirit* where they develop Assagioli's thoughts (Firman & Gila, 2002). Molly Young Brown a psychosynthesis teacher and therapist has written an instructional psycho-synthesis book for therapist (Brown, 2004) She also applies psychosynthesis theory with concepts of "ecological self" the development of a sustainable society (Brown, 2009). In Europe, one of the most well-known authors is Diane Whitmore with both an instructional guide for therapists and further application into the pedagogical field (Whitmore, 1986). There is numerous literature under the label self-help such as *What we may be* (Ferrucchi, 1982); this author later brought the psychosynthesis thoughts together with Buddhism in his book *The power of Kindness* (Ferrucci, 2006). A newly published special issue of *The International Journal of Psychotherapy* (2012) shows a wide range of examples of how psychosynthesis has been applied. Within the field of healthcare and psycho-

education there is on-going research concerning coping with cancer and dying (Brode-Thies, 2012) chronic illness (D. Firman, 2012). One article emphasises how psychosynthesis contributes with many skills and techniques that are useful in recovering from compulsive behaviour in relation to addiction (Schaub & Schaube, 2012).In the psychiatric field psychosynthesis and its focus on the relational aspects between therapist and client is used in reducing psychotic suffering (Alberti, 2012). Graham-Wilsson (2012) exemplifies an application of psychosynthesis in connection with professional leader development in finding inner balance, identity and meaning in stressful organisations (Graham-Wilsson, 2012). Some perspectives on the psychosynthesis training as such is given from an educator (Silvester, 2012).

Self-criticism within the field

Psychosynthesis as a therapy is still relatively small compared to other kinds of methods. There are a number of explanations for that. Up until recently, there are very few researchers, who specifically study psychosynthesis practice. The training programmes use extensive literature with well-accepted clinical and psychological theory common in many disciplines. The tradition is still seen as an alternative form of treatment in many countries. The institutes are nowadays aware of this lack and the Educational Trust in psychosynthesis is offering a master's degree in cooperation with the University of East London. One of the aims of the organisation EFPP (European Federation of Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy) is to support research in the field.

Robertson (1998), an experienced teacher, therapist and organisational consultant asked the question why psychosynthesis has had difficulties in becoming more widespread when many other traditions such as Gestalt, Transactional Analysis and Rogerian therapy are well accepted. His first point is that psychosynthesis has weak boundaries and is extensive and difficult to define (Robertson, 1998). Assagioli himself advocated an openness that has allowed for a wide range of influences and there are also a wide range of applications; an openness that is further discussed in an article by Tan Nguyen (Nguyen, 2012).

Robertson's second argument concerns the assumptions behind the psychosynthesis as a theory. He identifies the problem with psychosynthesis and transpersonal therapies in general and argues that many spiritual traditions are unfortunately caught in a dualism that separates and alienates matter and spirit, body and soul, reason and instinct. The spiritual path can encourage its adherents to rise above their lower nature. According to him, this dualism is reflected in psycho-spiritual theories such as the concepts of the lower and

higher unconscious in psychosynthesis. Following this therefore, an inevitable devaluation occurs of the lower in comparison with the higher unconscious (Robertson, 1998). He argues that a focus on "Higher Self" results in a neglect of difficulties connected to matter and that the psychosynthesis society needs to face its limits and frustrations and upgrade the importance of ordinary work. The on-going process of organizing psychosynthesis in federations, creation of standards, accreditation promoting research, is means of meeting this problem, according to Robertson (1998). Robertson (2012) continues to elaborate on the dualism that separates matters and spirit. He suggests a deconstruction of the psyche/spirit dilemma and a development of the theory of psychosynthesis in itself. In this development he suggests another understanding of the spiritual dimension and here he refers to Firman and Gila (2002), who advocate a view where "Higher unconscious" experiences are more of a uniting experiences within this world rather than an experiences of something coming from a higher world, or from an outside world (Firman & Gila, 2002; Robertson, 2012).

Education

Education in psychosynthesis is arranged by autonomous institutes around the world. In Europe, there is also a central organisation, since 1997, that brings together institutes from France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden Switzerland and the United Kingdom. It has as its aim to promote common standards and ethics within the different institutes. It organises international conferences, workshops, and has an on-going discussion with authorities as well as with other disciplines of psychotherapy. The course description below is based on data that belongs to an institute in Sweden where 5 of the 6 participants in this study have undertaken their education. This institute is a member of the EFPP[2] organisation, following their standards. There are other institutes outside this organisation such as Huma Nova, which is another Nordic alternative. Their training programme is different and they have somewhat other standards and aims.

Educational programme

For a clear understanding of the data and analyses in this thesis it is an advantage to briefly know how the education is formed at the studied education institute. On a first level, the training consists of an introduction of one week, when

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[2] EFPP European Federation of Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy

people have a chance to see if this kind of work is suitable. The next level is a two-year training aiming for personal development. Altogether, there are sixteen workshop weekend, from Friday to Sunday, including a summer residential of 6 days. There are no special requirements besides the introductory course; people come with different backgrounds, often in the ages between 30 and 70 years. The programme consists of two years with personal development. On the professional level, there are two different programs. It is a therapist program with an additional two and a half year of education. The other programme concerns leading and coaching in professions and is psychosynthesis applied to organisational life, which means a further one and a half years. In the training programme that focuses on professional development, a supervision group is added to the training for supporting client-work. The professional level leads to a diploma as a psychosynthesis therapist, or as a psychosynthesis coach.

The pedagogy of the training

The pedagogy used in this training is experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). The students take part in exercises in which they can explore different themes in their life. Self-reflective assignments are written for each weekend, keeping a diary is promoted. At least one set book should be read between the weekends, which should later be discussed in a seminar during the coming weekend. It is especially stressed in this pedagogical model that experience comes before theoretical understanding. Part of the process in self-development is to write a self-assessment which is processed in peer-groups (Boud, 1995). The different elements of the education exploring the self consist of experiential group work, reflection, reflective writing, inner dialog and introspection, role-play, symbolic drama, symbolic drawing, visualisations and theoretical studies. A compulsory part of the education is to take 25 sessions of individual therapy outside the institute, in order to ground the personal process of synthesis. The therapist needs to be a qualified psychosynthesis therapist and work independently of the institute. For each weekend, one obligatory book is to be read. These books will be mentioned below in the separate presentations of each weekend. There is one obligatory book each weekend. Each year has 8-9 weekends (Thursday/Friday-Sunday) and a summer school. Every weekend consists of five three-hour seminars, plus one interpersonal group or process group and one study group. The content of the weekends is shortly presented, based on the programme for 2011-12 (PSI, 2011). The main contents are reproduced, but some processing has been done in order to compress the description.

Year 1

The beginning of the journey ⬥ The first weekend starts with building a context for the year. At one level, the focus is set on building the group, helping the group members become visible to each other and come together as a group. At another level the past, present and future in relation to "Who am I" and "Who do I long to be" are considered. Books: (Ferrucchi, 1982; Somers & Gordon-Brown, 2002).

Incarnation ⬥ An exploration is undertaken from the perspective of the soul; human existence may be experienced as the first abandonment, as an entrapment or an opportunity. This concerns an exploration of the primary choices for Life – to enter into matter and into the womb of one's mother. Attitudes to these choices may be reflected in different stages of the participants' journey of life. Book: (Hillman, 1997).

Birth ⬥ The way people experience their earliest separation in birth and what they do with the loss of the symbiotic relationship with their mother is considered to set a pattern for the development of each personality. The participants explore the bonding with their mother and the inter-relationship between experiences of oneness and separateness. Book: (Stern, 2011).

Mother and Father ⬥ The next two weekends deal with relations to parents. Early interactions are considered to establish certain patterns of behaviour – and responses either to satisfy needs or to frustrated needs – but also to establish the ego, defence mechanisms against anxiety and the loss of omnipotence. This psychological birth is supposed to be a lens, through which one can recognise complexes, relationships to actual parents and to the archetypes of mother and father. Books: (Leonard, 1994; Miller, 1978; Somers & Gordon-Brown, 2002)

Adolescence/Relationships ⬥ This part of the course deals with relationships of youngsters outside the family and how early patterns of relating are challenged and repeated, or transformed in the emerging sense of self built through interacting with friends, peers and lovers. Book:(Wellwood, 1996).

Identity ⬥ The weekend of identity deals with questions of "Who am I" and "What am I". The "Who" question is supposed to bring each human in touch with their sense of identity and leads into experiencing the deepest sense of self, which is here considered to be the real source of meaning, purpose and our human values. With these questions, the different levels of human and spiritual nature are explored and how life, potentials and limitations are experienced at these different levels of being. Book: (Firman & Gila, 2002).

The order of Love ⬥ Hidden dynamics in the family system are explored, which is here considered to contribute to suffering or health in life. In order to be able to live their lives, people need to find their right place in the family-system and give those who belong to the family system a proper place in their hearts. Book: (Ulsamer, 2005).

Will and Fate ⬥ People are considered to manage their lives through a mixture of unconscious motivations and conscious choices. Which values, meanings or purpose do they choose? The balance between being an "unconscious victim" and "being

master of the ship" is explored and contact with meaning or instincts is examined. A person's will is considered to have different aspects and is considered as in self-development. Book:(Assagioli, 1974).

Separation and call to life ⬧ This part of the course marks a symbolic threshold, the culmination of the developmental journey undertaken in Year One. During this part of the course, each participant is invited to hear the call to step towards a new unknown – an unknown in whom they confront the responsibility of choosing their own path. In myths and fairy-tales, this is often portrayed by the moment when the youth sets out to seek his or her fortune and truth; for the participants, myths may act as a guide to this point. In the course, the participants make use of their imagination and of rituals to re-examine some of the values upon which their identity has been built. Dependence, freedom, loyalty and betrayal are among the archetypal themes that are engaged and how these matters shape individuality. Book: (Murdock, 1990).

Year 2

The content of year two in the training has developed somewhat since it started in 2001. An extra weekend is formed on the topic of sexuality and the body. The description is based on the programme for 2011-12 (PSI, 2011).

Interpersonal ⬧ This is about the development of participants' interpersonal relations in the group. They explore polarities, roles and their relation to groups. Participants also train communication skills to express personal feelings and needs in the group, they train how to give and receive feedback and they learn to establish and to maintain contact. Book:(Smith, 2001).

Skilful relating – real and soulful ⬧ The participants turn their attention outwards during this weekend; they examine how the inner world mirrors the outer and how the outer world reflects the inner world. How does each human use his or her inner consciousness of intimate relationships and how can they express them both effectively and soulfully? Book: (Wennerberg, 2010).

The one and the many ⬧ Although each individual is unique, humans have many faces; one ego has many aspects to its personality; each soul has a polytheistic nature. The pluralistic identity is explored through examining the formation of what psychosynthesis calls sub-personalities and how that relates to the psychoanalytic theories of object relations and the idea of "splitting". Participants also investigate how some of their sub-personalities serve to express who they are in the world; they also examine how other sub-personalities act in a limiting way. These seem to develop a reality and autonomy of their own. Book: (Firman & Gila, 2002; Rowan, 1990).

Unconscious selves ⬧ This module is about how young people are considered to learn to banish or abandon important aspects of themselves in order to maintain the integrity of their soul and to protect their infant heart. The participants inspect the process of creating scapegoats and the consequences of repressing parts of oneself. The aim is to redeem and integrate this missing part from the unconscious. Book: (Perera, 1986).

Psychosynthesis and the Body ⬧ The relationship between body, feelings, mind and spirit is explored from a holistic perspective. It is discussed how the body might be separated out and either be ignored or be given special treatment as a separate entity. Bodies are considered to hold a record of all life's experiences within their cellular structures. Book*: (Ekenberg, 2008).

Sexuality – During this weekend, the participants examine their relation to sensuality, sexuality, spirituality, considered to be important aspects of this core vital life function. The emphasis is on considering one's own relationship to sexuality, and how it is manifested in your personal life. Through using dance, the participants explore responses to six fundamental archetypal energies, which are considered to move through each human being and influence their capacity for intimacy. Book (Dickson, 1985/2001; Ekenberg, 2007).

Eros – This weekend continues the theme of sexuality (see text above). Book:(Moore, 1998)*Embodying transpersonal Will* ⬧ Is there a purpose to life or is it only what we make of it? To what extent are we in charge and what is the relationship between what I want, what I need and a Will that may seem greater than myself? These and other questions are explored in order to deepen the sense of how one can manifest the soul's purpose and heart's desire in life. Book: (Assagioli, 1974; Somers & Gordon-Brown, 2002).

Redemption and Return ⬧ In the first year of the summer school, the participants explore the experience of the voice of the Soul, which is considered to be active in existential crises arising at mid-life. It will include the waning of the heroic ego and the loss of meaning; depression and the pathology of the sublime; solitude; facing the Shadow. The participants examine their relationship to death and surrender; they redeem family roots. Book: (Tolle, 2010)

Year 3

This year makes a shift from personal development into a professional focus. The professional part contains theories from clinical theory. In the professional part, there is greater emphasis on theoretical understanding, but experiential pedagogy is still used. During year three, the students start to meet clients and an extra module of supervision is introduced in the training. The students are supposed to have therapy outside the training during the professional part. The assessments that are written during the professional training are to have more references to the literature. The content of each weekend year three is described below.

A Dynamic and Soulful Meeting - Therapeutic relationship part 1 ⬧ The shift this year, from the purely personal focus of the work done in Basic Years 1 and 2, to the professional focus needed in Years 3 and 4 is set in focus. The nature of the relationship between therapist and client is fundamental. During the first weekend, the participants examine the assumptions they initially bring to this relationship. They also investigate their

preconceptions and expectations. They pay particular attention to the role of the "Helper" as a motivating force. Book: (Brown, 2004).

The art of listening – Therapeutic relationship part 2 ⬩ This weekend gives the participants some basic tools to meet their clients. It has been said that just listening in itself, is half the healing in the therapeutic relationship. Some of the subtle and profound implied in "just listening" will be investigated. Participants learn to listen and to hear beyond words, to ensure and reflect, to remain in relationship with clients, to guide and to summarize. These skills are expected to be the cornerstone of the therapeutic work and are supposed give a solid ground to build on in future. The use of role-play gives the opportunity to learn from experience. Book: (Falk, 2012; Ferrucchi, 1982)

Holding and Contextualising – Therapeutic relationship part 3 ⬩ The structure of the therapeutic relationship holds both client and therapist. Clarifying the boundaries of this relationship gives confidence and a sense of purpose to the work. Whatever the client's initial expectation of therapy, the therapist must build an effective initial relationship with him or her. A real working relationship can only begin to emerge, when they have reached an agreement about the fundamental purpose of their meeting. One of the initial steps in commencing the relationship involves discovering what the client has been through. Therefore, the participants examine the meaning in the client's history and background. They practice skills in exploring this material and marking its relevance to the therapeutic work. In working in this way, the Will of the client and the therapist's Will can converge, and some sense of a greater whole that the therapy serves can be glimpsed. Book: (Grof, 1985).

Theory and Maps – Integrating Experience and Theory ⬩ This weekend focuses on the theory of more conscious development towards perceiving the client both as a person who needs to be understood and at the same time as a soul on a journey through life. It includes a review of the basic psychosynthesis models as well as contributions from other approaches to provide a starting point for the process of hypothesising. These models are supposed to help the therapist to keep a mental perspective and provide an understanding of the client's journey, which gives a sense of security, a solid basis for the on-going process. The course uses different forms of role-play to help the therapist engage actively with this creative and organic process Book:(M. Kahn, 1997)*,* (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1978/1996).

Listening soulfully
> *You must give birth to your images.*
> *They are the future waiting to be born.*
> *Fear not the strangeness that you feel.*
> *The future must enter you*
> *long before it happens.*
> *Just wait for the birth,*
> *for the hour of new clarity.*
>   (Rainer Maria Rilke)

This text by Rainer Maria Rilke describes the transpersonal part in psychosynthesis, in which both rational and intuitive ways of understanding the healing task are used. This weekend, the participants probe into the meaning of "fantasy" and "imagination" and open their consciousness to the intuitive realm. They examine their use of body-consciousness, images, metaphors, dreams and symbols in order to trust and to practice the ability of their intuitive forces to lead them safely in this work. They investigate when, how and with whom this more intuitive approach is to be recommended. They find out how they can use this exploration as a base and see the impact it has in the client's life. Book: (Högberg, 2003).

Working with a Cast of Characters – The Inner Drama ⬩ Almost all therapeutic approaches these days agree that the human psyche comprises many parts, though they may not define them in the same ways. One of Assagioli's most enduring legacies has been the concept of sub-personalities*,* the aspects of ourselves, which we employ and develop to serve vital functions in our relation to the world. In this weekend, sub-personalities are examined and how they can offer a window into the client's inner drama. Some ways of working with sub-personalities are explored, their origins and the functions that they have served. It is also seen how acknowledging these can sometimes enable the client to use the talents of their sub-personalities in ways that are more creative. Book: (Bradshaw, 1992).

The Reflective Practitioner 1: The Dance of Relating – a Video workshop ⬩ Relational Psychosynthesis regards the therapist and client as two parts of a whole – an interactive field contains them both. Video is an exciting tool that can help therapists partially to dis-identify from their own role and to see the 'dance' that they are part of with their client. It also offers an opportunity for professional therapists to monitor their own work by reflecting on it, recognising blind spots and learning from experience. Therefore, it lays the foundations of this vital therapeutic skill.

Will and Change in Therapy ⬩ How can therapists tell the real will of the client? How can therapists 'learn to push where it moves' instead of fruitlessly doing more of what already has not worked in the past? This weekend, participants consider the function of defences, which act both as neurotic blocks appearing as the client's 'resistance' or 'stuckness', but also as invaluable protectors of fundamental values. If defences are ignored, or personal needs are devalued, more lofty purposes can be spoilt. Honouring resistance is essential if one is to listen faithfully to the voice of the Soul. During this weekend, the skills of working with self-maintaining cycles are explored, but the participants also work with one of Roberto Assagioli's original models, the Aspects of the Will. Books: (Keen, 1974; Watzlawick, et al., 1978/1996).

The Wounded Healer – summer school ⬩ This is a paradoxical course. While most professions require us to distance ourselves from our pain and wounding, psychotherapy needs us to embrace this. If we are truly to accompany our clients towards the source of their pain, we cannot stay safely away from our own. In this week, the participants make a ritual journey to the seat of their own wounding, to re-experience and reconnect to the healing that is to be found there. To do this, we have

to confront all the excellent reasons that normally makes us try to avoid our pain, and let them go – a choice to surrender that has a transformative power. Through accepting that our wounds are a doorway to the Soul, our perception of our clients is renewed and our relationships with them changed from mundane meeting into healing space. Book :(Firman & Gila, 1997).

Year 4

The main book in year four is the book of Somers & Gordon-Brown (2002). Although the participants are likely to have read this book in Year 2, it is again recommended in the context of therapeutic work, encouraging them to explore the contribution of myth and story as a deeper way of hearing client narratives. The content of each weekend is presented below.

The Loss of Eros – A Transpersonal Perspective for Psychopathology ⬩ This weekend deals with the transpersonal quality and perspective of the therapeutic model. The myth of Psyche and Eros is taken as a guide to sensing the nature of psychological work, it has many twists and turns, yet is always drawn on by a longing for wholeness. Considering this, participants are also likely to see how therapeutic work needs to involve the integration of persona/neurotic and archetypal material. The nature of pathology from the perspective of the soul is explored. Based on this, participants are intended to begin to see the significant differences between a medical or psychiatric model of illness. With respect to this, they can adopt what Jung termed a synthetic model, which combines recognition of these differences with an appreciation of a soul perspective and the need to acknowledge when this may not currently fit certain states of the client. Book: (Somers & Gordon-Brown, 2002)(Samuels, 2002).

Developing Relational Depth – Deepening through Relationship ⬩ The focus of this weekend is on examining, clarifying and practising some of the subtler skills that allow therapy to deepen. Normally human beings try to avoid pain; but in this weekend, the participants return to the healing power of choosing to turn towards our pain, to meet the wisdom in the wound itself is explored. This challenges the therapist to be authentic, modelling the courage that the clients will need in order to pursue their healing journey. In addition, a return to the wounds created by unmet needs from childhood is made, in order to explore how the Inner Child can perhaps guide us to a new way of relating to these needs and thereby connect client and therapist to each other in a more open and undefended way. Book (Mearns & Cooper, 2005; Yalome, 1996)

The Origins of Longing – Psychodynamic Patterns of Early Relating ⬩ Assagioli was clear that the transpersonal aspects of his Egg model needed to be based in a clear understanding of the impact of early childhood experience. All children have to adapt to the holding environment of the family in order to have needs met in the best way possible. This adaptation tends to involve a process of ego/self-estrangement and a characteristic patterning of the personality, as well as being the manifestation of the early story of the soul. The longing for wholeness, created in this process, is at the

heart of the process of individuation, the process of becoming who we are; often it may later reveal itself in the issue that the client brings to the therapeutic process. It is supposed that needs that were unmet or disrupted in childhood, become a crucial part of the longing that is brought to the therapeutic relationship. In this workshop, some key ideas from psychodynamic and Jungian thinking are explored in order to help the therapist to understand more of the client's implicit needs in relating to the therapist, but also how these needs can be worked with. Books*: (Firman & Gila, 2002; Havnesköld & Risholm-Mothander, 2002; Tudor-Sandahl, 1992/2004).

Psycho-pathology in psychiatry ⬩ During the weekend the psychiatric perspective, including depression, crisis and chronic fatigue syndrome, along with the most common medications and their uses are in focus. Suicide and how this can be prevented is discussed. Book: (C.Brain, Psychopathology, handout PSI)

Transforming the Inner Critic. The Reflective Practitioner – A video Workshop ⬩ This weekend focuses on bringing together the different threads of the therapy training into a coherent whole. Video is the main method used, because it is a powerful tool to give direct and immediate feedback on the interaction with a client. Sometimes therapy work is spoilt because the young therapists are controlled by their Inner Critic; much of the work this weekend will be around transforming this crucial relationship. Book: (I. Yalome, 2004).

Revisiting Psychopathology – Clinical States and a Transpersonal Perspective ⬩ During this weekend, a developmental model is used to identify and understand disturbances in during states of transition, including how these are simultaneously both obstacles to individuation and the voice of the soul. The work is both experiential and theoretical with material concerning borderline and narcissistic phenomena such as scapegoat and Puer/Puella complexes. Book: (Dougherty & West, 2007)

Transpersonal Psychopathology – Freeing the Trapped Angel ⬩ How can therapists distinguish between clients who need to break the walls of an imprisoned ego and clients with a fragile ego who risk being overwhelmed by the power of the unconscious? What are the sicknesses and suffering that come from self-betrayal and suppression of the sublime? How can spirituality act as an escape from the challenges of life? Might the unfulfilled need, be specially masqueraded as spiritual longing? This workshop will attempt to address the nature and methods of therapeutic work that is transpersonal or beyond the heroic ego. It is essentially an in depth exploration of the nature of existential crises. Along the way, a diagnostic model is considered that helps the understanding of the significance of inter-related aspects of ego, soul and spirit in clinical work. Book: (Somers & Gordon-Brown, 2002). Hand-outs and articles are suggested.

Hearing Wild Swans and Deepening the Therapeutic Craft ⬩ "Stories can conquer fear you know. They can make the heart bigger" (Ben Okri). Ending year four, the popular old fairy tale of the Twelve Wild Swans will be used as an archetypal example to be kept in mind during the week in which individual short case studies are worked with, in a small group supervision format. It is likely that the archetypal energy may resonate

through client work, individual processes and group life. The natural environment and craft materials are included in the work as part of a rich and creative week and participants are encouraged to bring anything that might add to the craft materials, scraps of material, wool, decorations, coloured paper and string.

Year 5

Year five is the time when therapist students finish their client sessions and they write their case-story before receiving their diploma. This year the main focus is on practicing client-work in connection with supervision. There are two weekend and a summer school and the content of those is described below.

The erotic field in psychotherapeutic work ♦ The aim of this workshop is to explore the range and significance of erotic feelings in therapy; it will provide guidance for clinical practice that remains both creative and guarded. By its very nature, psychotherapeutic work is an intimate encounter between two people. From a Jungian perspective, it is assumed that the client actually needs to perceive something of the woundedness of the therapist to facilitate the way in which the client's woundedness can be recognised and re-integrated in a new and healthy way. In this rich field, transference and counter-transference become inevitable. They become potentially creative, as fantasy and projections in both parties provide clues to deeper truths, often to do with longing for oneness and intimacy. To engage with the healing potential in this territory, therapists need equal and healthy respect for both its transforming potential and its inherent fears and dangers of transgression.

Dance me to the end – Summer school ♦ This is a time of completing, celebrating, separating and stepping out into professional life as a psychosynthesis therapist. The heart of Psychosynthesis and the reality of the Self, as described by Assagioli, is the paradox that we are both human (personal) and divine (spiritual). In our lives we take on masks and ways of being that enable us to be and live in the world and belong to the cultures in which we live. The journey of self-realisation or spiritual awakening, illumined by Assagioli, is the journey of remembering who we most essentially are and the discovery that each of us has a unique purpose; a quality or gift to express in the world that can be done by no one else (Assagioli, 1974).

The intention for the week is that students will reconnect to the essence of Psychosynthesis as a Transpersonal Psychology and be encouraged to explore their journey in relation to The Transpersonal. A person's journey has a context, a relation to a whole, to evolution. This week's course provides a deeply enriching experience for students to review their journey as an individual.

Chapter 5

Critique of psychologizing
in society

Here I will give voice to researchers criticizing the psychologising of western culture in general and of working life especially. The description given in chapter two of individualization within professional life exemplifies the political reform zeal within the public sector starting in the eighties, and by some social scientists called New Public Management (Hood, 1991; Hood & Peters, 2004). This movement is not unique for the Swedish context, but is also seen in many other countries. Management includes an entire set of ideas and theories concerning how to develop effectiveness at the workplace of which individualization is one idea. In chapter three, I presented research on personal development in relation to professional development, which exemplifies how psychological theories have been used in professional development and what participating in courses of personal development can contribute with in terms of useful knowledge at the workplace. In chapter four, the psycho-synthesis education is presented, being an example of how psychological theories can be used for personal/professional development. However, there are social scientists, philosophers, social commentators and others who will not approve this psychological development. They argue that psychology permeates almost every aspect of society. The critics involve both philosophical, political, religious and economic dimensions as well as problems within the science of psychology itself. Below, the main arguments are reviewed. Psychosynthesis is a method that involves the transpersonal dimension; therefore, it is a psychology involving spirituality and the theory becomes associated with the discussion about religion and New Age. Psychosynthesis as a therapy is still considered as an alternative form of treatment. It is often seen in connection with professional development and leader education oriented towards a broader group of professionals outside the healthcare system. Consequently, it seems relevant to address the critical questions that sometimes are associated with psycho-synthesis, even though they more often belong to a more general discussion about psychology in general society.

Psychology and ethics

Madsen (2010), a Norwegian psychologist and philosopher, questions from an ethical perspective how therapeutic and psychological theories and techniques have spread into the culture. He asks whether an increased focus on psychology is a sign of an unhealthy society, or if we have less tolerance in society for deviance in society. An explanation might also be that there is more transparency and a greater access to scientific and technological methods, as well as more resources than during earlier periods. With today's psychological knowledge, we can treat psychological distress and focus on our own mental problems in a way that was not an option for earlier generations. He also raises the question if this development has contributed to a better or worse society. What do we gain and what do we lose by a development like this? He argues that there is no single answer to this question, but the question needs to be asked. Madsen refers to the ethical rules of practicing psychology with the responsibility of being self-critical and aware of how it may influence the society on a larger scale. He argues that there is a special responsibility to be self-aware within the psychological discourse, since the profession of psychology contains issues about self-awareness. In this argumentation, he refers to the general discussion of ethics in the scientific discourse asking whether a greater reliance on experts is fostered. He refers to the "black hole of democracy", a discussion on whether the politicians are in the hands of experts. He argues that even if the danger of psychology cannot be equated with the existence of nuclear weapons or atomic energy it should not be neglected. The possibility to misuse psychology and thereby create harm in society needs to be taken seriously and the limitations of the psychological paradigm need to be discussed. With a possible strong influence on the society follows a great responsibility. He asks what happens when expert knowledge is spread into the culture and becomes demystified through popular culture. Madsen argues that therapists normally have a reliable ethical awareness in relation to their clients, but less understanding of societal ethical dilemmas. He considers that this is expressed in the unwillingness of psychologists to do research on negative consequences of how psychology is used. He exemplifies by pointing out the process of diagnosis, therapy with children and issues on what is to be regarded as normal or deviant as critical areas within the psychological discourse. Finally, he deems that psychology is a science that does not question whether it creates less or more suffering. He concludes that it is unethical of a professional society to continue to solve problems in society by asking for more psychology. In developing his ideas, he uses examples from coaching in sports, together with neo-liberalistic ideas about

entrepreneurship and freedom of the individual within organizations. He also connects psychology and self-realization with consumerism in society, where humans fill their existential feelings of emptiness within the self with increased consummation. If this is the case, psychology and capitalism may be considered to breed each other (Madsen, 2010).

Psychology and politics

The situation in which society is permeated with psychology is also discussed by Johansson (2008). He argues that in an individualistic culture there are greater demands for psychological theories in understanding the human condition. According to Johansson, psychology can be a new "opium of the people", like religion was historically. He refers to the philosopher Marcuse (1960), who criticized psychology as being used for disarming and neutralizing workers of the capitalistic system. The positivistic and individualized psychology could take advantage in removing focus on struggles of class, social injustice and exploitation, in order to make problems on the social level invisible. Marcuse warns for the rhetoric of adaptation to new liberal ideas, where the strong individual is manifested through the new heroes of the time (Marcuse, 1960, as cited in Johansson, 2008). Johansson considers that reflections on the context of management are imbued with words like freedom of choice and entrepreneurship, while the discourse of sociologic literature deals with injustices in society, class, different social categories, segregation and exclusion. There is a risk that the ideal of the perfect human can create feelings of inadequacy and alienation for those who do not succeed. Johansson argues that in the long run this will create a need for existential guidance as the detached and single individuals search for support in life (Johansson 2008).

Management culture and the ideal of change

Through studying management magazines Johansson (2008) gives a cultural analytical contribution to the understanding of the management culture. He tries to capture the management culture as a social feature through the characterization of the new ideal leader. The ideal leader fostered in the manager culture is dynamic, colourful, inclined for change, communicative with high emotional intelligence, and able to recognize employees' unique personalities and talents. According to the management ideal, the leader should be a rational problem solver as well as a communicative and emotionally committed leader. Johansson continues to describe the new leader as plastic and changeable with an

open style of leadership. The leader must be qualified in terms of the content of the work and in psychology as well as being aesthetic and creative. Johansson describes a leader who is educated, goes to the gym, reads fashion, visits art exhibitions and rock concerts, reads popular psychology, and cultivates his or her spiritual side. The leader is expected to develop intelligence in both thought and feeling and in spiritual intelligence. Johansson associates these ideas with the concept of coaching for this expanded form of leadership. This management ideal has influenced private life and he argues that every individual has access to psychological development methods and techniques through so called self-help literature and popular culture. Ultimately, he asks how far one can get in creating the perfect human being (Johansson, 2008). The author questions the ideal of always being in a process of change by learning new things and developing new qualities. Johansson (2006) elaborated on the discourse of change or makeover-culture. He wonders where the limits are for such a development and if the process would end in disappointment. What was thought to be graspable is, in fact, always fleeing away (Johansson, 2006).

Johansson (2008) argues that the management literature creates the illusion of the heroic and perfect leader; this neglects the actual tediousness in the profession (Johansson, 2008). He refers to Alvesson (2006), and his book *Triumph of emptiness. About grandiosity, acts of illusions and zero-sum games,* arguing that leadership is much about economy and administration; that the ideas of bottom up, less hierarchy and flat organizational structures have not become manifested in the organizations as predicted. The Swedish market could instead be characterized by its inertia, traditionalism and stability, rather than being flexible and unpredictable (Alvesson, 2006, as cited in Johansson, 2008). Johansson argues that psychology used in this way is a materialistic way, as it includes efficiency and economy rather than existential philosophy of life (Johansson, 2008).

Eclecticism and paradoxes within the psychological field

Besides the problem of neglect and lack of cultural and historical analysis in psychology, Johansson (2008) discusses the eclecticism of the therapeutic schools and the paradoxes in their theoretical content. He considers that ideas about health and psychological diagnosis are a paradox. On the one hand, he notices that burn-out syndrome for example is not to be regarded as a diagnosis, rather it is a signal of health, telling the individual when it is time to set limits to unbalances in life. On the other hand, there are diagnoses like psychopathy and narcissism that are used in understanding difficulties at a workplace. Another

paradox discussed by Johansson, is the situation when the same therapeutic school may involve determinism and liberating messages. He categorises different therapeutic traditions according to the degree of deterministic and liberating strategies. He also discusses attitudes that he thinks are fostered in this kind of training, e.g. that "difficulties are something to learn from". What happens if all difficulties in an organization could be addressed to problems at the individual level? What happens when the interest of searching for explanations on a structural level is overlooked? Johansson argues that the models of explanation have a lack of cultural and social analysis, and difficulties are almost taken as given by nature rather than being socially constituted (Johansson (2008).

Professionalism and legitimacy

Johansson and Madsen, referred to above, do not distinguish between the different strands within psychology. Johansson mainly refers to the management and self-help literature addressing leaders. He argues that the ideals described in management literature are converted to general philosophy of life (Johansson 2008). Madsen discusses how psychology and therapy have been demystified in popular culture through films and self-help literature where people are given tools and methods for self-help (Madsen, 2010). I also recognize the confusion that exists in the different professions using psychology as a basis for knowledge. Several titles for the recognition of qualifications flourish such as psychologist, psychotherapist, counsellor and coach. In psycho-synthesis, the concept of guide has been used periodically. Titles such as psychosynthesis therapist, psychosynthesis coach and consults in psychosynthesis can now be seen in connection with different approaches within the psychosynthesis education. The confusion of titles and legitimacy is debated by for instance Hornborg, a Swedish researcher in history and religion. In articles and in her book *Coaching and layman therapies – a modern awakening* (Hornborg, 2012, my translation of title) Hornborg debates the culture of coaching in daily press. According to her, coaching has entered the culture during the last decade, and she strongly criticises how easily old wisdom rituals have been taken out of their context and are purchased in the west without quality control and evidence that they work. She argues that leaders in mindfulness, chi-gong and yoga can act like trainers, leading others after an introductory course of a weekend. She also questions how quality can be guaranteed when therapists certify themselves within their own organization and are not certified by any authority as for example Government Health (Hornborg 2012).

Religion and psychology – New Age

The authors referred to above, all point out the association between psychology and religion. Madsen sees a new religiosity and alternative spirituality in society within traditional religions as well as within New Age. Madsen wonders if the therapeutic culture is being phased out in favour of the return to more traditional collectively established religious values. He argues that the relationship between therapy and religion is unexplored, but he does not want to set one against the other. Instead, the therapeutic culture calls for all forms of searching for meaning, according to Madsen. Christianity in the western countries demonstrates how the sacred conversation more or less follows a pattern of the therapeutic consultation or therapeutic conversation. Madsen also believes that from this perspective, one could see psychology as a natural extension of the individualized Protestant Christianity, committed to contemplation and introspection rather than to collective religious rites and ceremonies. Madsen also makes connections between individualism in society and Luther's Protestant reformation, introducing a personal relationship with God.

In developing this reasoning, Madsen refers to research on spirituality in American teenagers, where the same values of individualism can be found. The individual is considered to have authority over the religion. Religion is no longer a superior tradition or transcendent authority. God can be seen as a personal advisor to make you feel good. Madsen implies that modern forms of religious individualism manage rights rather than duties in full compliance with the therapeutic ethos in which self is the foremost authority. He distinguishes between religious and spiritual, where religious represents an external force such as institutional religion. Spirituality on the other hand represents an inner divine power, a Gnostic belief (Madsen, 2010).

Madsen also argues that psychology has taken on a great responsibility in managing human suffering, which earlier was the task of religion, and he misses a critical discussion about the risk that psychology can create harm. He is concerned about possible consequences in society when the authority of old roles and norms is exchanged. What happens when established institutions are replaced by therapeutic expertise requesting that one must seek answers within oneself? He describes a return of religion through the new-spirituality that can be seen in different kinds of psychology as a response to a need from the individual of support in an unsafe and unpredictable world. He wonders if it could be a foreshadowing of a re-evaluation of the secular and therapeutic world order. He connects religion with psychology in the sense that religion previously was

something that framed the human in the community and motivated a search beyond itself (Madsen, 2010). Johansson describes in his book the subtle limits between the psychologist and the priest. His view is that psychologists, therapists and all sorts of "helpers" have gained a great influence in management, leadership and entrepreneurship (Johansson, 2008).

Psychology and the market

In an article, Hornborg (2010) discusses commercialisation of nature, health and ritual healing. She questions the feature of purchasing old wisdom traditions on the western market. In her research, she has studied native culture of Indians in America; to my understanding, she wants to protect the old wisdom and traditions of native cultures. She honours the idealistic, non-profit activity in which those sacred rituals were integrated in society to benefit the group. However, according my understanding, there are cultural differences and the situations cannot be compared. One has to consider that even nuns and monks in monasteries have their food and support from the people in the villages, in order to survive in what could be called a system of voluntary tax. Hornborg questions the commercialisation of the various therapeutic courses often charging high fees. On the other hand, she discusses the overproduction of different kinds of therapists, which makes it difficult to have therapy as a livelihood. She argues that there is an overrepresentation of women being attracted by the thought of breaking out of a tough public system, often in professions of care, in order to live a free life. She also questions the common assumption in disciplines of therapy that "the only person that you can change is yourself". Hornborg argues like Johansson that it would be a better alternative to stay within the established system and try to make necessary improvements from there. Again, this is an argument with political connotations on how society is best developed (Hornborg, 2010).

Hornborg asks how procurement in the public sector has involved the purchase of courses offered by nonprofessional therapists and she is troubled by how tax money is used in this way. She especially mentions the new trend in Sweden with "job coaching" that is offered by the employment office. She observes that all sorts of fortune hunters earn big money out of peoples suffering (Hornborg, 2010). This criticism is multi layered. It contains an ignorance of the procedures around this purchasing. It gives the impression that there is almost no control of how the purchasing is conducted. To apply for and receive the commission to undertake these jobs involves formal requirements and they are which are quite difficult to meet. According to my experience

within the context of psychosynthesis, very few support themselves as full-time therapists earning 'big money'. Hornborg's arguments indicate an ignorance of how free enterprise works in relation to the public sector. The traditional "helpers" in the public sector, healthcare, social work, priests in churches et cetera work for wages. Commercialisation and free enterprise generally in society is growing and exists within the public sector as well. Compare for example the system that is under development around relay doctors.

A conclusion is that psychology and especially psychology with connotations of spirituality is a relatively young field that still suffers from a number of "teething troubles". From the above account, it can be seen that critical voices have an emotional engagement. The discussion is more of political and philosophical standpoints in what kind of a society is preferred for the future. Critical questions like if the therapeutic ideals of the western tradition can work independently of culture and independent of age or person. The described of the influence of psychology into the popular culture was discussed by Johansson and Madsen and I also agree that the makeover industry can be examples of undesirable versions of psychology in use. These are examples of how psychology about human growth can be misused in the service of showmanship. However, this version of psychology is just one version in a field of many serious workers. In the light of this, there are many unanswered questions in the field that would be highlighted by research. Control systems are certainly a way of identifying and correcting misuse within the various disciplines and thereby making psychology a valuable and relevant contribution to societal, organizational and individual development.

Contribution of this study

This review shows that there are critics that warn for the problem that psychology and psychological knowledge is widely spread into professional life and in society. However, the interest in this study is educational rather than psychological. In this study, the individual is not is not set in juxtaposition with the system. In addition, the theoretical framework used here is the phenomenological life-world approach, which is relational and does not rule out the organizational dimension. The ambition is to find out what training contributes with to the relation between the individual and the professional world. This study is primarily interested in finding out how an education in psychosynthesis can contribute to professional development; it does not have the aim of developing the psychosynthesis theory itself.

PART II

Chapter 6

Phenomenological Life-World Theory

The theoretical frame chosen for this study is inspired by a phenomenological life-world theory. A life-world perspective on professional practice provides an integrated framework that takes the human aspect into account. This approach has a potential to deepen and enrich the understanding of professional development, as it includes the human and the relational aspect between the individual and the world. Phenomenology can be described as a scientific movement with several specializations; the life-world approach is one. On a general level, the life-world understanding of reality is pluralistic, complex and intertwined which implies that reality includes properties that are not only physical; reality also has to include mental qualities of different kinds such as feelings, aesthetic experiences, as well as social, cultural and historical dimensions (Bengtsson, 1999). This approach is presented by Bengtsson and its main resources are found in philosophers such as Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Schutz. Husserl is considered to be the founder of the phenomenological movement and elaborated a critique of the European sciences and questioned the objectivism that dominated scientific thinking in his time. His discussion included the problem of how objectivism created a distance to human life, as well as the problem of reductionism that ignored the complexity in life (Husserl, 1970/1954). In this chapter, before entering the field of professional development, I will make an account of some ontological assumptions within the life-world theory, which are relevant in this study in understanding professional development and the relations between professional person and professional practice. Other research using the life-world approach in studying professional development in teacher education according to this tradition (Claesson, 2004; Orlenius, 1999; Søndenå, 2002).

In understanding the relation between life worlds I will start this section by mention some concepts that are crucial in understanding the ontological conditions of human existence and the condition for knowledge. These concepts comprise the natural attitude lived body, inter-subjectivity, the possibility of authenticity, the possibility of openness and transformation. They are selected because they give a certain meaning to what professional learning and knowing might imply in an education focusing self-development.

Natural attitude

According to Husserl, humans live and act in their everyday lives in an attitude of taking their world for granted. This is an attitude in which we are immersed in the world; the content and the existence of perceptions that we are involved in, are taken for granted. We also take for granted that others perceive the world as we do. In understanding the natural attitude, Bengtsson (2005) refers to Schütz's theories about the social world. He argues that the everyday world is available to us through stored experience, consisting of our own experiences as well as experiences transferred from parents, teachers and the culture we live in (Bengtsson, 2005). This means that even if the life-world is ambiguous and intertwined the understanding is dependent on the situation and the immediate impression is that the world is taken for granted. Everything that is problematized and questioned is against a background of un-problematized beliefs that are taken for granted. We can never reach a pure knowledge independent of the background according to this understand (Bengtsson, 1999). As Dahlberg et al. (2008) describe, a person participating in a situation in the natural attitude does not critically reflect on own immediate action and responses to the world in that situation. It is a way of participation in the situation where one is completely directed towards, immersed in, and absorbed by the activity or the being, of the moment. They refer to Husserl and argue that this is a naïve approach to the world, a mostly uncritical and unaware position from which the world is basically understood (Husserl 1970/1954 as cited in Dahlberg, et al., 2008). They believe that existing in this attitude is a good enough approach in every-day life, but it is far too imprecise, weak and vague for scientific purposes. In this attitude, a person does not stop and consider all the possibilities for each situation (Dahlberg et al., 2008). Dahlberg, et al. study epistemology and the basis for scientific knowledge in relation to the profession of research, but this can be assumed to apply to knowledge within other professions as well.

Lived Body

In the life-world-approach the concept lived body is important and it is elaborated by Merleau-Ponty in his *Phenomenology of Perception* (Merleau-Ponty, 1962/2009). The body is given a special interest in that the perception is considered as mediating our being in the world as the centre for our experiences. The "lived body" means an integrated view on the body that focuses on both physical and mental aspects in relation to the world. We are situated in the world through our lived body; the body is considered to be a physical anchor from

where our perceptions take place, while at the same time, through our consciousness, we have access to the past, present and future. Through our bodies, we have the possibility of getting things into perspective, the body is considered different from things in general in that we cannot escape our body or step outside our bodies. The lived body is the actor in the world and a changed body means a change in the experience of the world (Berntsson, 2001). The life-world concept of the body is both a theory of body and a theory of subject where mind-body is integrated in a whole. The human body can never be understood merely as a biological thing or as an object and the concept of the lived body is different from the medical concept in that it includes the subjective experience. Our body is different in that we never can get away from it; our body is constantly perceived and constantly perceiving. Through the body and the bodily experiences, the surrounding world becomes meaningful to us. Bengtsson (2005) refer to Merleau-Ponty's theory, that the lived body is ontologically social in that we, through our birth, emanate out of another body, and we are referred to other humans through our division into sexes (Bengtsson, 2005). Further is described as the meaningful core which behaves like a general function. The body is central in that it connects us to that world and roots us in the world. The body is described in metaphors like anchor and something that gives us a home in the world. Our relation to our body is characterized by immediacy and one relates to one's body and to oneself in the natural attitude (Bengtsson, 1993 a; Dahlberg, Dahlberg, & Nyström, 2008).

Finlay (2011) refers to Sartre's conceptualisation of the lived body. He says that our bodies are in continuous relation to the world and "bodily experience and a sense of belonging to the world are one and the same" (Finlay, 2011, p. 30). When the self-body-world relationship is interrupted, it can be described as losing balance or losing footing and there is no longer a sense of being myself. It can contain a sense of homelessness and alienation from the world. It may be felt as though we lose interest in the world or that the world has lost its colour. Several researchers have used the concept of the lived body in understanding the altered relationships between the person and the world as a result of physical injury(Berntsson, 2001).

The lived body in professions

In life-world theory the embodied knowing is highlighted (Bengtsson, 1993; Dahlberg, et al., 2008). According to Dahlberg, et al. (2008), professionals all practise embodied knowing when they work, whether they take care of clients, teach students or meet customers. Professionals often spend little reflection on

what they do; they proceed in a natural way in which knowledge is embodied. For example, therapists know what to do and how to respond to clients because of knowledge that is integrated in their subjective body. Teachers read and respond in their classrooms at the same time as they consider how to make the transition into the next step; the entire subjective body is involved. In the interplay between the student and the teacher for example, the lived body of the student can be engaged in the learning process, expressed through the bodily excitement of learning new things. The teacher's body senses the emotional climate in the classroom and responds to these signals of excitement or discomfort (Dahlberg, et al., 2008). The embodied aspect of professional knowledge is also discussed by Claesson (2004). In her research, the results show the importance of how professionals conveying their intention in the professional situation through posture and bodily language1 (Claesson, 2004). The importance of embodied knowing is also mentioned in relation to artistic performance and expert-knowledge when integrated knowledge in the natural attitude is exemplified. These kinds of perfect professional performance could be described in terms of flow, but as soon as one starts to reflect, the flow may break (Bengtsson, 1993 b; Finlay, 2011).

Although we mostly live our body-world relationship pre-reflexively with the body, the body has its own wisdom working automatically, within the natural attitude. Finlay gives an account of how professional therapists are trained to consciously use their bodily perception as an instrument in their profession. It is a kind of training that she suggests would be useful in doing research work. Therapists are trained to observe the way others use their bodies and rely on these nonverbal clues. They have also learned to draw on their own feeling and subtle bodily responses to clients in order to gain insight about their experiences. Finlay describes how the body of the professional acts and reacts like a kind of somatic compass. She argues for the possibility of reflexively observing bodily responses of oneself and others in order to tune in to the other persons experience, relating to the other person's subjectivity. She also mentions how clients can be taught to focus on their own bodily responses when listening to feelings in the stomach or the tightening of the shoulders, focusing on changes in the bodily information. Changes in bodily tensions provide information that the work is in progress (Finlay, 2011).

The relation between selves

In the process of understanding inter-subjectivity and social relationships, I will use a theory from Shutz (1967). In his theory, he makes a classification of inter-

subjective relationships on the basis of closeness and distance. In a social system, there are a myriad of relationships. In the context of this study, the social systems belong to a workplace and the interpersonal relationships in this study include relationships to students in school, to employees in the company or to clients in supervision. Without saying that these professions are all the same, their interpersonal relationships could be described in terms of closeness and distance by using the distinction between "Thou-orientation" and "They-orientation", according to Schutz's theory. Schutz says "the Thou-orientation is the pure mode in which I am aware of another human being as a person" (Schutz, 1967, p. 163). They-orientation is in contrast a more anonymous, abstract way of relating to others. In Schutz's words "the term 'They-Orientation' serves to call attention to the peculiar way in which I apprehend the conscious experience of my contemporaries. For I apprehend them as anonymous processes" (Schutz, 1967, p. 183).

We relationships are described by Schutz as "the face-to-face relationship in which the partners are aware of each other and sympathetically participate in each other's lives for however short a time we shall call the 'pure' We-relationship" (Schutz, 1967, p. 164). When we participate in each other's lives for however short time it may be, the "We-relationships" appear in different manners and the character of the conversation may vary in degrees of intensity, immediacy or intimacy. In a "We-relation" there is a continuous exchange of information through the shared experience of each other. Being oriented towards each other, communication is going on both verbally and non-verbally through facial language and exchange of glances. When I see another person in front of me and as I watch the face of the person in front of me, listen to the tone of her voice, I become aware of much more than what she is deliberately trying to communicate to me. This encounter is affected by the experiences and the pre-understanding of each individual. In a situation of mutual presence, experiencing the "We", you are not aware of it while it happens, this is an experience that you live through while "growing old together". As soon as you start to reflect on that lived experience of presence, the face-to-face relationship will break and turn into an object for reflection. "The Thou-relationship can, therefore be either one-sided or reciprocal. It is one-sided if one notices the presence of the other. It is reciprocal if we are mutually aware of each other" (Schutz, 1967, p.164).

The one-sided relationship would be possible to imagine in the situation where a teacher by observing and inferring pupils behaviour using her subjectivity in judgement about proper actions to take in the classroom.

Another more anonymous way of orienting oneself towards others in society is described by Schutz (1967) in the concept of They-orientation. The subjective meaning of the context is not in focus in this kind of relationship. In social reality, the experience of a person is commonly characterized; human beings are abstracted from any individual setting. In a "They-relation" the other person is classified in correspondence to a certain type, an ideal type that is associated with certain patterns or as he express it, certain scripts, which exist in a person's pre-understanding. The other part in the relationship is regarded as a type rather than human, according to his theory (Schutz, 1967).

Inter-subjectivity and the concept "They-relationships", will describe the impersonal relationships that might occur in a professional context between professionals and their clients, students or colleagues. As mentioned in the background of this thesis, research on education points to the benefit of personalized relationships between the teacher and his/her pupils; such a relationship is considered desirable as it is beneficial for the process of learning (cf. Goleman, 1995; Eisner, 1994; Noddings, 1992; Kahn, 1999).

Human existence and the possibility of authenticity

The ontological condition of being human in the world is described by Heidegger in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 2008[1962]) It is a wide theory about what it means to be a human in the world and I have chosen Mulhall's (2006) reading of *Being and Time* because he pays particular attention to the idea of authenticity in his interpretation. According to Heidegger, the nature of a person's[3] existence is of being thrown into the world, which means that the person is born into an already existing world with historical and cultural influences. From the beginning, a person's understanding of being is vague and undetermined, but the person's existence is necessarily confronted with the question of meaning, along with questions of whether and how to live in the world. According to Heidegger, part of the ontological conditions of the human being is to reclaim the question of meaning and he describes life as an inquiry, characterised by having a direction or an orientation. The inquiry is also concerned with something and it is driven by a sense of wonder when certain objects appeal to us and want to be explored. There is no objective or neutral place where we can start our inquiry and the significance of things appears in

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[3] In this thesis the term existence or person is used instead of Heidegger's 'Dasein' as the ambition of this study is mainly practical; it is not a philosophical project.

relation to the projects that we are heading for (Heidegger, 2008 [1962], as cited in Mulhall, 2005).

Ontologically, according to Heidegger, as a person you have a possibility to take a stand on who you are and on what it is that is essential about your being, and you may let yourself be defined by that stand. In the process of choosing certain activities, lifestyles, visions and not others, we reveal our conceptions of what it is to lead a flourishing life as a human. A characteristic of being human is to live in this capacity of self-interpretation and self-definition; although the possibilities for self- interpretation are restricted by the conditions of the context we live in. As existence is an issue for the individual, any given mode of its existence can be assessed in terms of what Heidegger calls authenticity or inauthenticity (Befindlichkeit - das-Mann is the German expressions in *Being and Time*). According to his theory, failure of authenticity is a failure in asking the questions about meaning correctly. Authenticity is about inhabiting the world and finding a unique expression; in this, the individuals carry a responsibility for their own lives and individuality (Heidegger, 2008 [1962], as cited in Mulhall, 2005). According to Heidegger's philosophy, human development starts in an inauthentic mode and is considered to constitute the ontological condition of being human in the world. In this process, the possibility of "mineness", which is a Hiedeggerian notion of the possibility of saying "my life, my body, I do" and so on. As my life is mine, I am responsible for what I let myself be informed by, or infused with, or who I want to be. Expressed in terms of the two modes of authenticity – inauthenticity, you could say that the individual, the inauthentic person could in her existence chose herself or win her-self. From an authentic position, I might as a unique self have lost myself or not yet won myself. From the existential condition of "mineness", it could be said that if I, from the position of the unique self, merge with the They, the generalized others; then I lose myself and fail to reach individuality. As an inauthentic self, I interpret my own nature in terms of common categories in the culture and everyday life. To lose oneself into the They represents an inauthentic mode (Heidegger, 2008 [1962], as cited in Mulhall, 2005). Mulhall (2005) comments, that genuine authenticity does not require loosening all the ties with others. Expressing authenticity, he argues, could not involve detachment from others, it must rather require a different form of relationship a distinctive form of "being with" others (Mulhall, 2005).

Authenticity in professions

Applying this reasoning of authentic-inauthentic on the professional sphere, to be professional is to enter into an occupation. The relationship work–world, could be described as people, performing socially defined and culturally inherited tasks, in which their identity is defined prior to and independently of any individuality. The identity closest to hand is the identity of being a working person. It is a temporary inhabitation of the profession and in this sense it means that the worker is replaceable. When taking on a profession one starts' in an inauthentic impersonal mode, but for the individual that occupies the profession, work can be an important part of that person's self-understanding and profession can be appropriated and carried out authentically. He also claims that the state of being inauthentic is the position from which a worker must break away if he/she is to achieve authentic existence (Heidegger, 2008 [1962], as cited in Mulhall, 2005).

Anxiety reflecting existence in relation to existence

Further, in Heidegger's philosophy of existence, a person is always occupied with different things that she encounters in the world; care about possibilities is an inevitable part of the human existence. The world and anything in it is something that cannot fail to matter to her (Sorge is the German expression in *Being and Time*) (Heidegger, 2008 [1962], as cited in Mulhall, 2005). In her everyday being, a person is scattered among different objects that appeal to her curiosity. An authentic mode of a person requires her to overcome this state of being scattered. Thus, in order to reach a genuinely integrated understanding of existence, we are required to gain a perspective of the fragments, which demonstrates an overall unity. In this process, anxiety is the state of mind that takes us to such a unifying understanding. Anxiety is described as objectless, unlike fear that always comes in response to some specific object in the world. Anxiety confronts the person with the knowledge that she is thrown into the world – always exposed to situations of choice and action, which matter to her but which she is not fully in a position to choose or determine. Anxiety confronts the person with the inevitable fact of her own worldly existence. The individual is anxious about herself, not about some concrete existential possibility. This is rather an anxiety over the possibility itself, and that one's living existence necessarily involves projecting oneself upon certain possibilities in order to find an authentic expression (Mulhall, 2005).

Mood reflecting existence in life-world

Mood is a concept that Heidegger uses in order to describe the capacity a person has of being affected by the world. Mood reflects how the situations that a person faces matters to that person. Moods emerge, and in ways over which the person has less control. Moods are characterized by emotions such as depression, cheerfulness, joy and fear which influence the person's temperament; these moods are typically experienced as "given", as states into which one has been thrown. Our emotions affect others, but they are also a sign that we have been affected by others. Moods constitute a human condition for the human existence; "and once in their grip, moods can colour every aspect of our existence. In so doing they determine our grasp upon the world" (Mulhall, 2005, p. 76). In this sense, moods are revealing of the world and a particular mood discloses something in the world as mattering. Mulhall discusses how moods and emotions in this sense are passions, something passive that we are suffering from rather than something we inflict. Suffering in this sense signifies not pain, but submission. The person is then open to the world as something that can affect it. Moods reveal something of the world in a particular way, for example as fearful, boring, cheerful or hateful; the person is in that sense open to the world. Mood is not related to the psychical and it is not an inner condition, or an outside condition, but arises out of being in the world. In the same way as moods reveal something to the person, mood also reveals something about the world. Mood shows us how we live our life in terms of an authentic or an inauthentic mode (Mulhall, 2005).

The possibility of human openness

According to the reasoning above, the idea of authenticity concerns self-defining processes in the development of identity. Todres (2007) highlights the possibility of openness and non-self defining processes of human development. He offers a phenomenological embodied understanding of the transpersonal dimension and the spiritual qualities of existence. In calling attention to the more human understanding of the development of identity, he means to articulate a vision that human identity always already has a transpersonal dimension, which is present in dynamic ways in our daily lives. In this view, the transpersonal dimensions cannot be considered as something that comes later or is a state to be achieved, according to Todres. He argues that the tension between the personal and the transpersonal is revealed from the beginning as constituting a fundamental existential ambiguity, always present to all of us in our earthly life, not something that belongs to a heavenly realm. Todres' way of describing this

concerns the inclusion of mystery into the living dimension, without reducing it to already known categories of thought. In understanding the transpersonal dimension, he takes his point of departure in an "ambiguous focus model" in which there is a dynamic tension in our sense of self, between the possibility of a "non-separative being", and more specialised forms of self-experience. Todres claims that the presence of "personal" and "transpersonal" dimensions functions as a possibility at any moment, a condition that forms a deep motivation and creative tension in the human heart. This tension holds the lived possibility of integration, a wider embrace, understanding whole and part, unity and difference. According to the theory of an ambiguous focus model, when living with this kind of focus an inner peace may be attained, involving thisa kind of wide embrace (Todres, 2007).

Ambuiguiety and the freedom-wound

In his thinking, Todres (2007) is influenced by Heidegger's way of describing human openness to the world and the ambiguity of existence that belongs to this openness. Todres describes this ambiguity with the tension between freedom and wound. In one way, the human condition involves "belonging to freedom", which aims at the possibility of being open for anything that presents itself. He cites Heidegger (2001). 1)"Freedom is to be free, open for being claimed by something (p. 217) 2)"Beings are and are not nothing…[human Beings] distinction and peril consist of …being open in manifold ways to beings as beings" (pp. 74-5). Further, Todres connects these statements to another passage in Heidegger (2001) regarding the clearing, the openness, where everything merges. "He is not the clearing himself, not the entire clearing, nor is he identical to the whole of the clearing as such" (Heidegger, 2001, p. 171, as cited in Todres, 2007, pp. 112-113). Yet Todres argues:

> "Yet human being in his/her essence does carry an "opening power" that is enacted by his/her embodied perceptions and actions. This is an essential source of human freedom; not fundamentally in the freedom to choice or to act but to be a domain of standing perceptually/receptively open to what is encountered, to be the "there" of being. This kind of freedom is described as something we are rather than something we decide to do or not to do- it is part of the ontology of being human" (Todres, 2007, p. 113).

Todres elaborates further how this freedom is not an absolute freedom, referring to Heidegger, and his concept of care. "Being there is also being there for others it is essentially an opening that has care as its nature" (p. 113). Freedom is not then to be regarded as a human possession. On an ontological level, we belong

to freedom, which is a movement towards "letting beings be" rather than to achieve or do things. Potentially there are multiple ways of "being there" and perceptually attuning to otherness. Heidegger indicates something of the careful possibility of freely standing in a serene welcome, which allows beings their otherness and their own freedom to be. To exemplify this understanding of openness, Todres mentions how meditation of nothingness (death) can help us remember how we may get lost in specialised, fixed objectified views on self; we may forget about leaving room for openness and allowing new forms of being (Todres, 2007).

Belonging to the wound

Describing the other side of the freedom-wound Todres (2007) argues that the existential nature of being human is vulnerability with its task of suffering, living in the human realm and meeting others there. In this argumentation, he cites two statements in Heidegger (2001). 1) "Dasein is that being whose being itself is an issue for it" (p. 124). 2) "Being human, as such, is distinguished by the fact that to be, in its own unique way, is to be that openness" (p. 121). (Heidegger, 2001, cited in Todres, p. 115). According to Todres (2007), there is a certain quality of aloneness in this absence of the other. While a great freedom and responsibility is given to human beings with the possibility of intimate participation in the clearing, there is also a profound vulnerability associated with human existence. Paradoxically, the sources of vulnerability come from the openness of human beings towards the world to receive and perceive at the same time. Regarding Heidegger and his theory about care, previously cited, he emphasised that human existence is essentially concerned about itself, other people, and things in the world (Todres, 2007).

Todres elaborates these reflections further, noting that if each of us is formed as a passionate question, this would indicate incompleteness in our lives, to which we respond. This is what he calls the wound of earth, which contains questions and choices such as; shall I walk this path or that path, questions of loss and the possibility of not being. Further issues might be questions of physical pain and of the pain of not being at home, or of being thrown into the circumstances of life; it might be matters concerning culture and time, or of being situated and defined by self, body, others, language etcetera. Todres adds that these are all matters concerned with how to live with the implications of this wound that speak of an unfinished self that cannot be irrevocably grasped, that speak of temporal uncertainty, and that speak of falling from the oneness of belonging. Todres takes the example of narcissism, a psychopathology that

describes a defensive pattern in response to the great vulnerability and the feelings of neediness and incompletes. This pattern announces, "I do not need" and describes a flight from openness, relations and vulnerability.

The gift of belonging to this wound, in Todres' view, is that participation in situations in life with openness to what might come, which way involve a sense of vulnerability, brings a sense of a newness, of being touched by aliveness, but this always includes the risk of pain. He describes this urge as a hunger for what might come. The hunger is not only directed towards the past, (unity with mother), it is also a longing for what has not yet taken form, and the freshness of what may come to present itself. According to Todres, there is a difference between the wounds that are inflicted on the personal level in that they can be held, while each one of us is exposed to the vulnerability connected with existence (Todres, 2009).

Soulful space and the qualities of "being there", "letting-be-ness" and "being with"

Practically, belonging to that freedom-wound means a shift in ways of how one may participate in life situations. It is described by Todres as an on-going participation rather than survival of a "fixed" self or specialized identity. In such free participation one wears the freedom to be vulnerable in an existential way. The mood of this is not just a detached, in Todres' words "letting-be-ness", but rather of being moved and touched in many different ways at different times. Through these moods and multiplicities there may also be the profound taste of being willing to "be there", to be hospitable, and to be a unique place for allowing things to emerge. Interpersonally "being there for", "being with" each other in this way brings us most fully to what Todres describes as the 'soulful space'.

Elaborating further the gifts of this freedom-wound, Todres (2007) describes how approaching circumstances in life with openness and the vision of being 'more than' present self-identification becomes possible. Being 'more than' the way our contexts objectify us, will bring a sense of a wide space of freedom. Participating inter-subjectively in this way, allows both freedom and empathy; a 'soulful space' where we meet as fellow carriers of the freedom-wound. Soulful space is influenced by biographical, historical and contextual circumstances as well as by future potentialities. This human realm is thus an ambiguous place that includes freedom, vulnerability and other tensions of intimacy and aloneness, self-assertion and love, productivity and play, home and adventure according to Todres.

In Todres' reflections on the paradox in which psychological notions of ego-strength are enhanced by feelings of ego-lesness, psychology and spirituality go hand in hand. In his argumentation on traditional theories about development of the identity, there is a view that a person becomes someone living in the rhythm of self-sameness and otherness, which according to Todres, means a present self to maintain and a future self to attain. This is a development towards a specialised self-perception, which carries the risks of a development towards an objectified self. According to Todres, Heidegger (2001) suggests another potential rhythm in human development of ontological depth in remembering the possibility of un-specialized nothingness as a counterpoint to our specialized self-conceptions. That suggests a dialectic process of development between specialized forms of being and non-specialized perceptual openness to the world. Todres also points to the paradox of how the recovery of our nothingness also empowers the freedom to be someone-in-particular and incomplete (Todres, 2007).

The experience of wholeness

Todres (2007) then discusses the source of experiencing wholeness. The "belonging to nothingness" does not give a sense of emptiness or nothingness, rather it is an experience of fullness. It is a possibility of being simple, filled with wonder and naivety in our presence to things, where the motive for self-finding disappears. He describes human development as a rhythm of self-loosening and self-finding processes in which both processes can be mutually supportive. Self-loosening provides experiences of wholeness that are primordially given; the process of excessive self-objectification can never find a self that can be whole. This is a circumstance of irony because the very desire for self-objectification, self-finding is grounded in a hope for wholeness. The challenge is then, according to Todres, to find inclusive relationships where self-finding and self-loosening processes can co-exist. Further he argues that in psychological theories, the sense of wholeness is identified as the feeling of oneness such as it is experienced in relation to historical experiences of oneness associated with one's mother. The transpersonal or spiritual experience of wholeness is different from that experience. The sense of wholeness and completeness that comes from one's nothingness is not the finding of a situation of completeness; it is not a completeness in which suffering is avoided - as in the mother child experience of nourishment. Rather it is the sense of the completeness in which the seeking for self-object is recognised to be unnecessary. According Todres, the

relationship life-world will in that transparency appear less self-objectifying, and the tendency to objectify others will also lessen (Todres, 2007).

Premature self-understandings in open dialogue with no specialized perceptions of self

Todres (2007) continues to ask how the ground of our identity, which is our essential nothingness, can become transparent to us in the midst of individuated life. How could such nourishment be regained? According to him, there is a difference in thinking about self-concept and specialised self-capacities. Our specialized self-concepts, that is, the specialized view that we have of our self is always more restricted and prematurely fixed than all the potential memories, capacities, and historical experiences that make up our specialised self-capacities. Todres argues that the whole purpose of entering into therapy is to identify those premature self-understandings in open dialogue, with no special perceptions of self. The recognition of repetitive personality structures can point to the transcendence and a greater freedom and sense of easiness can be gained in return. We begin to discover a context or series of stories, which makes our unique forms of objectifying unworkable and unnecessary; we see a widened story begin to take form that is less fixed. Through the rhythm of self-identifying and self-loosening in therapy, an increasing willingness to be somebody is implicitly learned in psychotherapy (Todres, 2007). This understanding seems important in relation to this study where participants take part in psychotherapeutic elements within the training.

Transpersonal dimension in profession

What are then the implications for such an embodied understanding of spirituality based on theories about a freedom-wound? Professionally, that could mean to understand the importance of giving space to the "the otherness" of others and allowing the space for "letting - be", leaving space for new things to present themselves. Understood differently, this could be referred to Husserl and the classical expression connected with him, "going back to the things themselves". This involves not to being able to find a transcendent true knowledge, but instead finding the possibility to allow the space for building up the gestalt without premature categorisations or interpretations. Todres (2007) discusses how a professional, in his case he address the therapist or the scientist profession, can be informed by the lived understanding of the freedom-wound. It includes both a psychological understanding of the psychoanalytic character; it addresses the repetitions and premature ways in which we define others and

ourselves. It involves understanding blocks that hinder openness to possibilities in life. It is also to have an attitude that invites others and supports the possibility of "being more than". It is also a greater degree of self-acceptance of common vulnerabilities in an embodied human life (Todres, 2007).

Todres considers that being professional is not primarily something that you do or achieve. Rather, it is a way of being in your own existential presence of freedom – to be able to nurture that place of welcome and acceptance where people dare to open up. It is to have the possibility of honouring and facilitating experiential processes and it concerns attunement to the other, reading the prevailing moods of the situation, facilitating the life-world relationship. It is also the willingness to be there, open, letting things be, giving space to let others make experiences, to be with the other, finding new beginnings and self-definitions. Understanding the transpersonal dimension in professional practice represents a shift in how you as a professional participate in professional situations. In Todres' view, it is not only a detached situation of letting things be, it is a matter of openness, letting yourself be moved and touched with empathy according to the situation, supporting the other as a fellow-human-being. His descriptions of a professional way of being concern the psychotherapist profession (Todres, 2007). Considering the purpose of this study, the reasoning around transpersonal dimensions seems useful in understanding professional ways of being in practices of care.

To be a person who learns

Within philosophy and sociology, the question has been discussed about what a self is and whether the self develops from the inside and out, or from the outside and (Bilgrami, 2006; Elliot, 2007; Shoemaker, 1996; Silva, 2011; Zahavi, 2005). Within the life-world approach, development is considered to occur in a reflexive process between life and world. Just as we are born with a curiosity, a concern for other people and things in the world and a sense of meaning and context, with a body, we are also influenced by the world. This means that you cannot look at human development in only one way or the other (Bengtsson, 1999). Earlier in this thesis, I have mentioned how people stand in relation to the world. Now I will provide some models for how to understand learning, change and flexibility, based on earlier accounts. The research question in this study is about what participants learn in a psychosynthesis training, which they later use in their profession. The life-world approach has no clear-cut theory for learning; but in this study, I will highlight aspects that connect with the phenomenological concepts of natural attitude, authenticity and inauthenticity. It is a starting point

when discussing how learning might take place in training focusing on self-development.

Learning as a process of de-learning and deconstruction

Connected to the reasoning of authentic-inauthentic, I will introduce an aspect of learning that deals with the process of de-learning, which is also involved in the learning process. Learning is often associated with learning new things, but it might as well be a process of destroying and breaking loose from old patterns and beliefs in the natural setting. For this aspect, Colaizzi (1978) uses the notion of genuine learning where he sets genuine learning in opposition to acquisition of information and facts. Colaizzi describes how the process of learning starts in an existential question concerning individual existentiality and personality. The learning process may lead to a change in perspective and it could involve emotional difficulties but may lead to a reorganization of former understanding. Genuine learning could, according to the description of Colaizzi, represent a process of de-learning where the unique self, the authentic self, will emerge as distinctive from the generalized inauthentic being shaped in a process of socialisation (Colaizzi, 1978).

Brooks (2009) makes an interpretation of Heidegger's analysis of existence, when he describes the learning process as an existential possibility of being human. Taking his starting point in human concern about one's own existence, the human nature of "being with" and the human possibility of living authentically, he claims that learning in itself is a possibility of authentically becoming oneself and caring for the sake of others. It is also a matter of being oriented towards the basic sense of being human in our daily life. He describes a learning process where the person questions what is fundamental; in order to later reconstruct a new understanding after eliminating preconceptions. The learning process includes deconstruction of such that a person needs to reject in his/her everyday preconception. Transferred to the professional person, this is a process of questioning traditional and cultural matters as well as one's own professional pre-understanding, to distinguish the fundamental in what remains, finding an authentic way of inhabiting the occupation. Thereafter comes a phase when we construct new understanding out of the characteristics of being human (Brooks, 2009).

Learning as a process of distancing

Another aspect of learning that is different from acquisition of information and facts is to take the human potential and experience as a point of departure in a

process of reflection. Bengtsson (1993 b) uses the concept of distancing in connection with reflection. Reflection is required to distance yourself from the natural attitude, making you self-aware of what is involved in a particular situation. According to Bengtsson, reflection is certainly not concerned with reaching knowledge that is objective and free from the influence of life-world. However, it is possible to distance oneself and get a better understanding of what happened. As we have mentioned earlier, part of the human condition is that we in our practical world, live with a natural attitude, i.e. the world, such as we see it, is taken for granted. Regarding the situation of being a professional person, it is not enough to go on acting in an un-reflected way in a natural attitude; instead, the professional situation needs to be transcended and reflected upon, in order to make new decisions. It is a fluctuation between being immersed in the natural attitude and keeping a distance.

Distancing might be done in different ways. Reflection is one way and can be undertaken using different methods, individually through giving oneself space, taking notes and writing diaries about the professional situational experience. It can be done in social relationships through dialogue with colleagues in pairs or in groups. Another way is achieved by doing research relevant to the profession. Consequently, one way professionals acquire skills is by studying educational theories, applying, practicing, and thus making the knowledge their own, integrating the knowledge in their own lived body. Knowledge then turns into tacit knowledge and becomes part of the complex professional skill. According to Bengtsson, the theories need to be relevant and be experienced as meaningful if they are to have a substantial impact in practice, which may be a problem when it comes to some kinds of educational research (Bengtsson, 1993 b).

Transformation of the self in education

One way of understanding learning in an education may imply changes in a person's self-understanding and identity. In life-world theory, a starting point is that the world is always appearing for someone, but self is not a rigid entity, it can be transformed over time in an indefinite process (Bengtsson, 2005). In this study, I have chosen a model of self that allows for the person's agency and creativity connected to the ideas of authenticity as well as the possibility of openness. O'Connor and Hallam (2009) provide a detailed phenomenological description of how a possible transformative process might be conceived. They argue that experience of a situation is both personalized yet it is socially constructed. Their ambition was to overcome terms like agency, locus and the separation between public and private domains of experiences. They propose an

understanding that grounds self-knowledge in "being" rather that something "known about". Being is revealed by projects in the world and dependant on spatial and temporal dimensions. According to their understanding, as projects are always in the process of coming about, the self-defining process are in relation to future potentialities rather than something that is in the present. They claim that the finite self is an illusion: but a necessary one. According to their interpretation of Husserl and Heidegger, they propose that the self emerges as a point of reference amongst spatial and temporal coordinates in everyday life, in a way similar to an illusion that emerges in a "magical conjuring trick". Its emergence depends on ways of knowing. The illusion comes into being on the basis of proceedings, or surrounding conditions, that lead up to the emergence of self. Self is not seen, but it has the immediacy of reality and is sensed as a real reference point. Conceiving of the self as an illusion or a point of reference and the realisation that its emergence depends on ways of knowing will not diminish its power, according to the authors. The self is determined by circumstances; it is never determined completely but is about to be. It is this becomingness or about-to-be-ness, which defines the sense of self as an illusion, according to O'Connor and Hallam (2009) and they write:

> Accordingly, what creates a "consciousness" of self is Being grounded in forms of life that provide the soil from which metaphors spring forth in order to encapsulate a particular way of being human. Rather than viewing the self as fiction we would prefer to conceive of the illusion of self on the model of Emperor's New Clothes. We possess selves because this is a necessary illusion of human beings. We see each other as possessing selves and provide the necessary (and institutionally real) conditions to sustain the illusion. Illusion can of course be broken. The child's voice in the crowd who pointed out the Emperor's nudity cracked the social mirror. But this fable is an allegory, and to dispel an illusion is not to suggest that we can manage without illusions in the veridical world in which they do not exist (O'Connor & Hallman, 2009, p. 258).

This theory about what constitutes self is an open understanding of self, which suits the purpose of this study, according to my understanding. It implies that self is shaped in interaction between the personal and the conditions in the world and that self is something that is developing over time in an infinite process. This reasoning is considered to be in line with the understanding of how self-development processes occur in the rhythm of specialised self-definition and non-specialized self-definition (Todres, 2007). In the education of self-development, people discover more of their history, "the soil" from where they have developed their pre-understanding and their sense of self. According to the understanding in this thesis, during their education and their therapeutic

process, it is possible for participants to re-experience parts of their history, "nurturing their soil", integrating forgotten parts. Their "soil" is also enriched by integrating new theories about human understanding and experiences from participation in the processes of other people. Their own self will appear slightly different against a new background. This new self-understanding could also imply new understanding and new ways of experiencing the world. O'Connor and Hallam (2009) and their theory about the transformative self seems close to Sartre who criticised the idea of Husserl who spoke about two selves with different names, the empirical psychological self or a pure or transcendental ego with a unique first person access. When describing self, Sartre is describing self in terms of an illusion, the emergence of I and the need for magic in self-understanding (Sartre, 2004).

Ways of knowing

Polkinghorne (2004) discusses professional knowledge using the Aristotelian concepts of episteme, techne and phronesis referred to in the review of research previously in this thesis. He discussed what knowledge professionals need to have in practices of care and questioned an emphasis on technical rational views represented by sequenced manuals, instrumental problem-solving supported by scientific theories and tested techniques. He argues that this model has largely ignored the importance of phronesis, the kind of practical wisdom that includes the professional as an individual. Relational and dialogical aspects are involved, perceiving that the human relationship may be of great importance in how the work is done (Polkinghorne, 2004). In this thesis, the interest is to explore, through the notions of self-awareness and self-knowledge, what training that focuses on personal development may contribute with to professional knowing. For that purpose I have chosen the phenomenological life-world approach, an analytical frame with an integrative understanding of knowledge that allows for episteme, techne and phronetic forms of knowing. The life-world approach includes the personal experience and takes the subjective, the relational aspect of knowledge into account, as well as more cognitive and rational forms of knowing.

Knowing starts in experience

Husserl, the founder of the modern phenomenological movement was the first phenomenologist to mention the life-world. His project was to understand knowledge and he states that knowledge starts in experience. According to Bengtsson (1993 a) Husserl describes the life-world as pre-reflective and pre-

scientific which means that it is presupposed by science. Husserl's idea, in his philosophy of transcendental phenomenology, was that there was a pure consciousness behind the relativism and he developed the "epoché" as a philosophical method, a procedure of reflection in which the intention is to put existence in brackets. Later phenomenological and hermeneutic thinkers have questioned the epoché and the transcendental phenomenology, and argued that we never reach pure knowledge. According to the tradition of life-world phenomenology such as it is developed by Bengtsson, the world of experience is intertwined and not possible to reduce to an objective position. Experience in a practical situation is differentiated and complex with a richness in properties and types of properties (Bengtsson, 1993 a).

The personalized way of professional knowing is elaborated by Claesson (2009). She describes how professional development is not a uniform process, but often reflects the professional as a person. Teachers often develop their own style in the process of becoming a teacher and by using the concept of intentionality, or what she later calls "orientation", she describes how teachers often are oriented towards a certain field within their profession. What they see or experience as important in the situation is based on earlier experiences and a specific pattern can be identified in each person's way of interpreting the situations they are involved in. Some of the teachers in her study are mainly oriented towards issues like content, while others are oriented towards relational aspects within their profession. It is discussed how teachers develop certain patterns of acting in professional situations and certain ways of understanding their professional task in line with their personal pre-understandings and preferences (Claesson, 2009). In Claesson's research it is not said that those orientations are reflected on a conscious level of the professional, it may be part of a professional's natural attitude. However together with a researcher in a research process they may become increasingly aware of themselves in a process of distancing.

Self-awareness and self-knowledge

However, in this project with a life-world approach, I will refer to Bengtsson's thoughts from 1999 about the ambiguity of professional knowledge in that it always has both an objective and subjective aspect. Life-world is in a fundamental way ambiguous in that it is both an experience for me and a world that my consciousness is directed towards, as described by the notion of intentionality. A person's consciousness is intentional which means that consciousness is mostly oriented towards something other than itself. The

knowing of an object presupposes a subject to see, which means that the object and the subject are dependent on each other (Bengtsson, 1999).

According to Bengtsson, this ambiguity of experience can be described as both immanent and transcendent. Immanent means "inherent", which refers to the subjective experience in a situation, made through different perceptions of the body in the natural attitude. In this study, I have chosen to use self-awareness as a notion for this embodied aspect of knowing. Self-knowledge means the knowledge that I have about myself that is transcendent; it represents the knowledge I get when I break the natural attitude and reflect on myself and the situation as an object in the world. This experience is relational in that it always has a subjective, and an objective side (Bengtsson, 1993, 1999).

In the discussion about the nature of self-knowledge, it is considered that self-knowledge is different from knowledge in general, independent of weather there is a special locus for self-knowledge or if we gain knowledge about ourselves in the same way as we gain understanding about others (Bilgrami, 2006; Elliot, 2007; Shoemaker, 1996; Silva, 2011). The life-world approach maintains that there is no distinct status for consciousness of self above consciousness about the world; there is no separate locus for an transcendent understanding of self. As mentioned in the theory of intentionality consciousness about an object presupposes consciousness of the object. In this statement of O'Connor and Hallam's they refer to Sartre (1956) and his thinking in *Being and nothingness* where he poses that to know is to know that one is knowing. Sartre distinguishes between reflective consciousness and a pre-reflective consciousness (cogito). He argues that in pre-reflexive consciousness, the world is a factual reality, and I have no positional consciousness of being here in a certain place. This primary consciousness of consciousness is not positional because it is at one with the consciousness that it is conscious of. In this situation, perception and consciousness about perception is in line. O'Connor & Hallam continue to describe the implication of such a statement of Sartre and describe a situation when a person is unselfconscious, immersed in the world as in the natural attitude, where the boundaries of self and world overlap completely and existentially, but where separateness can be recovered simply by reflection (O'Connor & Hallam, 2009; Sartre, 1956/1969).

Further, elaborating on the possibility of self-knowledge in phenomenology, O'Connor & Hallam (2009) pose the idea that knowledge of self in a situation is gained through a shift in focus; when one is reflecting on oneself or when one reflects on other objects in the world. Every perception implies an object to be seen and a subject to see it, according to the theory of intentionality; but it can

be a question of redirecting perception. Consciousness can intentionally be directed towards oneself, making the self an object for reflection. Awareness of self, awareness of body, awareness of objects, awareness of space are all intertwined and all part of being in the world and part of the human existence (O'Connor & Hallam, 2009).

Embodied knowledge

The embodied aspect of knowledge and the importance of perception are described by Merleau-Ponty in his theory about the body as the central aspect of experiencing the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1962/2009). One example within professional research with a phenomenological life-world approach comes from Barnacle (2009) who points to the connection between mood and embodiment in practical situations through elaborating on the expression "gut instinct". She discusses the hierarchy of cognition in higher education at the cost of sensitivity and perception and she examines the question of which contributions non-cognitive modes of engagements, such as sensibility, have in supporting or delimiting the learning processes in higher education. She writes:

> Rationalistic conceptions of learning presume a model of the subject characterised by a rational mind presiding, hierarchically, over inert bodies. Embodiment is not considered epistemologically important. But can sensibility and perception really be dismissed that easily? Recent feminist scholarship is demonstrating that attending to physiology can open up new ways of understanding the various ways in which embodiment conditions everyday being-in-the-world (Barnacle, 2009, p. 23).

Referring to neuroscience, Barnacle aims to point out the entanglement of biochemistry, affectivity and the physiology of the internal organs. She takes the example of the gut, the connection between digestion and psychology, recognizing the link between mood and appetite. She means that the gut is initially attuned to the outside world; it is a vital organ in the maintenance of relations to others. Barnacle wonders what influence the gut have in orienting our thought towards or away from choosing certain topics and ideas. The influence of the gut in moderating mood or generating emotional responses is something that can be harnessed or utilized, particularly in regard to arousing interest in a topic. Other examples that she mentions of non-cognitive knowledge are such matters as understanding social norms, being aware of the limits of others. She argues that the distance in communication with others is negotiated in non-conceptual ways, involving the emotion, sensory-motor responses and perceptions in an embodied language rather than learned by verbal languages.

Barnacle (2009) further discusses different reasons for the primacy of reason before embodied knowing that has been advanced in the history of education. She refers to Descartes who problematized the deceptiveness of sensory experiences and St. Augustine, who talked about the corruptibility of the passions. For them, reason is a privilege due to its capacity to provide self-control and critical analysis. According to Barnacle, the purpose of re-thinking the relationship between mind and body is not to reverse the situation, giving embodiment a higher hierarchical position. She refers to Heidegger and his thoughts on higher education in which he warns of the technical rationality and the fragmentation of knowledge that is spreading in academia. According to Barnacle, he advocates human judgement in order to be sensitive to situations in practice

Integrated knowing – felt sense

In the previous text, the process of distancing and the reverse process of integration of knowledge into tacit embodied knowing was discussed by Bengtsson (1993), he gave the example of a sportsman. One way of understanding knowing and integration of new self-insight from therapy into embodied knowing comes from Todres (2007). The question is how an insight becomes a part of a person's everyday thought, feelings and actions. A liberating self-insight about something does not necessarily function in specific situations and although a liberating focus has occurred, it may not yet belong or be tacit to a person's functioning in everyday life. In understanding this process of integration Todres draws on notions of tacit understanding referring to Polanie (1996) and Dreyfus (1972) and to the notion of expert-knowledge described by Dreyfus (1986). The expert is a level of knowing where we are intimately familiar with a situation, where the specifics of a situation is tacitly informed by a background context of understanding that operates automatically without us having to remember or be conscious of the principles on which it is based (Polanie, 1996; Dreyfus, 1972; Dreyfus, 1986 as cited in Todres, 2007). Such tacit understanding is about having a "felt sense" and it is experienced as a whole and provides a ground from which to think and act from. As a result of the integration of a new self-understanding, the context for one's personal self-understanding broadens (Todres, 2007). In connection with the understanding of the transformative self in this study, it could be compared and be equated with the soil that provides the ground for new illusions of self, which may infinitely replace each other.

Knowing about others

In Schutz's (1967) theory about inter-subjectivity, he argues that a person can never understand the subjective experience of another, precisely in the same way as the other does. Since subjective knowledge is built up of lived experiences of the subject, to understand the subjective experience of another would imply that we have to be that person and have lived through the same experiences. According to him, as self is grounded in experience, you could never reach an understanding of another in the same way as you understand yourself. However, in genuine understanding of another we can intentionally grasp the other person's facial expressions and gestures as expressions of that person's inner life. According to Shutz, we have an advantage in that we can add another perspective; we can watch the other person's expressions as they appear, while the other person cannot see herself. Further he describes how there are possibilities in a face-to-face relationship to gain a more genuine understanding of the other through our perception of his or her bodily presence and expressions. We can intentionally grasp the other person's facial expressions and gestures as expressions of that person's inner life. The essence of Schutz' theory is that we sense the other person's stream of consciousness as it is temporally parallel with our own. The two flows of consciousness are synchronised, and in social interaction, they can become interlocked. This means that we share the same situation at a certain moment. These experiences are simultaneous but do not have the same content imply that we never fully know the inner life of the other person (Schutz, 1967).

> The simultaneity of our two streams of consciousness, however, does not mean that the same experience is given to each of us. My experience of you, as well as the environment I ascribe to you, bears the mark of my own subjective, Here and Now, and not of yours. Also I ascribe to you an environment which has already been interpreted from my subjective standpoint. I thus presuppose that at any given time we are both referring to the same objects, which transcend the subjective experience of either of us. This is so at least in the world of the natural attitude, the world of everyday life, in which one has direct experience of one's fellow men (p. 104)/.../I apprehend the lived experience of another only through signitive-symbolic representation, regarding either his body or some cultural artefact he has produced as a "field of expression" for those experiences (Schutz, 1967, p. 100).

He distinguishes between the genuine understanding of the other person and the abstract conceptualisation of the other, as an idealised type. As a type, is an impersonal way of understanding and the person is reduced to her function (Schutz, 1967).

Knowledge as inquiry in a context

Dall'Alba (2009 b) elaborates on the topic of how professional identity that we develop is influenced by the context. In our process of professional development, we are guided by the knowledge we find stimulating in our search for meaning and this process is influencing who we become as professionals. She refers to Heidegger's philosophy of existence in that we understand ourselves in terms of possibilities; we are continually in a process of becoming that is open-ended, never complete. Not only do we negotiate possibilities, we are already (oriented towards) what we are not yet. Dall'Alba argues that there could be several trajectories, along which we might develop in specific ways in line with our own choices; each person has an impact on her/his own development. While we have a range of possible ways of being, it matters to us who we are and who we are becoming (Dal'Alba, 2009). This means, according to Dall'Alba, that we do not avail ourselves of every opportunity. Rather, as our activities and projects shape our development, we are likely to adopt those opportunities that are consistent with, or advance our sense of self, while resisting those that undermine our sense of who we are. She argues that students, by taking up some possibilities and not others within the options available to them, they contribute to shaping and actualising their own development. This includes such things as selecting special courses, discussing with certain professionals, or certain friends, rather than others. Forming and shaping our own present and future in this way carries with it both anticipation and anxiety. Facing uncertainty and letting ourselves, and what we are, be challenged are all parts of the process of development. Dall'Alba argues that trying to live up to the expectations of others, contributes to the development of an inauthentic professional (Dall'Alba, 2009).

As well as the interest of our own development, restrictions at our workplace or in the educational setting have their impact on our development. Dall'Alba addresses this occurance with the concept of ambiguity, which is inherent in our relation to the life-world. She describes how we in situations sometimes are open to extending, or challenging, our familiar ways of understanding ourselves, or our understanding of certain aspects of the world. At the same time, we continue to be restrained by the possibilities available in the particular situations we inhabit, as well as by our past and by what we anticipate for the future. Dall'Alba claims that it is in this way that our development includes both continuity and transformation. She points out different ambiguities such as continuity-change; possibilities-constraints; openness-resistance; individuals-others. These are polarities that exist in all professional situations, according to her. Dall'Alba

gives an example of how students in a medical programme involve themselves in different parts of the programme, which commits them and orients them towards being professionals (Dall'Alba, 2009).

Knowing as embracing complexity

Connected to the above reasoning about ambiguities, a transpersonal understanding of human development is elaborated by Todres (2007). According to him, a shift in the process of self-defining, as well as in processes of self-loosening, leads to a greater ability to embrace ambiguity in the human realms. In this development, he distinguishes between personal integration and integration on the transpersonal level. On the personal level, it could be regarded as the transcendence of polarities of divided parts in our psychological functioning and self-understanding. Furthermore, the tension in the personal level is described as creative tension between the primordial and the social. On the transpersonal level, he describes how the tension can be stronger concerning existential matters such as the personal and the impersonal, the absolute and relative, all time and this moment. In this description, Todres prefers the notion of harmonising before integration, aiming to distinguish between a process of achieving a simple synthesis on the psychological level and insights on the transpersonal level that leads to a development in which the pluralities of life are understood. Discussing the integration of liberating self-insight into tacit understanding, new less fixed possibilities of self are seen and serve as helpful references, according to Todres. The new references may be held as a symbol or a metaphor or self-image and are enacted in different complex situation. In the case of spiritual awakening, the experience of "wholeness" in reflecting on "nothingness" serves as a helpful reference in other situations when difficulties may arise and the sense of separateness is strong (Todres, 2007).

The unity of self-world in professional knowledge

This relational approach to professional knowledge is not just a theoretical philosophical argument, according to O'Connor & Hallam (2009). Instead, it leads to practical consequences when shifting from thinking about self individually and thinking about what I as a professional person want to do, or are expected to do, in relation to the conditions within the profession situation. Approaching the profession from a relational position you have to ask yourself, "As this appears to me at this moment, what does that say about the situation? How come that I find myself in such a way that I do? This describes an awareness of the point that what I apprehend in the moment is just a part of

what happens in that situation. It is awareness that there are only parts of the world that I am aware of and that this awareness rests against a background. Professional knowledge, according to this understanding, is that the way something turns out also says something about the world via the prevailing mood. An example is given by O'Connor and Hallam illustrating how the experience of a room appears to me differently depending on my function in it. If I were on trial in a courtroom, I would experience the room differently than I would if I were brought into the same room to receive a prize. According to those researchers another way of understanding connected to the relational character of professional knowledge is that one only has a partial knowledge about matters that appear. The rest is hidden in the background but constitutes the condition for knowing at all. Properties of consciousness involve the ability to fill in missing parts or the thematic consciousness that connects reality into the internal horizon of the moment (O'Connor & Hallam, 2009).

Theoretical concepts in summary

In this chapter, a theoretical approach is described in how to understand what participants learn in training personal development with psychosynthesis as a method. The aim of this study is to explore in what way the process of gaining self-awareness and self-knowledge would change the relation between the professional and the professional situation. Would this knowledge enhance professional development? What are the changes that participants may undergo in relation to the different ways of understanding that are gained with the ontology described in the life-world theory?

- What are the changes that participants may undergo in relation to their natural attitude? One answer is an awareness of different ways to participate in a situation. The participant may be immersed in the situation, being at one with the situation, trusting embodied knowing, immersed in the natural attitude. In this situation self-awareness is possible in that you may give attention to embodied experience in a situation. It is also possible to transcend the situation through gaining knowledge about self and other aspects of the situation, breaking the natural attitude through a process of reflection. It is a participation that could be described in terms of closeness and distance, also expressed as immanent transcendence (Bengtsson, 1993 a, 1999).
- The theory of lived body includes different aspects such as the possibility of gaining a perspective on the matter, perceiving and acting, contact with

feelings, insights about the use of subjectivity and intuitive knowing trusting the "somatic compass" (Barnacle, 2009; Finlay, 2011).

- Schutz' theory of social and inter-subjective relation in terms of closeness and distance is used. A distinction is made in the research between genuine understanding of another through personalized face-to-face relationships and more objectified ways of relating. In objectified ways of relating, individuals are typified; they are generalized to a function in a They-orientation. Empathy is based on the idea that you can never understand another person fully, as self is grounded in experience (Schutz, 1967).

- According to the conceptual pair authenticity-inauthenticity, a person may follow his quest developing a unique professional identity through self-defining processes. Self-knowledge thus involves being aware and trusting our own preferences and what matters to us. The development towards authenticity is guided by an experience of meaning and moods. Anxieties are important in that they communicate how we find ourselves in relation to the quest of developing authenticity. A change may occur in a person's self-understanding that may influence how to perceive and respond in professional practice. Learning in relation to authenticity – inauthenticity is about deconstruction and de-learning from socially categorized identifications and ways of being. Knowledge is dependent on the projects that are about to be (Brooks, 2009; Claesson, 2004; Dall'Alba, 2009; Mulhall, 2005).

- Concerning the transpersonal dimension and human openness, participants may experience changes in terms of openness in relation to the world. They may have developed an awareness of the potential in participating in processes of reflection, of dwelling in the realm of "nothingness" and in the experience of "wholeness" that can be sensed when taking a step back from self-defining processes. Connected with the transpersonal dimension, a development toward "embracing ambiguity" was also described, which means an increased awareness and understanding of the paradoxes in life-world (Todres, 2007).

Chapter 7

Method

Methodological considerations

According to the reported results of Yalom and his co-workers, there are some common factors that participants of this study might be expected to have learned, such as the experience of being more self-aware concerning patterns and responses, concerning their own value for others, social competence, awareness of their own identity etcetera (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). It is also to be expected that there will be a transformation of the self, according to the results reported from self-development groups in manager development, but that it is difficult to maintain those changes when coming back to the organisation (Andersson, 2010; Derefelt, 1975; Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). Explanations of those difficulties have revolved around the length of the training and the reception back at the workplace. In studies concerning the impact of self-development (reviewed in Chapter 4) there is little evidence that others, for instance clients or students, would gain from this kind of professional education (Andersson, 2010; Payne, 1999). Another reason mentioned for not maintaining the changes from self-development groups has been the length of the courses. It could be that it is necessary to work with self-development during a longer period in order to integrate insights in a durable way. Evidently, even the design of the research is of importance for what is possible to comprehend in the result.

This study aims to conduct a qualitative exploration of what it is like to be professional after at least two years training in personal development; the experiences of each person will be taken into consideration. In this study, the influence of self-development is explored through the changed experience of professionals in their situation at work. Professionals are asked to give examples of situations, which they experience differently after participation in the training. In order to answer my research question, I have used a phenomenological-hermeneutical way of research in understanding the unique experience of each person. According to the phenomenological element the ambition is to describe the individual experience as closely as possible. Through the hermeneutical element, the ambition is to make interpretations and to gain an understanding, using the theoretical frame of the life-world (Bengtsson, 1999). The aim is to

understand how being professional with self-awareness and self-knowledge, such as it is developed in a programme of Psychosynthesis, is expressed in professional situations. The experience of each person will contribute to the understanding of how it is to be a professional with self-awareness and self-knowledge.

Interview

In order to answer the question of this study, the method of interviewing was chosen for gathering data. The interview method is considered to be one way of studying lived experience and it is acknowledged as a good way to reach insight into how persons understand their world and life. An advantage compared to observations is that in interviews one can talk about events that are not present when the interview is done. The aim of an interview research is to return from the qualitative study with a story that gives justice to the interviewees' stories. The aim is also to communicate new knowledge and insights to those who read the story(Kvale, 1996). In this study, stories concerning the experience of being professional with self-knowledge and self-awareness are illuminated by examples given by the participants of the study from situations at work describing changes in the relation between professional and its practice.

The interest of this study is to find out what participants learn in psychosynthesis education, which they find useful. It is reasonable to expect that what interviewees say, reflects what they experience (Kvale, 1996). It is also reasonable to expect that the theories of the training are possible to trace in the manner participants describe themselves. The experience and pre-understanding of the researcher is also a crucial part in this study. Experience of the field of professional development in teacher education, as well as within personal development as a psychosynthesis therapist can offer a good grounding to understanding the researched area.

The intention in this study is to give a rich phenomenological description of how self-awareness can be expressed in professional contexts. However, how reliable are the stories told by the respondents? Can people describe their own development and will it be possible to say anything about their development? The experiences that are described are reflected upon and are not a direct expression of a lived experience. Further, the lived experience may be transformed through the process of transcription. In studying lived experience and lived meaning, the interview is considered to be an adequate format, since it provides the possibility of approaching people's experiences of situations at work. However, we need to be aware that there is a difference between the

actual experience and the stories that we are told in the situation of the interview (van Manen, 1990). According to Bengtsson (1999), an interview can be seen as a third degree of construction. The first construction occurs when interviewees' lived experience reflects on and interprets his/her experience. When this interpretation then is expressed in words, there is a second level of distancing. The third distance occurs when the researcher analyses and interprets the interviewee (Bengtsson, 1999).

There are further critical questions that may be asked. How do we know whether participants learned a set of new theories and a new language or if there actually is a change in their professional practice? What happens in their everyday life at work? With this design, I will only be able to account for what they say about how they experience themselves. It is not possible to tell anything about whether a personal change comes into expression at their workplace.

There are further questions when it comes to validating the result in an interview study of what is being said. How likely is it that the participants give a true and fair view of them and not say what they think the researcher wants to hear? According to Kvale, there are two ways, either one can use different co-assessors and compare the interpretations or one can make a thorough description of the research process and exemplify the interpretations are with excerpts from the interview material (Kvale, 1996). In this study, I have used excerpts from the interviews and described the procedures.

In a third way of validating the results of a qualitative study, participant validation is often used. All respondents were asked if they wanted to read a transcript of their interview, but all declined on the grounds that they trusted me as a researcher to handle their statements in a proper way. The relevance of participant validation is also discussed in phenomenological research. Finlay (2011) argues that in phenomenological research we do not claim to seek "a truth", which can be verified. Instead, we acknowledge that findings are produced in a specific context, which influences the result. She also argues, that the value of participatory validation has been over-emphasised and that participants maintain an interpretation that they prefer.

The participants of this study were asked to select some situations from their professional sphere; this created a new ground for applying their insights, which I perceive could prevent repetitions of old truths in the educational discourse of personal development. The interview had the character of a reflective dialogue focusing on the research questions and how self-awareness and self-knowledge in their profession was expressed. This means that I tried to find a balance between being unstructured and structured in establishing a dialogue around the

insights in psychosynthesis that had made a change in their experience of professional life. At the same time as I tried to be with the interviewee, I had an eye on the phenomena at hand in accordance with Dahlberg's research, previously mentioned. Questions were formulated to help me as an interviewer to follow the topic, but it also gave the respondent the possibility to answer freely. My pre-understanding as a researcher on the subject of professions came to my rescue several times when the respondents hesitated, searching for situations where they had achieved a new understanding. We could then discuss what generally might be involved in the professional task of different professions and typical issues of each profession, such as expectation of the profession, conflicting situations, professional culture, etc. In that process, I had to restrict myself, or as the concept of bridling suggests, hold myself back so as not to ask leading questions (Dahlberg, et al., 2008).

Research procedure

In order to attain the answers of the research-questions of this study, the education in psychosynthesis was given from the beginning. The training fulfilled several criteria that seemed relevant such as: 1) The length of the education which has a duration of two to four years, which is of greater length than the previously studied training programmes, reported in the section on previous research. 2) It is a part time education, which means that participants normally stay in their profession at the same time as taking part in this education. Consequently, we have a situation where it can be assumed that there is a possibility that new knowledge can be integrated into everyday life. 3) The recruitment of students is open to a wider range of professionals than the education in personal development for professionals offered within the health sector. In this study, that is seen as an advantage as the interest of this study is to address a wider range of professional groups than those who belong to the school-sector.

A proper amount of interviewees in a phenomenological study is around 3-6 persons. With this amount of participants the result is not possible to generalize, but it is sufficient to attain the variation that is needed in order to achieve a rich understanding of what self- awareness and self-knowledge might be about. A variation in ages, in gender or different working experiences or cultural background could be of value (Dahlberg, et al., 2008; Kvale, 1996; Larking, 2009). In this study, six persons were considered as enough and they have all participated in more than two years of psychosynthesis training. The length of time they have spent in the training varies from two to four years, which may be

considered as part of the intended variation. The aim of this study is to find qualitative dimensions, rather than comparing degree of development. Participants also represent different professional disciplines and this was considered to contribute to enough variation. The procedure of selecting participants started with a letter of invitation that was sent to all the students studying at a particular institute. A number of 42 out of 214 responded positively and then a choice was made among these according to the criteria mentioned above.

The interviewed persons

Lena 57 works in her profession as a headmistress in a unit organising day-care activities before and after school for pupils up to twelve years at the intermediary level within the Swedish school system. Her basic professional education is in teaching at the intermediate level of school. She has taken part in a full programme of psychosynthesis involving a diploma education as a psychosynthesis therapist. After some years of practicing as a therapist, she returned to school.

Anders 45 is educated in technical engineering and this is his profession; he works as manager in an organisation in various leading positions. He has undertaken four years of psychosynthesis training and received a diploma as a psychosynthesis therapist some years ago.

Anna-Greta 55 works as a manager and a project leader within the social service. She has an academic education in social work. She is in the beginning of her professional training to be a psychosynthesis therapist. She had just attended the first weekend of that training at the time of the interview.

Elsa 37 has a teacher education for the intermediary level of school and works part time as a teacher in school. At the time of the interview Elsa had entered the third year of psychosynthesis training (she had participated in the first weekend of year three) of her professional training to be a therapist.

E**sie 63,** in her profession as a supervisor in social service, she supervises professionals working with rehabilitation. She has been taking part in the two-year training in personal development and the three terms of the organisational programme of psychosynthesis, learning how to "work creatively with groups".

Kristina 63 has a long experience of teaching in different school systems. Her teacher education is from a folk high school seminar (independent adult education college). Since some years back, she practices psychosynthesis therapy in the health team at the residential school.

The psychosynthesis education

The education studied in this thesis is a course in personal development within the tradition of psychosynthesis. The pedagogy used in exploring the self includes experiential group work, interpersonal groups and study groups as part of the work, but also reflection through reflective writing, inner dialog and introspection, symbolic drama, symbolic drawing, visualisations and theoretical study. An obligatory requirement for the participation in the training is 25 individual therapy sessions each year. The professional parts of the education, in year 3-4, have an experiential focus; methods and theory are also studied. The structure of the programme consists of two years with personal development and a further two years for professional training, becoming either a therapist or a coach/leader. Each year contains eight weekends and a summer school. Between the weekends, the students write assignments concerning their personal experiences in relation to theoretical insights. The theory of psychosynthesis and the thematic content is specifically presented in Chapter 4.

The interview guide

The interview-guide focused on the following areas in order to attain a rich picture of the story of each person, including personal and professional development.

1. Make a short description of your occupation.
2. What was the situation that led you to enter this training?
3. What were your expectations of this training?
4. a) What insights did you make during the education?
   b) If there were any insights, did these insights contribute to how you carry out your work nowadays?
   Can you give one or two concrete examples, from your work setting, of situations that you now handle in a different way (in a manner in line with psychosynthesis)?
5. a) Did the training in psychosynthesis give you what you expected?
   b) If there are differences from what you expected, is it possible to verbalise what that might be?

Preparing the interview

The psychosynthesis institute, where they had taken part of their education, was chosen as surroundings for the interviews. One exception was Anders, who I visited in his home for an interview of around one and a half hours, during the

autumn of 2008. All participants in this study showed a willingness to share their experiences and each interview was informative. The interviews were tape-recorded and the interviewees seemed to enjoy speaking about their insights. I also experienced that the interview had the effect that that the interviewees were "brought closer to the phenomena and that they experienced that they expanded their awareness" (p. 185) as Dahlberg et al. put it concerning how they used their new insights (Dahlberg, et al., 2008).

My experience from the interviews is that the respondents seemed skilled in talking about themselves and that they selected a few changes and aspects in relation to their experience, not trying to include everything. Transcription was carried out soon after the interview. The intention in this study was to make a description rather than critically trying to detect something beyond the text. In consideration to this purpose, I decided that there was no need, to transcribe all the pauses and hums among the questions and answers (Kvale, 1996).

The analytical process and recording the result

This study uses a life-world approach in researching lived experiences in relation to their professional world. A phenomenological life-world approach means an combination of openness to the individual experience of the interviewee and a theoretical frame of reference (Bengtsson, 1999).

The lived experiences of professional situations constitute the empirical ground for this study and open up a new area, unexplored for both researcher and respondent. The first step in the hermeneutic process was to read through the transcribed interviews thoroughly several times trying to get a hold on the whole material. Interesting areas were marked such as the examples and the most important insights. Later I coloured each interview according to person, cutting out descriptions of situations and important insights in an attempt to find common units among the participants. A comparative step was undertaken where similarities and differences between the experiences were noted. In this work, an insight grew that it did not make sense to separate between personal and professional changes and that the individual experiences should be described in portraits. The professional changes were strongly contrasted to earlier experiences in work-life and needed to be seen in the light of the insights about self. Portraits were then constructed inspired by a narrative way of representing the participants' experiences. Narrative stories are often used in qualitative studies and in phenomenology and intends to create a coherent story of the many events and situations told in interview (Berntsson, 2001; Hugo, 2007; Öhlén, 2000). There are selected citations from the interviews and from the

interaction between the researcher and the interviewee's voice. These portraits tell the story of each participant and include the participants' experiences before, during and after an event or education. I, as the researcher, have made some secondary analysis identifying most important insights, significant metaphors of change and experiences that were told from professional situations. Quotations from the interviews are used in order to make the narrative alive and give evidence, but I have chosen to leave out the researcher's questions in order to make the narrative more fluent. Following this, I have constructed a narrative of each person and I have used the everyday language of the interviewees as far as possible in order to stay close to the lived experience (van Manen, 1990).

In the second part of the research process, a phenomenological thematic analysis was made, based on the portraits. Three themes were identified in the professional situations that were mentioned in the interviews and in the insights reported as useful in the profession. Common expressions and meaning structures were sorted out and were tested against each other in several steps. In this second step, three themes appeared as relevant, creating a structure of meaning in the phenomena of self-awareness and self-knowledge in professions.

In the third part of the results there is a theoretical analysis in which professional changes are described in accordance with this abstract level. The most difficult part in this analytical process was to decide when and to what extent the theoretical frame of the life-world was allowed to be used.

Method discussion

My intention from the beginning was to avoid a situation of evaluating the training in psychosynthesis. My ambition was to try to understand what happened in an education similar to the psychosynthesis training. I had the experience myself that the training had brought changes to my personal life and I also had the experience from my client-work that the clients found ways to understand themselves and to go on living in a more open way. Warnings about the risk of being normative have followed this study from the first day. The action that I found most helpful in lessening this risk has been the design of the research in itself; not asking whether the education was good or bad, instead designing research questions and interview-guides with questions about situations which participants experienced differently. This study assumes that the education makes a difference, but it is not assumed that the differences are good or bad. The different steps in the hermeneutical interpretation start close to the experiences told in the interviews and thus a deepened understanding is reached.

All the interviewees in this study described changes in the way they dealt with a variety of situations in their profession after participating in the psychosynthesis training. They discussed important responses, knowledge and insights that they had achieved, which they now use in their professional practice. The participants in this study had all chosen to continue the psychosynthesis training after the personal development course and thereby made it a more professional choice. One can assume that they were committed to the idea of the training, which was mentioned to be important for their learning (Poutiatine, 2005). Also, the participants in the psychosynthesis training pay a high fee and it is likely that this circumstance contributes to the level of commitment. All those factors might contribute to the ways the participants express their experiences.

I would also like to comment on the heterogeneity of the interviewed participants. Amongst the group, the length of their education differed; some were in their third year, others had taken a full programme with a diploma for therapist or as an organizational guide. There were also differences in the time that had passed since they took part in the training. There are different explanations to this heterogeneity. The first plan for this study was to focus on teachers as a professional group. An invitation was sent out and there came three answers from teachers that wanted to participate in this study, which I found was too few for a study like this. In all, 214 persons had taken part in the training at this particular institute, 33 occupations were represented among these, which implies that a quite small group participated in this training. Then I planned to turn to other institutes in Europe; contacts were taken with England and Amsterdam. After comparing the educations and their set-up, they were found to be quite different. The decision then was to invite other professional groups than teachers and to accept a difference in the amount and length of personal development. There has been no ambition to compare the degree of development or to identify different insights according to the length of education.

Part of the selection process was the choice of this particular programme of education, the psychosynthesis training as such, which has a design that could fulfil the condition for learning and integration, considering the length of education and the style of leadership. Yalome showed in his research that all these factors were beneficial to the outcome of personal development (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005)Other reasons for the positive result could be that the method of psychosynthesis has a broad integrative approach, being capable of meeting each individual in their difficulties from the very start, continuing throughout the

training. The research method of this project allows for differences in how the participants perceive their gained knowledge. The results showed different developmental trajectories for each person, but there were also similarities in the sense that each person had a life pattern, which they learned to perceive and understand.

Ethical considerations

Concerning ethical considerations the first and overriding issue of the researcher to consider is the research objectives and the intended consequences for the participants (Kvale, 1996). In this study, the information is not considered to be of such a character that it may harm the interviewee. If the study aims to increase the scientific knowledge and promote the human situation, it is usually considered to be justified. The ethical principles are covered by the ethical guidelines of the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet, 2008).

The principle of consent demands that participants are informed of the purpose of the study. In this study, a letter of invitation was sent out, where the purpose of the study was declared with a description of the procedure. It was stated in the invitation that participants would have the right to stop their participation at any time. A signed letter of consent was obtained. The principle of confidentiality demands a process in which the material is anonymized.

Concerning confidentiality the interviews, the identity of the participants was made anonymous; they were given new names and new ages. The principle of confidentiality also covers rules for how research material is to be stored. In this case, tapes, interview transcripts and self-assessments are stored (by the researcher) in agreement with the participants. The interviewees are portrayed in such a way that even if the portraits narrate personal stories, the stories are not told in a private manner and may not be considered too revealing. From an ethical point of view, one can say that the interviewees shared sensitive experiences and experiences from their lives. One concern might be that individuals could be identified because of the relatively small group of psychosynthesis students. However my experience of the research interview was that the participants were accustomed to talk about themselves and that they have learned to talk about themselves in a personal way, without revealing too much private detail. My aim as a researcher has been to further reduce the risk of recognition by portraying each individual on a general human level keeping focus on the research question.

PART III

Chapter 8

Results – Portraits

The purpose of this study is to explore how self-knowledge and self-awareness, gained through participation in psychosynthesis training, influences the participant's professional life. A point of interest is to find out if self-knowledge influences how professionals experience their work. In interviews, professionals are asked to give examples of situations from their professional life, which they experience differently since they participated in psychosynthesis training. These situations may illustrate whether self-awareness and self-knowledge is used. Through the analytic process, it has become apparent that different persons learn different things and have different issues to deal with. In reading and re-reading each interview a structure has emerged, which I find useful in presenting the results. As the purpose of this study concerns the question of how the understanding of self influences experiences of professional life, it seems necessary to include each person's personal process in order to describe the feature of personal development in connection with professional development. So how is it possible to be sure that those insights are a result coming from the training? The answer to this question is not a clear-cut yes or no. It is not possible to exclude other circumstances in life that may influence how they experience situations at work. Several participants changed work, gave birth, lost their jobs; all these events created changes in life. Interpretations of interviews refer to what informants say with their own words and are able to express. In the education in personal development, the chance is given to challenge and problematize pre-understandings of oneself. The goal of the education is that each person is given the opportunity to reflect and to identify a wound, and a survival strategy in relation to his or her story according the theories around personal development within the psychosynthesis method. Seen from a life-world perspective, through the process of reflection each person has become aware of some of their beliefs, values and intentions that earlier were taken for granted in his or her natural attitude. Their experiences will then be at the heart of their pre-understanding and will affect their subjectivity and their interpretation of situations in life. The aim of this study is to explore whether self-knowledge, as it is developed in this training, will be reflected in the professional life of the portrayed persons. Those portraits will primarily focus on

professional changes, but some personal changes are described since they are pointed out by the participants as having a major influence on their development. Each portrait will reflect an aspect of what it means to be a professional with self-knowledge and self-awareness. The experiences of each person will contribute to the understanding of "self-knowledge and self-awareness in professions" that is presented in chapter 9. Throughout the analysis of the interviews, it is obvious that there is a variation in what people learn. Each person picks up different things about themselves and draws conclusions according to their specific understanding of themselves.

Structure of the portraits

These portrays are interpretations that use a narrative form of representing the experiences that were told in the interviews by each participant and include the experiences of the participants before, during and after an event or an education. I as the researcher I have made some secondary analysis identifying such matters as the most important insights, significant metaphors of change and experiences of professional situations. Following this, I have constructed a narrative of each person and I have used the everyday language of the interviewees as far as possible in order to stay close to the lived experience in accordance with Manen (1990). Citations from the interviews are used in order to make the narrative alive but I have chosen to leave out the researcher's questions in order to make the narrative more fluent. However, the reader may be aware that there is a difference between the life-story of the individual, and the one that is told by the participant. It is reasonable to believe that a person's story is influenced by what the participants want to be presented about themselves. Another influence is what the researcher perceives as significant and chooses to write about (Finlay, 2011). In order to make it easier to compare them, they are structured in the following way. The participants have not taken part in the process of constructing the portraits.

Presentation and motives for beginning

This section of the portrait describes the situation experienced by the participants at the outset of the training. It may include private as well as professional experiences.

Most important insights

During the interview each participant is asked to point out express their most important which is presented in this section.

Exploration of the self

In this section of the portrait, the main content of each person's process during the education is described. Initial patterns are presented as well as the transformation experienced by the participant in the development process.

Professional self

In this section of the portrait, situations from professional practice that participants experience as changed are exemplified.

Summary

This section concludes the reported insights that participants find useful in their profession.

Lena 57

Lena works as a headmistress at a school in a rural area in the south of Sweden. She organizes nursery school and classes on an elementary and intermediate level. She is a qualified teacher for the intermediate level and has work experience from 15 years in a multicultural school. She mentions that from the beginning, she started psychosynthesis training for personal reasons. She wanted to understand more about her own emotional life. Until the start of the psychosynthesis training, Lena says that she had a cognitive understanding of herself, but she did not feel psychologically (mentally) well. So far in life, according to Lena, her strategy to overcome difficulties was to read literature in her endeavour to understand problematic issues. During the past years, she has taken part in an extensive amount of academic courses. Previously, when she did not feel well, she tried out different treatments among alternative medicine; in one of these treatments, she came across psychosynthesis. Lena tells me that she had very few expectations of any specific outcome of this training; although, ever since she was young, she was interested in understanding people. When the training started, other changes were going on connected to her professional life. After fifteen years employment at the same school, she moved to a new situation at a different school. In her new position, she was critical of how things were handled at this school. According to Lena's understanding of the situation, the consequence of this was that she lost her job. She describes how this period was a time when she questioned many things in life. She describes the first years of psychosynthesis training, as a place to learn about her small private world. Later, when she started the professional part of psychosynthesis training, she found it very meaningful to be able to help others. Five years ago, she wanted to try out a

position as headmistress. Her purpose was to challenge herself, to work with groups of people, and she found that leading people in a school organisation would provide such an opportunity. During this period, she had finished her education in personal development and practiced some years as a therapist in Psychosynthesis. In this portrait, the professional experiences that are referred to, come from her employment as a headmistress.

Most Important insights

The most important matter that Lena mentions having learnt from the training is that she has found peace within herself. She considers that she has come to peace with herself and her emotional life, which also was her main reason for entering this training. She says:

> I have found peace with myself. Perhaps it sounds airy-fairy, but it is very serious for me. I do not question myself, in the way I did before. Today I have a situation in which I enjoy life; it has not always been like that. Previously, I always had a backdoor open. Life felt heavy.

Lena describes how she no longer takes things as personally as she did before. She considers that this change is helpful in her leading position and leads to more realistic expectations of herself and she can allow herself to make mistakes.

> Now, I do not have the same demands on myself; this is probably a part of my feeling of tranquility. I am not a superhuman; I can accept that I am human and that I can make mistakes. My ambition is still to do my best at all times, but this does not always come true, which is easier to put up with nowadays.

Lena's experience of tranquillity is connected to several insights about herself, which she made during the education. So what was it that Lena came to understand about herself, which made her life less heavy and easier to live?

Exploring the Self

The models that Lena refers to in the interview, which were helpful in developing self-knowledge during the education in psychosynthesis, are the models of sub-personality and primal wound. These models are used in the education, when exploring how the personality is developed in connection with early relationships and to understand how survival strategies can be developed. Other models that Lena makes use of, in the understanding of herself and the environment, are the concepts of shadow and dark sub-personalities; these concepts are used in the education in order to explore hidden qualities in the personality. Lena's developmental process is described below.

Initial pattern

When viewing her life through reflections arising from different exercises within the pedagogy of experiential learning, she came to realize that she was a very idealistic person, wanting to make a difference in the world. Regarding her life in retrospect, she could observe herself as a person constantly involved in different engagements and projects under the theme of "saving the world"; in economic, political and environmental movements. Lena identified and explored a strong part in herself, which she calls the "truth-teller". She describes this as follows:

> I was a truth-teller, like the child in the Emperor's new clothes. Even as a child, in my family, I was a truth-teller, sometimes that made things worse. Adults do not always want to hear those truths.

Lena describes how she often had arguments with her family, saying things they did not want to hear. With her idealistic views, her engagement and her theoretical understanding gained from all those courses, she also had considerable expectations of others, always knowing better alternatives of how things should be. The result was that she could be sharp towards them. When people became angry in response to her, she started to question herself and it was a burden to carry those feelings inside. In Lena's description of herself, she implicitly expresses the dynamics, which may be described by the model of sub-personality.

Unique child

What was the reason behind this pattern in life, according to Lena? In the interview, Lena mentions that her personal process, in much, was a matter of her relation to her parents. She came to understand that during childhood she felt unseen; not seen as the unique child, valuable in her own right. The family was successful in an outer sense, but emotionally Lena felt abandoned. She says:

> My experience was that even if I was a welcome child, my parents had tried to have a child for a long time, I did not experience that they really saw me during my childhood. Their own needs were great and my task became to fulfil their needs, not mine. I really do not feel I had any parents. They gave me food and housing, but they could not meet my emotional needs in a grown up responsible way. Instead, I had to take care of them. Later when I entered school, it was the same. I was a gifted child, but I was not met on my own level. I experienced elementary school as very boring. I have a few memories in later years, when I was seen as a unique person. During such periods, school was enjoyable.

In Lena's case, the sub-personality, which she called the truth-teller, was connected with her, at that time, unconscious need to be seen. Telling the truth was part of her survival-strategy to be seen, which could motivate why the "truth

teller" could be a bit insensitive to other people and awaken their reactions. These explorations have been helpful to Lena, in becoming self-aware about a pattern that was part of her un-reflected natural attitude.

From "naivety" to "maturity"

What appears as the main transformation in Lena's process is the transformation from naivety to maturity. Lena expresses how the strong but naïve part of her personality, now identified as the "truth-teller", could get her into difficult situations. She exemplifies this with a situation from work, where she came into conflict with her superior. She thinks now, when reflecting on her own part of the situation, that the" truth-teller" could render her problems, when coming from her sharp idealistic point of reference.

> I think I naively said things, asked questions, which made my principle feel criticised. I was not aware of it at that time, but I was severely punished after this. In connection with a reduction of workforce, I was fired.

The naivety lay in not understanding how her "truth-teller" could hurt others and make others feel criticised. As described above, Lena had a strong talent in telling the truth and she was also brave in doing it, even if it sometimes felt like a heavy thing to do. Lena has come to understand that this part of her personality was developed as a response to unmet needs from her childhood. She has always been proud of being a "truth-teller" and having the courage to stand up to conflicts. Another consequence of such a pattern might have been that a person became quiet, in order to avoid the reactions of people, but that was not the case for Lena. Instead, she had to pay the price of having self-doubts, in response to people's reactions.

> The difference today is that I feel calmer inside. I can see a wider picture than what appears in the actual situation. I can set things in a broader perspective.

The strategy she had used so far to overcome this feeling was to study, with the purpose of learning and understanding theoretically what is right and wrong in difficult situations. With her new awareness, she learned about her emotional involvement and other motives behind the truth-telling part of her. Aware of this hidden dynamics, she learned to choose when this part was allowed to be active. By recognising this pattern, she has opened up for other strategies of coping with situations, other than using the "truth-teller".

Another aspect of the transformation of the self, from a "naïve" to a "mature" understanding of what is at stake in a situation, comes from the work of exploring hidden qualities of the self, through the models of shadow and dark

sub-personalities in the education. This was one of the points learnt by Lena; it became apparent when I asked the question of whether she had learned something unexpected from the education. She says:

> I did not have any clear picture or expectation of what it would be like. I have taken in everything I could. Well, if there was something I have learned that was not expected, it was that even well-educated psycho-synthesis people have their dark sides.

According to my interpretation, this is a statement that confirms how Lena's understanding of others has changed. It seems as if Lena's tendency of idealising has eased, as well as her need of creating the perfect world; she sees more of the individual and is now more realistic in her expectations of others and of herself. No person is perfect and that insight lessens her own demands on herself. Understanding this insight from a life-world perspective, using the concept of typifying, idealisations and expectations indicate a distance in the relationship with others. That distance prevented her from meeting others as unique individuals. In the process of typification, some characteristics come forth into the foreground and what we see, is not the whole person. We see what we ascribe to that person or what we expect. In a professional context, we see what we expect of that professional function. This type is not the whole person, it cracks and something else emerges. On the other hand, to meet as unique individuals in a face-to-face relationship is an encounter without ascribing your own subjective expectations and interpretations; it is a situation of being aware that this person can never be the same as you. In Lena's case, as a mature person with self-knowledge, it appears that she has increased her ability to create realistic and authentic relationships with others.

By understanding the earlier hidden dynamics between herself and the world, she can consciously monitor herself and stay open to others, responding according to what is relevant in the situation. She expresses this, in saying that she gained a wider picture, when meeting others. In her unreflected natural attitude, it could be said that Lena is involved in, what phenomenologists call, intertwinements in her relation to the world. Through a greater awareness of her own part, along with a process of maturation, she has arrived at a new point of reference. This opens up other perceptions and responses in her, offering new possibilities of acting. Lena can even consciously choose to defend herself, if she feels the need to protect herself from heavy feelings.

Professional self

The change that Lena mentions in relation to her professional life could be summarized as "standing one's ground – attaining a broader picture". Lena

experiences herself as more mature and she gives some examples from her professional life, illustrating how she experiences things differently from this position.

Personal vision

Lena has a personal vision in her leadership. This vision is connected with her personal experience. She has always wanted to make a difference; to make a difference in school means to create a school environment, which allows each child to be seen as unique. In her opinion, it is important for children to have fun in school. She says:

> To me it is most important that the pupils are seen as unique individuals in school. It is important that they are met, cognitively and emotionally, according to their personal need.

Lena has deepened her awareness of personal values in professional work, something that contributes to her authority as a professional. According to the reasoning about authority, professionals who are motivated by their own values are more secure in their professional practice. Work becomes meaningful, if it is grounded in deeper values. Lena says:

> It has always been important for me to have a meaningful job, but now it is even more important. To me it is meaningful to make a difference. It is a challenge to see if it is possible to make a difference, within the scope of a school organisation.

Connected with Lena's expression of "standing one's own ground", Lena also includes the importance of trusting her own unique style as a leader. With this, she means her own unique style of responding to others, but also of being sensible of the needs of others.

> It is important to find your own unique style. I think it is essential to have a style of your own and not to try to copy others. I have also become aware that different people want to meet different parts of me. To be able to respond to that need makes encounters easier, both in creating trust and in being able to communicate constructively.

Lena says that she has learned to trust her unique style, but that is not the same as not being able to respond to others in a smooth way, according to what the situation needs. With Lena's process of learning about the dynamics of her strong sub-personality of the truth-teller, other parts of her have become available to her. This is a process of change, which could be expected according to the psychosynthesis theory. In the development of the self, from having a point of reference of the "naïve", towards acquiring a point of reference of being

"mature", it seems as though Lena is more able to discriminate between different qualities in her responses to others. These changes indicate that Lena is different from what she was previously and has developed self-awareness.

Separating myself from others

Lena tells how she, in her profession as a headmistress, feels freer in her relationship with others; she does not feel so enmeshed within the organisation. Further, she does not have to take responsibility for other people's action, in the same way as she did before. She describes a difference in how she meets the staff. On the individual level, Lena describes:

> It does not trouble me to confront difficult issues, to recommend therapy or anything like that, if it is needed. Without psychosynthesis, this would have been more difficult. I came to the understanding that people are much greater than their problems and I trust that the issue coming up is a challenge on their life-journey.

In working with herself, Lena says that she has made the insight that problems are something to learn from; that they are challenges leading to development. Confronting her own difficulties makes Lena more secure. This is one of the explicit assumptions of the psychosynthesis education; this attitude appears to have been useful to Lena in her professional life. It makes her more secure in handling difficulties in relation to others. As it is an explicit assumption of the psychosynthesis programme, it is difficult to say whether she has acquired this knowledge on a cognitive level, or whether it is integrated in her experience, in her lived body, through her new feeling of tranquillity. However, it could also constitute a change in Lena's emotional life, giving consequences for how Lena perceives the world in her relation to others. Seemingly, there have been changes in Lena's subjectivity, her immanent awareness, which implies changes in the transcendent aspect, her point of reference from where she sees the world. Her feelings of easiness and her sense of having a broader picture could be an example of development both in transcendent aspects and in immanent aspects. Tranquillity is experienced in relation to the world.

Challenging the culture

Lena recounts a situation on the collective level, where she had to challenge her staff, while standing her ground in her own position. According to Lena, they did not really take on their professional responsibility, or trust themselves as professionals. In the neighbourhood of this school, there were many powerful parents and the staff avoided making changes, in fear of being, opposed by those parents. In Sweden, those children who have a parent staying at home during the daytime, only stay fifteen hours a week at nursery school. Lena wanted to change

that tradition, but it was an infected area to deal with. Lena relates the situation like this:

> It was an issue about a special group of children; we call them 15-hour children. The thing was that by tradition this activity was organized in a special way similar for everyone. This solution was not always the best for the child. I challenged the staff to take this discussion with parents and to break this tradition by using professional arguments, related to what was best for the child.

When Lena dared to take on her professional responsibility, stand her own ground, challenging her staff, it was an invitation to them to take on their professional responsibility as well. Self-confidence is required in this example, in order to be able to challenge the staff and to meet their resistance. At the same time, it is important to support the staff in trusting themselves and daring to use their professional judgement, knowing what is best for the children.

Disclosing enmeshments – recognising intertwinement
So far, we have noted Lena's vision of defending the children's right to be treated as the unique child, as well as trusting others to solve their own problems. These points were mentioned as an understanding, which made it easier for Lena to take on her professional responsibility. In the education of personal development, issues of transference are explored, as well as the question of how guilt is distributed in an encounter. This is studied through the models of scapegoating and projections. An implication of standing one's ground with self-knowledge, is also to understand that guilt can be projected onto somebody who is innocent. These explorations have made Lena aware of the implications of situations at her workplace. Those insights of Lena's came into play in a situation where she had to stand her own ground, meeting a difficult response from an upset mother of one of her pupils. The example is an illustration of what disclosing enmeshments could mean in an ethically difficult situation at work.

The background information that Lena gives to the situation is that a father came to collect his child smelling highly of alcohol. He was driving a car and one of Lena's staff-members called to ask what to do. Lena advised her on the telephone to confront the father. He denied the accusation and went away with his child. Lena felt that she was forced to phone the police; the man was caught and later even punished for this crime. The mother was upset and Lena comments:

> When I informed the mother, she reacted strongly. She accused me of ruining her family. She does not talk to us now; her view is that we made a mistake and made life difficult for her.

When we discuss what may have been different in this situation, without the knowledge of personal development, Lena does not think there would have been any difference in matter.

> Probably it would have been the same in matter, but I experienced that it was easier to stand up for myself in that situation. It was easier to put up with the mother's need of making us into a scapegoat. In this situation, she could not deal with her own part. She knew that he was drunk, since he came directly from home that day. I can really understand that it was too much for her and she had to lay everything on us. I can rest in the conviction that this was a necessary responsibility, connected to my profession. It was good for the children that this secret, which was common knowledge to everyone in the village, came up to the surface in the family. It was good for the children in the long-run, even if it was hard just then.

Lena says that she has learned to understand that a situation like this is not about herself and her own person. She does not have to take those accusations personally; she can set herself to the side, and see that other things influence this situation as well. Another way of understanding the situation is by the concept of typifying, which is used in the life-world theory to describe the quality of the relationships mentioned above. Persons become idealized; in this case, Lena was negatively seen as a representative of a school, a type and not seen as a unique individual. Lena may appear to the mother as an authority and an aggressor, with institutional power that ruins her family. Part of having a broader picture as a professional is to understand those mechanisms of being a symbol for authorities, to accept the woman's behaviour and not having to take her accusations personally. This helps her stand her own ground, without having to question herself and without such heavy feelings.

Understanding what influences there are, here and now
Lena describes a situation with complexity, where she had to use her skill of being able to discriminate between different influences in a situation. Strong reactions were involved, which were more extensive than what was relevant for the matter in question, according to Lena's judgement. Lena describes the situation as such:

> There was a situation where old grudges appeared. In a parent meeting, one of the parents came, who was a former pupil of the school. This parent had a story of being bullied as a child and maltreated by a teacher, who still worked at our school. Now this parent claimed that her child was bullied in the same way. When I checked out with the staff, I could not see that this was a true accusation. This child, like many

other children, had been in conflicts. There were meetings and our pedagogues have done a professional job, taking things seriously, following our policy in those cases. According to my judgement, we have not missed in dealing with the situation. In spite of facts, this parent was very angry. My understanding of the situation is that this matter concerns her, more than the child. It is a situation of revenge, in response to her own experiences of feeling bullied in school. Old wrongdoings come to the surface, affecting the actual situation. In this situation, we become symbols not persons. My understanding is that this woman is not perceptive to logical arguments, or facts. It is more about blurting out all the anger she has. For us it is just to bear, receive and to listen until it is finished.

Lena continues to describe how this insight made her decide that when the school two weeks ago planned a one-hour parental meeting of an informational kind, she had to steer the outcome by setting limits for this parent. Lena takes on her professional responsibility, understanding that this issue is of a different character, influenced by history, and needs to be dealt with in a different situation than this formal meeting. Her intention was to separate this parent's issue from the ordinary meeting and suggest an extra meeting instead. Lena wanted to give things the right proportions and to respect other people's time. It appears that Lena, by not taking those accusations personally has increased her ability to transcend the situation and disclose intertwinements at work, feeling more stable and aware of her own position.

Importance of the context
Another insight that Lena mentions as increasingly important, is to realise the impact of the context of the school. Lena told me in the beginning of the interview that she entered the job as a principle, because she was curious of what was possible to achieve, within the framework of a school-context. She thinks now that she became aware of several important factors, which influenced her possibilities. She says:

I have found that the history of the organisation is part of the conditions for the development of the school. It is important for being able to look forward. You have to look back, as well as looking forward, but you must also see the situation here and now. Several previous principals left the school, or had to take long-term sick leave. There are several families living close by, with negative stories to tell about the school. If I knew that from the beginning, I would have made some other choices. This gossip is influencing the potential of this school.

In her profession as a principal, with the help of self-knowledge, she has learned to disclose some of the entwinements that she is involved in as a professional in a professional practice. This ability contributes to her having more realistic demands and expectations on herself, which makes her feel calmer. No matter

what Lena's ambitions are, the surrounding circumstances, the context of the school, will affect and set limits to what Lena possibly can achieve as a leader.

Summary

In relation to the purpose of this study, exploring what people learn in psychosynthesis training, Lena describes a process of change from a point of reference of naivety towards maturity and exemplifies changed experiences of work. Her experiences are summarized as follows:

- She describes a change in her emotional life; she feels calmer and not so heavy-minded.
- She has learned about her values through processing her family history.
- She has also gained an understanding of her strengths and her limitations, which were previously part of her un-reflected natural attitude.
- Awareness of her own defensive patterns has led to an ability to understand what is at stake in difficult situations at work. She learned about how her sharpness could "come from different places".
- Her way of responding to others is more differentiated and she has found a way of meeting others as they are, in an authentic way.
- Through self-awareness, she has learned to discriminate between self and others, which leads to a change in her ability to separate between personal interests and the interest of other persons.
- She can more clearly see her own part in a larger context.
- She has developed an understanding of the complexity of professional situations. A naïve approach with many idealisations and expectations is changed to a more mature and realistic way of being professional.
- She points out attitudes that she thinks are helpful in professional situations.

This experience results in changes in her way of being professional. She says that she has learned to see through some of the intertwinements, in which she is involved in professional life. Lena does not explicitly express which models and theories that are the most important for this understanding. Implicitly, according to my interpretation, she mentions models when she uses different words such as scapegoat, sub-personality and shadow, which indicates that she has integrated those models into her understanding of herself. In her experience of development from naïve to mature she understands more about the complexity of human existence as well as developing a more distinct, authentic personality differing from the generalized other. The naive understanding with high expectations and ideals about self and other have now turned into a more

realistic level of expectations. She also told that she has learned different attitudes that she can hold on to, when meeting difficult situations, such as "problems are something to learn from" and "people are greater than their problems", which helps her in not taking too much responsibility in relations and in staying open to situations.

Anders 45

Anders, a technical engineer and manager in the industry, followed a full programme and received his diploma as Psychosynthesis therapist some years ago. He started his training during a period when many changes were going on, in both his private and professional life. He was newly divorced and felt a new kind of freedom in his life. He tells that he had recently left his wife, because in that relationship he became a person that he did not like to be. Then he described that he had an intense and successful period at work, a period, when he was leading a project, which turned out successfully both in terms of how the teamwork had proceeded and in terms of the outcome of the project. He said that he got a taste of a new way of living, a way in which he felt good about himself, where he became the person he wanted to be. At the same time, he said that he was aware of the old patterns in his former life, a life in which he felt a heavy responsibility and was filled with demands and struggles. In that old state of mind, he often became forceful and insensitive when leading projects at work; often caught up in the need of succeed, and a fear of failure, taking things personally. Aware of these two different ways of relating to life, he wanted to learn more about what it was that made the difference. In doing this, he hoped to be able to free himself from his old patterns. Anders relates how he felt a need of congruence in his profession, as well as in private relations. His personal process consisted of finding a stable and congruent identity, which he considers as important for being able to create security at the workplace and clarity as a manager. Anders describe that the professional motive to start the education in psychosynthesis was based in an ambition to strengthen himself in his work. He already had knowledge about marketing and models from leadership training, but he wanted to learn more about himself. Anders emphasises that self-development is both a private and professional task and it is not possible to separate these sides in the endeavours of being congruent and consistent as a person in relation to others. He wanted to be able to connect the things that he says, with what he does, which he considers, gives people something to relate to. He did not want to lose himself and become a person he did not like, the way he

did in his marriage. Anders comes from a situation where he feels he had been taking too much responsibility, not listening to his own voice.

Most important insights

Anders describes that the most important insight was to trust the process in unpredictable difficult situations. There is a change in his understanding of difficulties as something to handle, rather than something that should be removed. He developed a sense of trust in himself, by the experience that he will survive even if he fails. Part of accepting uncertainty is to be able to contain the difficult feelings connected with facing the unmanageable. Feelings of hopelessness, emptiness and meaninglessness are not so dangerous and he does not need to defend himself from these difficult feelings all that much. He feels safer in himself, even if it still is painful; he knows that he will manage and come back knowing that if he fails, no one can take his personal visions from him.

> I think it was fear of doing that dive into feelings of emptiness and meaninglessness that kept me from giving up before. I think about how I stayed in my marriage too long, or went on fighting at work.

Anders has learned to handle stressful situations at work in a new way. He gives an example of a situation typical for his work, which shows how his new acceptance of uncertainty has an impact on his leadership. He has noticed that he has a much greater trust in the process, trusting that things will sort themselves out in time. Stressful situations arise:

> When something new happens in the company; often, we do not know how to deal with it. Everyone realizes that something has to be done, but not exactly what to do. The puzzle is not readily solved. In that situation, I have learned that everything will disentangle itself along the road. In the beginning, we frequently do not know all the details, the technical solutions, the financing or other things.

To trust the process, means a different attitude to uncertainty than the kicking and fighting that Anders describes as an old pattern of trying to control the situation, afraid of losing. One of the ideas behind psychosynthesis theory is that the need for control is connected to the need of defence against difficult feelings. By opening up and allowing those difficult feelings to emerge, knowing that you will survive if they come, makes you feel a greater trust in yourself. You can relax and be more present in situations.

Exploring the Self

Anders mentions that for him the most important part in the training was the therapy sessions and being a part in a group process, witnessing the processes of other persons. He does not directly mention a specific part of the training, but indirectly by the story he relates, it is possible to understand that the models of primal wound and sub-personalities have been important to his self-understanding.

Initial pattern

During the process of personal development, he says that he learned to see his pattern described by the metaphor of the "lonely fighter" and became aware of the roots of his old pattern. He describes intertwinements of private and professional issues and gives an example of how these difficulties may appear in relation to work. It is an example that describes a strong energetic person, sometimes stubborn, sometimes showing forcefulness and rigidity, who finds it difficult to let go of things.

> With my old pattern, I could start a project; for example, it could be to re-organise the whole activity, engaging everyone. After some time, I often got trapped in an urge to reach a certain outcome, I became less and less flexible. I became manic in my effort to realize my goal, in a certain way. In that process, I noticed that I became rigid and emotional. I could be angry or feel despondent; I had difficulties in letting go of things. In this situation, I was not so respectful to others/…/It was as if I felt some kind of weakness if I gave up. I made a mix of survival and actualization. If I gave it all up, it was as if everything else in life became meaningless. I had connected success in work, with meaning in life and the actualisation of visions It became very personal and the longer it continued, the more difficult it became to admit mistakes.

Anders describes how he could be so identified with the project, both personally and professionally, that it made him lose sight of other solutions and other persons in the process. Awareness means that you are able to observe the patterns, in order to transcend the situation and consciously use your will, choosing another way of handling the situation. It appears that Anders has adopted other concepts than he had previously in order to understand his situation. These are concepts that are used in the psychosynthesis training; an example is the difference between survival identity and actualization. Acceptance of uncertainty.

In reflections upon different experiences from various exercises, readings and the therapy process, he learned that he had lived in a pattern of "If I fall no one will hold me up and help me". From that belief, he had developed into a person that was a strong fighter. According to his belief which he had un-reflected in his

natural attitude, he felt as if he was carrying the whole world on his shoulder. Through exploring and processing experiences from childhood, he could understand and feel how he had been abandoned early in life by one of his parents. His relation to the world was hurt and he had lost his trust to others. During therapy, he felt safe enough to challenge his fears and abandoned control. In his previous life, he had not been aware of this fear and had very little contact with it.

> Then I had to confront that feeling, which is connected with the situation where you meet something unmanageable. I mean your own history is something that is impossible to change. It is, the way it is. When I really confronted the unmanageable feeling and let myself fall, I found solid ground.

Anders mentions this as a turning point, when he could face his fear. He learned that he could trust that he will come back and the world will go on, even if he fails and has to let go of things. After this insight, his sense of himself and his relation to the world has changed. He experiences less personal fear and less need to control. According to Anders, the increased feeling of security made him trust himself and others, which makes him more present and responsive in various situations at work.

From a "lonely fighter", to "a piece of the puzzle"
What appears as the main transformation in Anders' process is from a sense of self as "I am a fighter", to a sense of being "a piece in a jigsaw-puzzle". The lonely fighter, developed during his early childhood, had the belief that all the responsibility was his, not trusting that anyone would help. Understanding the world from this point of reference is different from understanding the world, from a point of reference of "I am a piece in jigsaw". He sees himself act more like a "balancer" and a facilitator, understanding communication between parts in a system, rather than a "saviour", which was his theme as a "fighter".

> I still take myself seriously, I am as important as everyone else, as an individual. However, I realize that as a part of a system, I am not all that important. The things I can have an impact on, depend on my knowledge about how the system works/…/ I understand that I am just a piece in a jigsaw puzzle, among others. As I am a manager, my piece in the jigsaw includes more power and a greater responsibility.

He is developing his professionalism in the tension between those two approaches to life. Both metaphors indicate distance in relationships. "The fighter" is alone outside the world, carrying the world in his arms, while in this process of sensing himself as a piece in a jigsaw, he comes closer in his relations to others. He can still be influenced by those modes of being, but the awareness

of the difference between these approaches gives him the possibility to choose another way of responding in the situation. Through this personal work, Anders learned that he could trust that he would survive, even if the worst happens.

Professional self

So what were the consequences of Anders' process of self-development, according to him? He describes a difficult professional situation, which he could cope with in another way once he experienced a greater trust in the process. The description shows the struggles between the old pattern that was taken for granted and the new possible pattern, which is now available and possible to choose, as an alternative response to the unmanageable situation. The changed thought patterns are not automatic; it is a choice possible to make, based on new insights. This was achieved through distancing himself from the situation by reflection and through asking himself questions. Anders relates:

> Often I felt that I had all the responsibility. And if I am the manager, I am also responsible for others, which made me fight and kick even more. Now I have realized that it is better to let go of the situation, give up and see what happens. Previously, this was unthinkable to me. There was a situation where I had been working for two years with a new way of organizing. I thought I had done a great job, and that this new way of working should influence the whole company. Then my boss decided to reorganize everything. Two years of work disappeared in front of me and I lost my position! In one day, I went from "you are responsible for everything", to "you have no work to do"! This was taking me into the same feeling of hopelessness as I had confronted in therapy. In the beginning of this process of losing my function at work, I noticed how my old patterns were activated. I became angry, wanted revenge, wanted to prove my worth by looking for another job. And I also got one. Then I stopped and took a step back and started to reflect. What am I doing? Do I really want another job? What am I going to prove? I know already that things worked out well and I do not have to prove anything. Then I decided to stay, to accept and to wait and see.

Coming from the position of lonely fighter, Anders reclaimed a trust in the world through a therapeutic process. He has acquired another reference point in his process of becoming professional. From being a "lonely fighter", he now perceived himself and his position in the organisation as a "piece in a jigsaw". In his new sense of self as "a piece in a jigsaw", he says that his intentions for the future are different nowadays. He no longer focuses so much on the products of his projects. The process has become much more important. He says:

> It is not the project out there, which is important. My ideas and my ideals are inside me and follow me wherever I go, whatever I do, in small matters as well as in big matters. This insight made me able to rest in the conviction that people learned something on the way, which they bring out in other settings. My project never

became manifest in departments or policies, but it gave people another point of reference. That gave me strength, and I felt there was a meaning anyway".

Anders also uses the metaphor "spider in a web", describing how he is more aware of the importance of context. The meaning Anders gives to the spider metaphor is:

> I am becoming more and more a system freak, I am more aware of how we are ruled by the context we work in, by different relations, by history. It is as if all the threads in the web have their pull on us. I am amazed of how this affects us.

When talking about himself and his relations in the organisation and his spider-position in the system, he considers that he has gained a more realistic view of himself. This still makes him feel responsible, wanting to do his best. However, this new reference point is not the same as being the one who has to take all the fights, carrying the whole responsibility in fear of failing. Process and ideas give meaning, more meaning than the products.

Self as an instrument

Anders says that part of his motivation to start the Psychosynthesis training was to develop himself as an instrument. He describes different areas where he feels more skilful; these areas comprise trusting his subjectivity, developing empathy and contact with his feelings, as well as developing his sensitivity in reading the field. This helps him in different areas of his profession.

Developing empathy

Anders considers that the new contact with his feelings, through meeting his fear in the therapeutic process, has been helpful in understanding others. Apart from his own process, he has learnt a great deal about being a part of a group process, being a part of other persons' development. That has been helpful in understanding the complexity in what it means to be a human as professional. He now sees how many layers there are in everyone, each one carrying their own history.

> I have dropped the utopian idea that a workplace would be a place where everyone is pepped up, whole, motivated and aware of their goals. I have realized that to build an organisation on an assumption that humans are not human is outrageous.

Realising this, Anders says that with empathy, he is more skilful in separating matter from person, balancing between the often contradictory needs of humans and the organisation. Being a professional leader, you sometimes cross into the private sphere of the staff members. He gives an example where he had to give a

warning to two men in the company, because of sexual harassments. One of them took the warning, just accepting it and promised betterment. The other started a process among the employees, trying to raise an opinion against the company.

> He feels maltreated and tries to include as many as possible, in feeling sorry for him, and taking sides in his favour. I understand that he doubts himself and doubts whether he is all right. I have been very clear in motivating him my view. I really understand how painful it must be for him, but that does not change anything in matter. For me it is about finding a balance in the situation, both showing empathy and standing up for the decision. That is something that creates security for others in the group as well.

I ask if this way of dealing with the situation could be considered as empathic. It could as well be regarded as un-empathic according to my understanding. Anders says that an alternative response of dealing with the situation, without awareness, would be to become defensive or to be too kind. He says:

> Well, it could also be that I gave him another warning, or that I could feel sorry for him and take things back, playing his game. That would probably create even more problems and insecurity in the group.

A substantial part of Anders' profession as a manager is balancing between what is good for the individual and what is good for the organisation. According to Anders, there are always conflicting interests and it is part of the work of a manager to keep a balance between these interests.

Reading the field
One insight that Anders describes is related to knowing about the system and seeing himself as an instrument; this concerns his sensitivity of the field. His "instrument" resonates with different feelings in the field. Anders is now aware of how others affect him, and how that influences his responses to situations in daily life. He thinks that he has learned about how the unconscious operates; he has become aware of all the signals and perceptions, moods constantly bombarding people in the organisation.

> If you sit in a group and listen to all the things that affect us, then it is evident that we have an impact on each other; that is undisputable.

Anders is more relaxed in the professional situation. His increased feeling of safety makes him trust himself and others; it makes him more present and responsive to what is in the situation. Anders mentions this as a skill, which contributes to his work-performance. He talks about how he can feel the fears in

his organisation, but that he now is observant, not allowing himself to respond to the fears in the field. Instead, he is able to stay in himself following his own policy. He describes a situation where he is part of the situation, but not a victim, in which case he would have to defend himself, which would be the opposite of being open to the situation. He says:

> A demanding situation is in meetings, since I am still personally sensitive to group mechanism as a human being, such as having fears of being excluded from the group. In this position I also have to be professional, say what I see, aware of the culture in the group and in the company.

It could be said that Anders by working with himself can use his subjectivity. He uses empathy and sensitivity to the field in professional situations. He describes an awareness of the relational qualities of what is known in the professional situation as well as the importance of the lived body.

Understanding resistance

Anders describes that with his new insights of not having to fight he has a different attitude to resistance among the staff. His understanding of his own defensive behaviour makes him able to handle the resistance in the organisation. He does not feel personally criticised and it has become a part of his reflection process, to listen to the resistance of others.

> Now it is more as if I perceive resistance as something worth listening to, as a healthy sign telling me that we have to negotiate and talk more before we start, or it informs me that something is threatening. I have learned that one has to include the resistance as part of the problem-solving process". Now, if something turns out wrong; it is more a matter of thinking "now we have learned something, some things are missing in order to solve the equation".

Anders noticed a difference in people's responses to his new strategy. Anders' impression is that he was previously perceived as a bit controversial. He succeeded with most of his undertakings, but at a high cost. People learned to put up with the situation even though they thought he was an idiot. Now his belief is that he still is a bit controversial, but that his behaviour does not wakens that much feelings; on the contrary, he believes that he could be perceived as flexible.

Standing up for his own values and challenging the culture

In his work as a manager, sometimes Anders is confronted with situations where he needs to challenge the culture. This may occur in meetings. These are situations where subjectivity and objectivity interplay. He describes an awareness of his own subjectivity, the impact of all the signals in the field, as well as the

reactions to them. He also describes sensitivity to the feelings of others and to language that is used, which displays predominant beliefs in the system. He has to challenge himself; it is a risky process as a person, to be open without defences. He understands now how, when challenging the system, a set of defensive mechanisms is activated in the group and in himself. Things become truly awarding and satisfying, if he can stay open, true to himself and in contact with his feelings, even in the fear of being excluded, which is a part of the human condition. It makes a real difference, according Anders.

> Then integrity comes into play. To be able to step forward, stand up for my own values and ideas, no matter what the values of the culture are. That creates security in the group.

If he acted defensively, people would not listen but start to defend themselves. He expresses several times during the interviews, what it is like to stand up for his own values. Responding from his defensive part of "the lonely fighter" compared with speaking from the part of the "piece of a jigsaw-puzzle" makes the difference. "It is like speaking from different places". What Anders describes in this example is how he meets the group with a in a face-to-face relationship, which provides an opportunity for an authentic way of relating to the group. This creates trust and makes things work out well.

Self as reflective or non-reflective
The final ability that he describes, concerns his capacity for reflection, making it possible to shift between a reflective and a non-reflective mood. His awareness of what it means to be an instrument has increased and he describes how he consciously makes use of this ability. Anders gives examples of how he employs himself as an instrument, interpreting subjective feelings and intuitive responses to the field when reflecting. Anders mentions how he lets himself be informed by intuitive forms of knowledge and how he uses his ability to shift between the non-reflective and reflective self-consciousness intentionally. He describes situations where he chooses to let himself merge with the situation, trusting that he will respond according to what the situation requires.

> I let myself be more fully present in the situation, responding intuitively. Afterwards, when I reflect, I can see that taking this position was tactical. Previously, it was more important for me to influence things to be the way I wanted/…/ one insight I have made is about how I read the field. I notice very subtly how I take a position, which I usually do not take. Sometimes I become very structured, or unbelievably flexible. Earlier, I tried to control my behaviour wanting to be the same, all the time. Now I allow myself to adjust, according to the situation. In thinking about it afterwards I find it interesting that I took a position, which I normally do not take. What consequences

did that give? What happened? What did my response say about the situation? Often I can see that it was right of me to respond in that way; that it made a major difference to the outcome of that situation. Every time I can see this happen, the more I trust it. I could even become angry and that would be all right.

Connected to his awareness of being affected by the field, he consciously uses this awareness in his profession. It seems as though Anders has reached his goal of wanting to learn about how to use himself as an instrument.

Summary

In relation to the purpose of this study, to explore what people learn in a Psychosynthesis training, Anders exemplifies changes in his experience of work when developing from a point of reference as the "lonely fighter" to the "piece of a jigsaw puzzle":

- Anders learned to handle difficult feelings of anxiety when meeting the unmanageable that threatened his existence. He has a greater trust in that he will cope even if he fails and the worst happens.
- Through this experience, Anders learned to handle uncertainty at work when leading projects. Trusting that things will work out in due time, leads to flexibility and less need to control the outcome of the situation.
- Anders describes a renewed contact with his lived body, with his feelings and sensitivity. He has also gained a greater openness to moods in the situation. In what he calls "using self as an instrument" he has a better understanding of what is implied in the situation.
- He has learned new levels of reflection, asking himself questions such as "How come I responded in this way? What does my response say about the situation?"
- Anders learned to immerse himself intentionally in the professional situation. With a new sense of trust, he allows himself to stay open, without defences, and respond according to the situation in authentic communication.
- His ability to shift between being immersed in the situation and distancing himself in reflecting afterwards helps him monitor himself in the profession.
- In inter-subjective relationships, he has developed a greater understanding and empathy for other people and of what it means to be a human at work. Anders exemplifies awareness of authentic communication and the difference between addressing people personally or impersonally.
- He has learned to balance between individual and organisational interests.

- The personal process has led to a more realistic view on his own position in the organisation.

From his new point of reference of "being a part of a jigsaw-puzzle", he understands his task at work differently, this enables him to choose other ways of being professional. Moving from the position of "the lonely fighter" to "the spider in the web" or "a piece of a jigsaw-puzzle" implies a process of grounding and a change in interpersonal relationships. It is a process, in which Anders considers that he has achieved closer relationships, understanding the value of face-to-face relationships. In being professional, he shifts his focus from being the one who carries all the responsibility alone, to being someone who trusts others. All this creates consequences for how he acts professionally. From this position, leading work becomes a different project, which has consequences in his professional life.

Anna-Greta 55

Anna-Greta enters the room with glittering eyes, pink cheeks and a big warm smile. She seems to like the situation of talking about what she learnt in psychosynthesis training. She has been bicycling through the city and I got to know later on in the interview, that riding a bicycle and physical exercise is part of Anna-Greta's transformational process into a more enjoyable life. Anna-Greta has recently started the third term of the professional part in the therapist programme. When starting the first year of training in psychosynthesis, Anna-Greta worked as the manager of a home for elderly. It was a big home with approximately 100 employees. She had been manager for many years and from an outside perspective, she describes herself as successful. Anna Greta says that she felt weighed down with heavy responsibilities. Physically she felt as if her head was pressed down and she carried a deep longing for inner peace. Success in that outer sense was not so important for Anna-Greta at this time in her life. She says that she got the idea to start the psychosynthesis training from a colleague, who was trained in psychosynthesis. Anna-Greta remembers how she admired this person, because of her way of dealing with difficulties at work. During the training in psychosynthesis, Anna-Greta got a new job and at the time of the interview, she was working as a leader of a project in the administration of social service. She describes how her professional task nowadays is to develop a quality system that could coordinate the different groups within the social sector, based on the individual needs of each client

situation. This was a quality system intended to provide background information for organisational and political decisions.

Most important insights

Anna-Greta describes that the most important part of what she learnt from the psychosynthesis training is the ability to observe herself and her earlier unconscious patterns. In her previous life, she had developed a strong and independent persona, which did not take very much care of others. Anna-Greta describes a warrior attitude in life and that she always needed to be in control.

> My most important insights are that I have become aware of my patterns; in what way I have responded, reacted to, or even denied the importance of circumstances and problems in my life. I had a strategy in life equivalent to "attack is the best defence". Keeping myself at the frontier provided possibilities of making things come true. This warrior attitude could be successful in one sense, but it also had the consequence that I did not listen to others. I could make things turn out my way; sometimes my decisions were supported by others, but often not. The opinion of others was not important to me. This was a strategy I have had all though my life. By integrating my personal wound, I have become much less judging. I do not depend so much on structures or making plans as I did before. Planning is part of my personality, but I have become more flexible and I can more easily accept when things do not turn out as I had planned. It makes me more present in what is here and now. I can welcome life as it is, without having to change things. I try to listen to what life is telling me, and this I use in my work.

This citation describes how Anna Greta by breaking her natural attitude, becomes able to observe herself and her specific way of dealing with life. She could see that some of her earlier professional behaviour resulted in her feeling a heavy responsibility. Anna-Greta mentions situations in the interview that implied changes, which brought her in closer contact with the world on many levels. What was it then that made this change occur, according to Anna-Greta?

Exploration of the Self

For Anna-Greta her process was a question of exploring early relationships and identifying her defensive patterns. Through that process, she became aware of huge feelings of loss; she realised the impact of not having a father. The models of sub-personality and survival strategies have been important in understanding how she as a child could develop strategies from that disturbance in her early family relations. The model of self-development used in the programme makes sense to Anna-Greta in that she came into a process of mourning her past. Coming through this process, she considers herself to have a more peaceful way of relating to life.

Initial pattern

Looking more closely at Anna-Greta's experiences in the training, she describe how reflecting on her responses in different exercises, she learned about how she had a pattern of easily taking offence, often being bossy and stubborn. The most important part of the training, which Anna-Greta mentions, is the process in which she explored the relationship with her parents. Describing her childhood, Anna-Greta tells that she was brought up by her mother. When she was in her teens, they came to Sweden as immigrants. Her father was absent for the most part of her life; he lived in another country. Living without a father was a natural condition, a situation taken for granted and a part of her natural attitude and understanding in life.

> My pattern of being controlling and bossy was a defence and a survival strategy. Behind that, I had an enormous feeling of fear and loneliness. For me there was nothing to expect from others and I had to defend myself. In a strange way, I repeatedly got myself into situations where these patterns were active in life. For a long time I thought this was a very good strategy, which had taken me forward in life. From that point of view, the ego-perspective, I have learned a lot from life. What I missed was a feeling of inner peace, which I longed for, but was out of reach, at that time of my life.

By identifying her patterns, Anna-Greta became aware of another way of relating to life, which she had difficulties to reach in her old survival-oriented approach to life.

Lonely child

Anna-Greta tells me about how she early in life, as a child had to take much own responsibility. She lived with the belief that no one would support her and give her anything; she had to manage her life by herself. Due to this huge loneliness and the loss of her father, therapy has been a great challenge to Anna-Greta, although now she feels that it was worthwhile. She says that it was a necessary process of several years to loosen up the old pattern and reach a new understanding. She describes her fear:

> It was not all that easy to enter the process. I felt a huge fear. The first time I entered the psychosynthesis training I could just as well have left. I think it was a fear of coming in contact with all that was inside of me. I did not know what could happen, it was a feeling of having no control, it was entering the unknown, which felt dangerous and was a totally new situation for me./…./After three years in therapy, I was able to work up the courage to contact my father's relatives who put me in touch with other relatives of his. The process of integrating my dad into my life, realizing the impact of having an absent father, meeting this deep wound, has changed my relationship with my husband and my sons. I realize how much of my patterns I have transferred to them.

New possibilities to reflect and understand situations emerge in exploring early relationships and emotional processing, in becoming aware of one's own patterns and coming in contact with hidden feelings like pain, loneliness and longing. Anna-Greta describes a pain connected to the insight of how she has related to her own family, especially her husband and her sons. She became aware that within her old pattern, she could behave disrespectfully to others not really being sensitive to other people's personal boundaries. She tries not to judge herself too harshly. She says:

> After all, it is a matter of respecting other people; not intruding too much. It can happen sometimes that I still act disrespectfully, but I am much more observant when others start to become defensive. Then I know that I have gone too far and I take a step back. Now, I realize there could have been other ways. I try not to judge myself and I try to accept myself as I am. I did what I could do, even if I understand now that there are different ways to live a life.

Through learning about her own defensive behaviour, she has developed her sensibility to the boundaries of others. She can now recognise when other people become defensive, through listening to her feelings and intuition, sensing the signals in the field from the defensive behaviour of others. Anna Greta describes how her transformation is connected to a feeling of easiness and joyfulness and that life does not feel so heavy any longer. She describes this change in everyday life as follows.

> Life can be experienced as a punishment, or you can enjoy it. I did not really find my life a punishment, but perceived life as deadly serious and that was not enjoyable. In photos from that time, I never smiled as I can do now. Well, my life is not a carnival but it is not all that deadly serious. I realize that problems will go away; they do not follow me that long any more. The burden has been loosening up, it is not any longer such a heavy feeling, like concrete on my head/…/ Today I enjoy life. I have started riding a bicycle, I enjoy being in contact with life with the wind blowing in my hair. Today it was both rainy and windy and it helps me being present in life. To a person like me who was always on my way, it is a great difference. Now for instance, when I was on my way to this meeting, it was blowing like hell but it feels good.

Anna Greta tells me that this new feeling of easiness is connected to a bodily change as well. She has lost 10-15 kilos in weight since she started her training in psychosynthesis. She describes that in her new feeling of easiness, she does not have to protect herself with a big body any longer.

From "Warrior" to "Spider in a Web"
The transformation of the self from a "warrior" attitude in life, always on the run, prepared for attack, to a "Spider in a web" attitude, makes a difference in how she relates to life. The change Anna Greta mentions is mainly connected

with her relationships on the interpersonal level. She feels more trust and allows a closer contact with others. From this new point of reference, seeing herself as a "Spider in the Web", she describes a change where she is more present and more listening in meetings; she sees herself more like a coordinator than a manager. She says:

> I think the difference is that I feel calmer in myself; I stay present and take time to listen. Previously, I was always on my way, trying to figure out what the other person could mean, ready to defend myself. I was up at front putting words in other people's mouth. Now I can abide in a meeting with another person without trying to change anything.

Anna-Greta noticed a difference in her emotional life. From the point of reference as the "Spider in a Web", the world is perceived as different. The intentions of a warrior are different from the intentions of the "Spider in a Web". Other people are not enemies that are to be defeated; instead, others have something to say, from which Anna-Greta can learn something. She feels calmer, being more present and in contact with her feelings, aware of the signals of the field. From the point of reference of the "warrior", she constantly felt distrust to others and a need to control situations. The change that Anna-Greta experiences, is in her immanent aspect, which influences the way she experiences the world at work.

Professional self

As mentioned above, Anna-Greta had a feeling of distrust of others in her initial pattern. Her feeling of loneliness and her belief that no one would help made her controlling and pushy. In the interview, Anna-Greta gives different examples, which indicate that her personal process has been important even in her professional life. Her belief that she had to manage everything by herself has transformed to a belief that it is possible to trust others and that it is worth listening to others. What implications are there in feeling calmer and more joyous in life? What does it mean to be less defensive and controlling at work? Is there a difference in the process of becoming professional, if the professionals have more contact with their feelings, if they are sensitive to the limits of other people, having a greater trust in them? Thus, which implications could Anna-Greta's gained knowledge have on her professional life? The main theme identified from the situations that Anna-Greta exemplifies, is that she has become aware of different sources of knowledge useful in her profession. She describes several situations in her professional life, after taking part in psychosynthesis education, which she experienced differently when she had

moved from the point of reference of the warrior, to a point of reference of the "Spider in a Web".

Trusting others

Anna-Greta describes a situation from her professional life illustrating this change. In her position of coordinating a large-scale project within the social-service sector, she is dependent on others and on their views, which represent different parts of the organisation. She feels more relaxed in her new understanding of leadership and she says that she is more present and willing to listen to what others say. She says:

> I do not need to do all that much, things get done anyway, even if it will be done slightly differently than I expected. It is a matter of loosening up the feelings, which I had before, of a huge responsibility. If I had done this project four years ago, my interest in taking help from a group in order to solve the task, would not have been worth mentioning. I would have invited people that I already knew thought in the same way as I did. Now I wanted a group consisting of both men and women of different ages, with different personalities, representing different parts of the social sector. I felt safe in myself and I could listen to whatever they said, irrespectively of my own preferences. I realized that listening to others would reflect the complexity of the task. My part is like being a spider, trying to encourage everyone.

A transformation that is described in this citation indicates that Anna-Greta experiences work differently. It is reasonable to expect that the intentions of a professional in a leading position are completely different if you have a point of reference as a coordinator and a spider in a web, than it would be if you have a point of reference as a warrior, not trusting anyone. Anna-Greta mentions changes such as being more present, listening and choosing to invite as many differences to the team as possible, rather than trying to control the outcome by knowing everything herself, or by choosing those who think in the same way as she does.

Human attitude – trusting others

Learning to distinguish between a humanistic and a rationalistic attitude in meeting people in a work situation is something that Anna-Greta points to as important insights from her personal process in the psychosynthesis training. She exemplifies this with a situation in which she, as a project-leader, needs to be in contact with different companies, such as IT consultancies and the administration of the company. She describes a common situation in which she has noticed the difference in whether she relates to the situation from her rationalistic or from her humanistic side:

> In this position I try to have a humanistic attitude, I relate to others in a personal way and that is very successful/.../ I think it is because I am conscious of myself, I am present in myself; then, it is as if I reach the other person differently. I guess that in this state of mind, I radiate calmness, which makes other people feel secure/.../ I notice when I become stressed, when too much is demanded of me, I lose this inner calmness, as well as a considerable part of the personal contact with people. In those cases, meeting people on a business level is no longer the same. I have learned that I have to take the fight with those who demand too much of me and not with those who are supposed to work for me.

This citation expresses changes in her interpersonal relationships. Anna-Greta has learnt that it is not very efficient to treat others according to their professional position rather, it is important to relate to others as human beings. In a business-like relationship, colleagues feel less of a responsibility, according to Anna-Greta. It seems as if Anna-Greta uses the knowledge of her own defensive pattern in understanding professional situations. When she deals with matters according to her own rational defensive warrior patterns, communicating from a rational point of reference with other professionals, she has learned that organisational resistance is evoked. Being successful is to be able to stay open, in contact with feelings, taking human needs into account. This awareness implies that part of Anna-Greta's work as a manager and a coordinator now is to be sensible of when she is beginning to feel stressed. In learning this, Anna-Greta has understood that part of her professional responsibility is to reduce the stress and the pressure from the bosses, in order to be able to create conditions at work in which she can stay in contact with her feelings and be successful at work. Anna-Greta reports how easy it is to fall back into old patterns and when this happens she has some tools from the training, which she finds useful. One of the tools Anna-Greta mentions is to take part in therapy, or supervision, in order to be able to remain in a humanistic attitude. She says:

> To share with another human being is like having a co-passenger on the journey of life. A human being that can both challenge and support me, when I come across difficulties and when I get stuck; who can help me reflect.

Anna Greta has learned how she can consciously break her old patterns of coping alone with a heavy feeling of responsibility, of keeping her difficult feelings to herself. Instead, she upholds her relationship with others, sharing her feelings and endeavours to avoid falling into the warrior pattern, shut off from her emotional life.

Feeling knowledge

Another aspect that Anna-Greta mentions, which is connected to a human versus a rationalistic attitude, is the way she uses theoretical knowledge. Anna Greta uses her own concept, "feeling knowledge". She says that much of the theoretical content of psychosynthesis reminds her about the theories she came across in her academic professional education in social work. She says:

> The difference is that all the knowledge in academia stays in the head. It means that you look upon the knowledge in an ego-perspective, which involves that you have conscious knowledge in your head that you use in a rational way. There is no contact with what is underneath. What psycho-synthesis gave me is the integration of theories into the self; primarily by exploring myself and then taking the theories from my head down into my feelings. It is like feeling knowledge as well as thinking knowledge. This is a much more inclusive concept of knowledge, which is much more extended. For me school represents the head and psychosynthesis represents the heart, the feelings and the self.

When asking if Anna-Greta would like to deepen this statement about knowledge coming from the heart, she distinguishes between knowledge as a personal insight and rational knowledge, mechanical learning, in which the human is not included. She says:

> It is a much more extensive knowledge, initiating insight. I do not know if all the knowledge from literature stays in the head; whether it becomes insights sooner or later, or whether it stays as knowledge that you rattle off. Theories are something to be learned, but as long as they are unknown to the nature of my being, they are not integrated in myself.

It seems as if Anna Greta in her awareness of the difference between the rational approach and the humanistic approach, supports her professional judgements on another basis of knowledge, in which she includes feelings and her sensitivity to the boundaries of others. With her new sense of having integrated knowledge into her unique self, it could be said that Anna-Greta makes use of different ways of knowing when she reflects and makes judgements in her professional life.

Holistic thinking; Unique – General

Anna Greta tells me about another way of thinking as a manager and coordinator, which she calls holistic thinking; she ascribes a professional coordinating function to the metaphor of being a spider. According to Anna Greta, to be a spider is to be able to vary between the general and the specific in her work. She describes how she has to consider the circumstances of the individual, as well as thinking on a group level. In the different parts of the social

sector, such as the elderly service, children's welfare or family support, there are different ways of thinking. She gives an example from her project of building a quality system where different parts of the social service are supposed to be coordinated. She describes that much of her work is about asking relevant questions, reflecting the complexity of the field. In taking decisions that are beneficial for the individual, the quality-system should meet both the needs of the social service and the needs of the politicians. Anna-Greta says:

> There are huge differences between the conditions for a child in a wealthy area in the west, or in a less wealthy area in the eastern areas of the city. Still, there are similarities in the condition of being human! So my work is much about asking questions concerning housing, which is of interest both in social service and in politics, finding critical aspects useful in this quality system. In my position, I am like a spider in a web, trying to encourage and listen to everybody.

When I ask if the knowledge she has gained from the psychosynthesis training is present in this project, Ann-Greta's says that she is influenced by psych synthesis in several ways. She mentions the transpersonal posture, in which everything is connected. She also mentions the phenomenological posture, which means to meet people where they are. These are both important parts within the psychosynthesis approach. She says:

> It is interesting for me to listen to differences, to think holistically. In much, it is a case of thinking that every part in life is connected. If one is going to help, it is important to meet people where they are. This is a totally different perspective, which is possible to apply, even in an institutional decision. If I do not understand the situation of the individual, or the problem at hand, it is important to find out what it is all about and to consider the potential for change.

It appears that Anna-Greta has developed her ability to reflect, she has developed her awareness of the importance of taking different perspectives into consideration in her professional task. She uses her reflective capacity more consciously according to the reasoning around the conceptual pair, transcendence – immanence. Anna-Greta regards other people differently as a result of her deepened experience of self and her specific way of being in combination with knowledge of theories about being human. What she describes is a deepened awareness of her subjective experience as well as a widening knowledge of self, connected to the transcendent aspect. This change has affected her capacity to reflect, switching between the parts and the whole, the individual and the group. This helps her to formulate relevant questions in her profession.

Summary

In relation to the purpose of this study to answer the question of what participants learn in an education of personal development with the method of psychosynthesis, Anna-Greta describes a development from a point of reference of the "warrior" attitude in life to a point of reference as a "spider". She gives some examples illustrating situations at work that she experiences differently from before:

- She has gained an understanding of her strengths and her limitations through exploring her initial pattern, which was previously part of her un-reflected natural attitude.
- The most important change is in her emotional life. She feels calmer and not so "deadly serious"; she does not feel so weighed down by heavy responsibility.
- Her contact with her feelings and her sensitivity for the personal boundaries of other people has increased; this seems to contribute to her professionalism.
- In professional situations, she feels more trust in others, her willingness to keep up the communication and listen to what others have to say has increased.
- She has learned to discriminate between a rational and humanistic way of communicating with others; the humanistic way of relating seems crucial at the workplace. It appears that she has learned to discriminate between the personal and the impersonal relationships with others. She has learned that a rational way of communicating may raise resistance in the team and that the willingness to take a professional view of the matter may be lost.
- She recognises how important it is that she as a leader takes the responsibility to reduce stress and be able to manage a humanistic atmosphere at work.
- She has found new dimensions of reflecting holistically at work, inspired by transpersonal ideas presented in the training. By going through her own personal process, she describes that she came to see the connection between the unique individual in relation to the wholeness of a situation or a group more clearly.
- She learned about the importance of reflecting together with another person as in therapy. This could ease up the situation preventing her falling back into old patterns.

Anna-Greta experiences her professional life differently and her participation in the psychosynthesis training has opened up other ways of being professional.

Moving from the position of the "warrior" to "the spider in a web" implies a process of grounding in which Anna-Greta achieves closer relationships and an understanding of the value of face-to-face relationships. In being professional, she describes her shift of focus from being the one who is always on the go carrying all the responsibility alone, to being someone who trusts others and who is interested in other human beings. All this creates consequences for how she acts as a professional leader. Anna-Greta describes a process of change that involves alterations in both self-awareness and self-knowledge in her profession.

Elsa 37

I was seeing Elsa at the institute where she had her training. She looks younger than I had expected and she has a kind of seriousness in her approach. At the time of the interview, Elsa was in her third year of psychosynthesis training and had just started the therapist programme. Elsa is professionally educated as a teacher at the intermediate level of school and she is now working part time in an intermediate level school. Elsa tells me about her feeling of being stuck, which was the reason for her entering the psychosynthesis training. She saw things happening around her, which she had difficulties to put into words. She felt clumsy in how she expressed herself and her ambition was to learn to bridge that difference. Elsa's professional career started with working as a substitute teacher in an intermediary school. She stayed there some years, but after some bad experiences at that school, she changed to another job in another type of organization. There she became a trainee and was later promoted to a leading position. She was successful from the beginning, but after some time she started to feel that certain things became difficult. She often felt exhausted when she came home from work and her private life was suffering. She noticed that her relation to men and to women at work differed. Her relationship with her mother was nagging and she longed for a more peaceful relationship to her parents. She mentions her older siblings, who were reconciled with their parents and that was something Elsa wanted to do as well. At that time, when she started the training she had the ambition to become a better leader. She started the psychosynthesis training for both professional and private reasons. What did Elsa learn about herself in the education of psycho synthesis?

Most important insights

Elsa says that her experience of life is different after taking part in the psychosynthesis training. She describes how she has been moving from a" state of doing" to a" state of being" in life. Elsa says:

> I believe that much therapy and this training has transferred me from a state of "doing" to a state of "being".

She notices how she is less angry and she takes her time sitting with her baby. According to Elsa, the state of "being", enables her to take her time together with other people. She gives the example of her maternity leave, when she really took the time to cradle her daughter and look into her eyes. When I ask if this transformation could have something to do with motherhood, rather than the training in psychosynthesis she answers:

> Well I think primarily the training built the foundation of that feeling. Then I got to practice with my daughter. If I compared with other mothers in the same situation I could take time, be present, looking my daughter in the eyes, holding her. With my history of being a workaholic, I would not possibly have done that before /…/ It has to do with her being a little child, but I could take that seriously, because I had the understanding from the training.

Elsa describes how she is more present with others and how she is less angry now when she returns to school after parental leave.

> When I came back from my maternity leave, I notice that I am less angry. I do not fire up the way I often did before.

Elsa describes how she feels more grown up and that helps her to take her professional responsibility as a teacher of young children. So what was it that she came to know about herself that made a difference according to Elsa? She mentions several insights that have been important in understanding herself.

Exploration of the Self

The parts that Elsa refers to as most important for her process of transformation were those dealing with the circumstances around birth, and the relationship to her parents. On those occasions, early relationships in one's family of origin are explored. Other important parts in the training that Elsa mentions is the mirroring and the feedback from an interpersonal therapy group, where she learned about her own defensive behaviour through the work with "projections". The models that she mentions as most important for her development are the models of "primal wound" and sub-personalities.

Initial pattern
Most of the situations described by Elsa in the interview are related to her professional life although it is difficult to separate between professional and private life in this portrait. When looking back at her life she came to see a person who has been working very hard. She describes herself acting like a

workaholic. She could see a person who was solving her problems by working many hours, rather than taking time to reflect in order to find a solution. She describes herself as follows:

> I used to work so hard, that when I came home I had to lie down on the couch for the rest of the evening. I had no social life.

A workaholic for Elsa is a person who does not rest when she is tired, a person who solves her problems by "doing". She also described difficulties in her professional life as a leader. She had a problem with authority; this placed her in a negative position in the organisation. She describes her situation as such:

> When I worked as a manager in the company, I had the responsibility for the pool of substitutes. There were bosses above me that were pretty ignorant about many things and sometimes difficult conflicts developed. I could be very critical. Part of my pattern that I have worked with has been about having problems with authorities. I used "kick up-words and lick down-words", just the opposite of what one often expects. I protected the group and that made me end up in a negative situation. My relation with male leaders often worked well, but I frequently came in conflict with the female leaders. They accused me of shutting them out with different patterns of behaviour. I could see that they had a point in this, but at that time, I could not understand how this worked.

The situation described above is an illustration of Elsa's defensive pattern, which she later came to realize had connections to her family history. Continuing to describe her initial pattern, she tells me about when she in a teaching situation could have disciplinary problems.

She describes that in stressful situations in an encounter with a provocative child, she could often feel irritated in the classroom. In that situation she did not act as a mature grown up person, instead she became defensive and acted as a rebellious teenager. She expresses this as follows.

> I had a strong part in me, which I have given the name "the rebellious teenager". With that part activated, I was apt to give a lousy or ironical comment in response to the child.

In all, Elsa describes a person that could have difficulties with her anger and irritation. The rebellious teenager was the part of her that was activated in stressful situations, when she could feel personally attacked; this hindered her from taking a grown up responsibility in the situation. In the interpersonal group, she received help from the other members to identify different behaviours; she learned that these were part of a defence of hers. At that time, she was unaware of these patterns of behaviour.

Importance of recognition

In the process of self-exploration, Elsa describes how she found a turning-point in exploring her early relationships; this made a great difference in her experience of herself. In exercises during the birth weekend, she became aware that she had been provided with the loving care a child needs during her childhood. Elsa says:

> I think it was the weekend of birth that was most important in this exploration. It was the experience of being held when coming out which was crucial. I realized that this came from my mother. If my mother was not there, my grandma was there giving me the attention I needed.

Elsa mentions how she realized that she had previously unconsciously carried a doubt of whether she really was wanted as a child in her family. The feeling of being held in the exercise, led to the recognition on a physical level, bringing the insight that she was cared for and loved as a child. She could let go of her doubts about being wanted and she could accept her mother in a new way. Through this process, she found the quality of "being"; she realized that being there for others is important and an alternative option in relation to others. Challenging her belief in her natural attitude, which she previously had taken for granted, Elsa found that she was a welcome and loved child in her family, which makes it possible for her to relax, trusting that she is wanted in the group.

In exploring herself in relation to her parents, she noticed that her doubts about her mother had created an imbalance in the relationship to her parents. She had a greater respect of her father, while the relation to her mother was disrespectful. Through exercises in the education she "could take her father down from his pedestal" and realize that he was a human being with merits, but also imperfections. She had an idealized picture of her parents. She thought of her mother in negative terms and of her father in positive terms. It was a kind of typified understanding, preventing her from having an authentic relationship. Elsa understands this imbalance in relation to her parents as the reason behind her former difficulties with relationships to female leaders and her difficulties in relation to men. She describes how her earlier high expectations on men now are more realistic. She says that this change is clear in her new way of handling relationships, which she feels now works.

Apart from her former belief that she needed to perform in order to earn her place in the family, Elsa found out how her pattern of being a workaholic also was influenced by her family culture, living in a farmer family in the countryside.

> In this culture at the farm, work is highly rewarded; the alternative to quit, give up or ask for help was not possible. Work is more valued than money and that is how I am moulded.

Elsa mentions that she was the first person among all relatives to make an academic career, which created high expectations of Elsa. The process of challenging her unmet needs has brought about pain and sorrow for Elsa, but it supported the development of awareness and self-knowledge that made her "grow up" and take a mature responsibility for her life. After this first year, Elsa says that she experienced her life easier and her motivation to engage in life increased.

From a state of "doing" to a state of" being"

What appears as the main transformation in Elsa's process is in what she calls moving from "doing" to "being", as described above. This transformation has led to several changes in her experience of life. She mentions her sub-personality of the "rebellious teenager", her tendency of acting like a workaholic and her idealization in relation to her parents; this was all part of a pattern that affected her relations in life. Her transformation is oriented towards opening up defensive behaviour and feeling more trust in her self.

Professional self

To what extent does Elsa's insight about herself contribute to her professional life? It seems as though Elsa's transformation towards a mood of "being" and a sense of being an adult, brought about changes on different levels in her professional life. Elsa recounts situations from work, where those changes come to expression. In these situations, Elsa is now more relaxed and present together with others. She feels less angry and irritated and acts less defensively. She also mentions having learned to use some tools in dealing with conflicts and ethically difficult situations. Learning about projections has been important in understanding conflicts. Teachers' modelling behaviour has been important to Elsa in learning about communication, handling ethically sensitive situations. Elsa gives some examples, which will be described in the following text.

Workaholism –Rebellious teenager

Considering the new point of reference in the quality of "being", Elsa mentions a few situations indicating that she experiences her professional life in a different way. Elsa tells me that she previously in stressful situations often became angry and irritated. Further Elsa report how her personal work in the interpersonal group in the training, made her aware of this defensive behaviour. Elsa tells the story of a situation from school illustrating this change:

> The other day in school there was a guy who acted provocatively. He was looking into his under-pants, fiddling with himself, obviously wanting to activate his classmates.

> On this occasion, I did not feel as angry as I used to. I said very clearly that this was not OK and the whole thing just faded away. With my teenager roused, I might have said something like "did you find anything", or I may have said something ironical.

Through her personal work, she learned to understand the difference between defensive communication and a mature "grown up" open communication. Elsa refers to the work with projections in the education, which has been helpful in understanding what is at stake in a situation like this. She describes her insight in the following way:

> If there is a child who I experience as provocative, there are projections between that child and me. One share of these, are my projections upon the child, but the child also projects images upon me. It is common that, as a teacher, I am the object of mother-projections from the child. I realize now that the child does not do things just in order to provoke me. Here we are concerned with this child's history. With this insight, I can be more mature in the classroom and I do not let myself get irritated in the same way.

When Elsa reflects on her early teaching experience, she considers that this kind of training would have been helpful in teacher training. She speculates about why she failed in her first teaching experiences and says:

> Firstly, I might have felt more grown up in relation to the pupils. To enter a classroom completely unaware of your personal pattern is really tough /…/ if I could have had a chance to try out my ability in setting limits, things might not have turned out so serious.

In this citation, Elsa refers to limits both in relation to students and in relation to the workload as such. Elsa has learned that being a teacher in school is a work that never ends and she finds it easy to fall into the old patterns, forgetting about her own needs. You have to find your own limits in relation to this work.

Daring to be oneself
An indication that Elsa now dares to be herself comes from different reflections about her processing during the Psychosynthesis education. When discussing if there was anything missing in the training, she answers that she gained more than she expected. Elsa mentions how she has taken the courses with several breaks, not following the main sequence of the education.

> I have not been passing straight through the years; I have taken time for myself. That has been good for me and helped me to take everything in. From the beginning I had a plan to be a better leader. Now, I have dropped these ambitions. Money is not that important; it is as if I am standing a bit aside from the society.

Elsa describes how taking part in an educational context of psychosynthesis has started a process of questioning her old value system. The education has presented to her alternative ways of thinking about what is important in life.

> Side effects from this training are that I have gained a new value-system, money is not so important any longer. The motivation to go into the world of leadership again has disappeared; making a lot of money, buying nice clothes, etcetera. Here I am somewhat in two minds. Money is also important, for example, in bringing up the children or being able to take a course like this.

Elsa appears to have developed her ability to reflect critically, trying to identify her own needs. She has learned to ask herself questions concerning important choices in life, taking a step back from the stream of life, as she puts it. She identifies the dilemma in society, when you want to stay outside and make alternative choices, as well as having the need of taking part in society, which after all requires money. She seems to consider other issues in the questions of life and in her development towards a self that is more authentic.

Recognition of her own importance
During the education of psychosynthesis, working with the primal wound and with defensive patterns, she realized how important she is, as a professional person, to her pupils. It seems as if, with this new understanding her intentions at work have changed. She describes how she, in the "mood of being", has become more serious in regard to her relationships with others. She is more aware of the importance of recognising the needs of the children and supporting them in school; she says:

> Well, I think about the acceptance in the everyday work. This concerns identity works all the time and I try to make sure that the children are noticed the whole time, letting them know that they are all right the way they are. The pupils become worried as soon as they get a little bit outside the group. I give them confirmation by catching their eye, sometimes touching them or finding different ways of giving them attention.

Through her own therapeutic process, human needs, such as the need to be seen, the need of attention and having a sense of belonging, have grown more important to Elsa in her teaching profession. It is more important to show respect and create an open atmosphere where every child feels welcomed and the needs of every child are met. She achieves this by being present, seeing and confirming the student with eye contact and sometimes with physical contact. She no longer applies "to do" as a strategy in difficult situations; instead, just being with the child and giving the child attention is an alternative response. Just being there as a comfort, rather than running away and "doing things".

Conflict resolution

Through her personal work in therapy and interpersonal groups, she felt that she had learned about conflict resolution. Through learning about her own projections onto others and other people's projections onto her, she has learned to understand the mechanism behind how conflicts work. Elsa demonstrates how she uses the insights about projection in dealing with conflicts among the pupils.

> I often use this understanding in conflict resolution. Girls in grade five and six often make projections onto each other. Often they have a wish to be friends but they have preconceived opinions about each other, making judgments in one or the other direction. Often it is possible to help them put those conflicts aside and meet each other, even if they thought from the beginning that the other person was an idiot. Often, in the end one of the children has to admit that things were not as they thought. The other person was not an alien from another planet. They can start to see their own part in conflicts.

When reflecting on the theories of projections, Elsa says that she thinks that this is nothing you can learn theoretically. You must have a clue about your own projections, how they work and how the process of taking back something that you have projected onto others is connected with your emotions.

Ethical awareness

Another area that Elsa mentions during the interview is that she learned to create trust in ethically difficult situations giving protection to students by setting limits. Elsa gives an account of a situation from her teaching in the subject of "life skills"; sometimes, she has to deal with very delicate issues and it is important to create a feeling of assurance in the classroom. She gives an account of a situation where this comes into play as follows:

> When I had the subject "life-skills" with a class on Monday, a very serious situation emerged. There was a boy who I only know very slightly; I have had the class since the beginning of the year, and he had been on sick leave. He was in class on Monday, he was a bit tired and the other students nagged a bit at him, "why don't you" and things like that. At the end of the lesson, we got on to the subject of shame and guilt and issues like that. We talked about who usually gets the blame in the class and we got into speaking about who gets the blame in the family and so on. Then this boy started to tell me that his father would be much blamed. Last Thursday, his parents told him that they were getting divorced. The mother had a new man and that man had phoned home to them and the father had become angry. In this situation, I was more aware of when to set the limit and make sure of the situation. I could say "Stop a bit now, remember that what you say, the others can come to talk about". Maybe that was not the first thing I said, but I asked questions such as "is it OK for you that the others will ask you", or "if it does not feel right, you can say no, I do not want to talk right now" and other questions concerning limits. I could say "I will tell your class teacher. I

will check with her at the end of the day if you have told her. It is important that this becomes known to her so that she can support you". I said a lot of things like that. I knew what needed to be done in such a situation, which I didn't know before. On this occasion, I noticed that I felt much more assured of myself in the classroom and I knew how to manage. I know that I helped him to cope well with classmates and to protect him from saying more than he wanted. This then produced a great sense of trust; I knew much more about where the limits are.

Elsa tells me how she learned to deal with difficult situations by taking part in group therapy situations. She has learned by watching the respectful attitudes of the trainers in the psychosynthesis education. She has learned how to support someone to give confidences but also to protect the person from telling us more than he wants. This is knowledge that Elsa now uses in her profession when it comes to dealing with ethically difficult situations. Elsa says that it is a matter of understanding how to support students, of not leaving them alone with their worries or conflicts when they start bothering each other. It may also be a question of knowing when it is time to call for professional help.

Stress awareness

Another hindrance in her professional life, which Elsa learned to understand, is her tendency to work too much, the pattern that she calls being a "workaholic". A characteristic that Elsa ascribes to a workaholic is that this is a person, who never rests when she is tired. Elsa notices that she finds it easier to set limits to her work and stay out of her old pattern.

> I think I am more skillful in setting limits to the work. I have come to the understanding that I will not be a better teacher in the classroom, even if I have prepared myself like a mad. This will just make me exhausted when I enter into the classroom. I have to keep reminding myself. It is easy to fall back into old behaviour but I see that others are worse than I am. I think I can manage because I do not feel so speeded up any more.

Elsa has to make choices actively, in order not to fall back into her old patterns. With her strong will she could easily ignore her bodily signals. She describes a bad experience from her first employment, when her patterns of being "rebellious" and of being a "workaholic" were obvious. It was a situation that became traumatic, but which Elsa now has tools to understand. She says that when she was newly graduated, she came to be employed as a substitute teacher in a difficult class; she was the fourth teacher of that class. The school was situated in a rural area and the culture of the school was divided into the "traditionalists" and the "process-oriented" pedagogy. Elsa became a victim in this complicated situation. She was trained at the university in the process-

oriented teaching style, but was placed in the team where the "traditionalists" dominated.

> I came out young and ambitious, but having difficulties with the discipline; I was inexperienced and it did not work out perfectly. I did as I was trained, put pupils in groups, introduced research on the schedule and so on. Very soon, parents started to complain. In a meeting a month after my start it became apparent that parents had been promised by the principle, a teacher with traditionalist ideas. I did not know how to meet this demand; I did not know how, and I did not want to meet their demands.

She says that she was placed in a situation with difficulties on many levels, with very little support from the principle. When her contract was finished, it was not prolonged. After this experience, Elsa had to deal with a backlash from this failure for many years. In retrospect, with the insights she now has from self-development, she analysed the situation as follows.

> Afterwards, I realized how stressful this situation was. I had missed my menstruation for half a year; I tried teaching again by taking another job as a substitute teacher, but the backlash did not really lose its grip. Then I decided to try a completely different kind of work/…/It would have been another thing, if the teachers' education had provided a better preparation for handling difficulties. It would have been better to have learnt how important it is to take care of one's own needs; to have a dialog with oneself, checking out how one feels inside. I really did not understand what I was exposed to, when I stayed so long and let myself be maltreated like this. I did not understand the reactions that would come. I really did not have contact with the language of my soul.

Elsa tells me about how she has learned to listen to the signals of her body, which could inform her when it is time to stop working. She describes how she in that difficult situation did not understand the seriousness of the situation, but her body signalled in that she missed her periods for half a year. Against this background, balancing the workload is something that has become important for Elsa in her profession.

The importance of modelling

A new focus on "being" instead of "doing" has been important in many aspects of Elsa's professional life. She has learned an alternative strategy in her life and she wants to model that by her own behaviour. She can see young girls working like machines in school, wearing themselves out in all their doings. The conversation goes as follows.

> E: I do not want to be a machine; I want to be a human being in contact with my feelings.

> Q: So somehow, you'll understand that if you rest, you can "be" a bit more, be a little more present for the kids.

E: Yes, this is something I have thought about a lot.

Elsa recognizes this behaviour from her old "workaholics", when she solved her problems by working more, never giving up; like a machine where she used her power and energy disregarding the more subtle signals this.

Elsa mentions that the state of being could also be connected to how she chooses the methods of teaching a subject; this may be achieved by embodying the subject instead of doing the subject. By being the subject, Elsa means that she as a teacher will signal a different relationship to the subject, in this case the subject of English.

> The other day, I was thinking how I would give another quality to the subject; if I were to speak English in class, it would signal a different relationship to that subject.

However, there is some resistance among her pupils, they really do not listen all that well when she is speaking English. Her former ideas about time efficiency prevent her from accomplishing this goal of embodying the subject. Elsa considers this to be a thing to develop.

Summary

In relation to the purpose of this study, exploring what people learn in a psychosynthesis education, Elsa gives several different examples of situations that are connected to a changed experience of herself. She says that the training has taken her from a "state of doing" to a "state of being", which influences how she understands her professional task. She has also gained an understanding of her strengths and her limitations through exploring her initial pattern, which was previously part of her un-reflected natural attitude. She describes a development towards maturity.

- Elsa describes a development towards authenticity in that she dares to show more of herself, separating herself from "They".
- Through her personal work she came to see how she could be defensive in relation to others.
- She went through a process where she found a greater trust in herself not doubting her place in the group; this made her open up.
- She identified a pattern of being a workaholic neglecting her own needs, she is now more aware of her own responsibility in setting limits to work. The dynamics behind that pattern was due to an urge to earn her place in the group, but it was also a cultural way of relating to work.

- In her new mood of "being", she takes time to listen to signals of her body indicating her level of stress. She also became skilled in listening to the energy in the classroom, understanding when the time is to move on.
- Elsa learned about her own importance in the profession. She tries to be there, recognising and mirroring the children, supporting their development of identity.
- The aspect of modelling in the profession becomes important. For Elsa it is a matter of showing healthy relationships to work, setting limits, not working like a machine. This concerns embodying a respectful behaviour and formulating an expressive way of relating to subject matters in the classroom.
- Elsa improved her leadership and interpersonal skills by learning communication and learning how to set limits in the classroom in ethically difficult situations.
- She learned to understand and deal with conflicts through the work with projections.

Elsa mentions a process of maturation and she experiences herself as more grown up and able to take on the responsibility in her profession as a teacher.

Elsie 63

Elsie has a professional education in social pedagogy and rehabilitation. She worked with rehabilitation for 12 years in Sweden and some years abroad. When she came back to Sweden, the terms for this profession had changed and she wanted to move on in her professional life. She took a further education in supervision and in psychodrama and started to practice supervision in elderly care through her own consultancy. Parallel to this she was engaged in different projects within the social sector, the latest was an extensive and demanding EU project. In this project her task was to coach long term unemployed women back to work. Completing this project, Elsie came close to a burnout situation and felt a need for renewal in her work. Elsie says that it was a professional choice to start the education of psychosynthesis and she expected to attain some new tools in her work as supervisor. She came to hear about the education in psychosynthesis from a friend. At that time, it was possible to apply for money, to raise one's professional competence, from a special funding in an EU programme. Elsie received financial support and started the programme.

Most important insights

The most important change that Elsie mentions, she calls "a new holistic experience of her life". Elsie says that from the beginning, she expected to be provided with useful tools for supervision; but contrary to her expectations, she learned that this tool was herself as a person. She says that this insight was beneficial for her as a professional, but it also gave her new dimensions in life. She says:

> I realized that the tools really consisted of myself, my inner core and myself, and I discovered that I knew very little of my inner core. I was curious of how that core would look like. During the weekend of birth, I realized that something was missing, something that was connected to my life rather than to my profession. That insight made things turn upside down.

Her insights about her inner core took her into a holistic experience of herself, made her feel trust in herself, which made her stronger in professional situations. Part of being able to use herself as a tool was to come in contact with her feelings, but also to be able to put words on them and communicate them to others. The group has been valuable in practising those insights according to Elsie.

> I noticed when listening to the others that I had difficulties in putting words to my feelings. I was not used to talk about my personal feelings, I often kept them inside. At that time, during the first years of the training I was occupied with trying to understand what happened within me. I was looking for words to describe my own feelings.

Her development process was to become aware of her emotional life. The reflection and the feedback from others in the group have been important sources for self-knowledge. In exercises she was given the opportunity to learn about communication, how to put words to her feelings, and to express herself in front of others.

Exploration of the Self

The most important part of the training, according to Elsie, was the caring and supportive atmosphere that she met from the staff of the institute, which made her open up, the way she did. She also mentions group work as important to her development. The weekends she mentions explicitly as most important are birth, father and mother. She tells me that her process has involved much grieving of the past, as well as discovering and developing her spirituality. So what was it that Elsie came to learn about herself?

Initial pattern

In exploring her history, Elsie discovered a person who was good at taking care of others. It was easy for her to talk about the feelings of others, with others, but not so easy for her to talk about herself and her own feelings. This was a matter, which the group helped her to detect. Elsie says that this insight was a surprise to her, since she had a self-understanding of being verbally skilled.

> To take care of others is normal for me. I became aware of a feeling in myself of being an outsider, unwanted in the group. My belief was that no one loved me. I felt a lot of shame and guilt from that and I got the chance to challenge myself to express myself in the group. It was the challenges from the other members in the group that made the difference.

She also became aware of how difficult closeness was for her. That came into expression in the exercise around birth. With this fear, Elsie says that it was difficult for her to open up for the experiential work and let herself be assisted by others. She tells me about a special exercise around birth that almost made her feel panic. She refers that fear to a trauma earlier life, but she did not say specifically what that trauma was about. She says:

> I had heard about the exercise of birth and felt such an agony about that exercise. I did not want to take part from the beginning. I panicked with the thought that people would come close to me. I have another trauma in my previous history that motivates that fear. One of the teachers talked to me and my group was informed about my condition; then it was possible for me to take part in the exercise.

Elsie was supported in challenging her fear and she describes the important holding of the trainer and the group as crucial to her development. Those trustful relationships were a healing experience to Elsie, which helped her to open up to experiential work. This experience has made her more aware of the importance of the feeling of trust in groups.

From "being half" to "being whole"

In exploring early relations to those who gave her care during her childhood, as far back as the circumstances around birth, Elsie became aware that something important was missing in her life. In that exercise, Elsie realized the importance of having a father and her personal process has in much concerned her reconciliation with the situation of growing up without a father. She describes the process:

> It was during the exercise around birth, when I met the eyes of a male leader, that I realized that this is how it should have been in life. Together with other experiences in the training, I gained a clearer picture than I had before. The dramatic stories I had been told of in my early history was different from the picture I got through this

exercise. It was like finding a meaning and a soul. I have always been a seeker, I have been angry with the church, I haven't understood the Bible, but now it was like understanding my spiritual quality /…/ I never came to know my father and I knew very little about him. I never looked for him, I realized from the beginning that it was meaningless to try. He did not live in Sweden. During this education, I got some sort of contact with his soul, which made it possible to reconcile with the fact that he never was there for me.

Elsie came into contact with her feelings of sadness in not having a father and that made a major change in her experience of life. Through this process of mourning the loss of not having a father, she says that she can now understand how this lack of a father made her feel like a half being. She describes the experience of being half thus:

It has been like a permanent situation to feel half. I have identified myself with my mother; I consider myself alike her. Even If I did not have that close contact with her during my childhood, she was at least a physical person. Suddenly, I got the missing half and my life totally changed. The reconcilement with my destiny, not having a father, has made me stronger. It's like I understand the grief which is often unconscious in peoples lives, I have an understanding that people need to protect themselves from this grief, building defences, like I did in my life.

The history of Elsie shows how being a fatherless child can become part of a natural attitude, a situation taken for granted in life. Elsie states that experience has given her an understanding of the mechanism in which difficult feelings can be rationalized away. She says that she learned to understand how defences work, how sadness can be repressed into the unconscious, as we have to protect ourselves from that painful feeling.

Professional self

In the case of Elsie, it is difficult to separate her personal development process from her professional development. She describes how those processes have been parallel and interwoven with each other. The main theme identified from the situations that Elsie mentions, concern how she as a supervisor differentiates between being an expert and being a facilitator. As Elsie implies, she has gained a new "holistic experience" of life. How could such a transformation be elucidated? In Elsie's words she has moved from a "feeling of being half" to the "feeling of being whole". Elsie describes the difference in her professional experience as follows.

I bring this into work by being much more able to understand and feel empathy with the suffering of individuals in groups where I supervise /…/ Earlier, when people were telling me about a missing parent, I might have rationalized that experience away,

saying "Well it's possible to live without". I have lived a great life. Then however, I came in contact with the hidden grief inside. I feel I have a new respect and some kind of affection for people who try to make it better for others. When working in supervision with this holistic quality present, it is possible to talk about difficult issues, which people normally hide.

It seems as though "feeling whole" for Elsie is to have a sense of being stronger and to be in contact with her spiritual quality and her feelings of empathy with others. Previously, she could act rationally and was sometimes insensitive to the sufferings of others. From the point of reference of "being whole", Elsie connects this professional approach with the facilitator or guide. From the point of reference of "being half", she understood her professional approach as being the expert. So what is it that Elsie ascribes to these different approaches?

Being half – Being an expert

In the beginning of the interview, Elsie told me about being close to a burnout situation at work. Perceiving herself as the expert, Elsie found it difficult to live up to her own standards in meeting all the needs of her clients. She recounted how clients could awaken difficult feelings in her, which were hard to deal with. Elsie associates the expert with high expectations of having all the answers to the difficult issues of the clients.

> Sometimes I felt as if there was a big wall; I did not know how to get over it or how to go around. I did not have anything to give. I have a lot of knowledge and experience, but I did not know how to share them. Now I have a different feeling, which is that it is not my task to give of myself. Instead, it is a question of trusting that the others have knowledge as well. It is more a matter of gathering questions from others, guiding them to find their own answers and accepting myself as I am at that moment.

Elsie illustrates how her fear of not being a good enough expert came in the way, it made her scared and defensive; in that mood supervision became difficult and stressful. According to Elsie's description, there was a wall that was hindering her in doing good work. She describes how she became drained of all her energy, trying to reach the standards of being an expert. Evidently, the approach of the expert shifted into the approach of the facilitator; from being the one who had all the answers, to being one who could ask the right questions, bringing out all the knowledge and experience that was in the group. The professional facilitating approach emerged into the foreground and it is now available, as an alternative to the expert.

Being whole – Being a facilitator

As Elsie described above, she found a spiritual quality in herself that made her feel stronger in her profession. The transformation from feeling half to feeling

whole involves changes on different levels. She relates her sense of being whole to the professional approach of the facilitator. She mentions several qualifications associated with the facilitating approach and exemplifies with a classical situation dealt with in a supervision group in elderly-care. It is a situation where a staff-member is threatening to leave her workplace because of a difficult client. It is about Agda who has a diagnosis of dementia and Elsie relates:

> A question in supervision could be as follows. "How do we cope with Agda, when we become irritated because of her behaviour"? A person wanted to quit and felt really offended by her. However, in the discussion about this it became obvious that other people received the same treatment from her and felt the same. Consequently, I asked for more information. How long has this situation carried on? What is her history? Are there other things concerning Agda apart from the fact that she has a diagnosis? Well, in this situation I started to feel that they are there for Agda, she is not there for them. Having got this far, we started to talk about how to approach a person with dementia. How do we approach a person who is difficult to understand? I continued to deepen the discussion by asking questions such as, what happens in you when you meet Agda. I mean, in this situation, it is not Agda that is difficult. She has the right to be difficult, she is a client because she is difficult to handle. The difficulties emerge because she awakens difficult feelings in you. There is something you recognise in yourself, or something in your unconscious. Then we talk about what happens if you relate to Agda from these angry feelings in you. When those difficult feelings appear, it is your responsibility as a professional to solve this. A possibility is to find someone among the staff at the workplace, or somebody outside, to talk to in order to be able to deal with the difficult feelings of yours.

This is a situation with complexity and Elsie points out the different qualifications of the facilitator, which are present in this situation. She trusts her own intuitive feelings arising during the conversation, in her understanding of the question at hand. She uses her own feelings of empathy and sensitivity to others and she mentions the ability of altering communication. As a facilitator, she asks probing questions, gives constructive feedback and points out the difference between different ways of communication. According to Elsie, it is important to point out the difference between communicating with a feeling of defence or in an open communication taking your own feelings into account.

The interplay within the field
Elsie relates how her new sense of being whole, with feelings of empathy and respect towards people in the caring profession is of great help in her professional life as a supervisor. She understands how defensive mechanisms can be evoked when being involved in stressful situations. She can observe herself and her own reactions knowing when fears are projected into the field. She says:

> I can only be a support by being there as a person. It is not only the things that are said, other things in the field are also of relevance. I am observant of the energy in the room, both my own and that of other people. This has been a very important insight for me; how we influence each other, how I can observe the energy in the room, how I can understand when projections are influencing the field. Previously these matters affected me, which sometimes scared me. As a supervisor people often project feelings onto you and it awakens a sense of being disliked, of not being good enough and such."

In this situation, the facilitating approach is to just be there, to be aware that when supervisees, draw attention to difficult issues, this awakens people's defensive mechanisms. In this case, Elsie applies her self-awareness in understanding what is at stake in this situation, she uses knowledge of how she as a subject used to react in response to the field. She uses her subjectivity in understanding moods in the supervision group; she is aware of the importance of staying open, not becoming afraid and starting to defend herself.

Being in service

Part of the facilitating approach is to help other persons to come through their difficulties in work, according to Elsie. She gives an example illustrating the difference of being the expert having all the answers and instead using your own subjectivity and intuition to understand the professional situation. In the situation above with Agda, she mentions a rising feeling in herself that we are here for them; they are not here for us. Trusting that intuitive impulse, she could transcend the situation and lead the discussion in a more generalised direction using theories of the profession, discussing diagnoses and the professional experiences of the others, enabling them to find their own answers. In a caring profession, there are often frustrations and a part of professional responsibility is to be able to stand up to difficult situations at work. In this process, she uses her own experience of being a facilitator and her own insights into professional work with elderly care, in her understanding of the situation. She continues:

> Now, with that awareness and a feeling of empathy I stand amongst the projections, thinking that it is my function as a supervisor to help professionals unload difficult feelings. It is as if I can hold their frustration and then people can go out into their workplace feeling more at ease with them. To be out there, at an elderly care-home, can be really tough sometimes.

It seems as if Elsa's understanding of being of service is to hold the frustration by acting as a screen for projections. Her understanding seems to be that this serving attitude of hers is passed on to the professionals in the elderly-service; they are helped in their service work by being provided with the possibility of unloading their difficult feelings in the supportive atmosphere of the supervision

group. When coming back to the work-situation, it is then easier to keep a serving attitude in relation to difficult clients.

Acceptance of the situation

According to Elsie, professional responsibility also involves accepting the situation as it is. It is not a matter of something being wrong with the situation. Difficulties are a natural part of the profession as she described in the example above. Without a diagnosis, Agda would not be in elderly care at all. Elsie continues to tell the story about Agda and the change that the staff-member experienced later in the work-situation after supervision.

> This staff member returned after a couple of times of supervision and told me that she now could handle Agda in a different way; now that she knew that it is not about herself. I answered that I had felt that I could mediate, that there is nothing wrong with you or with Agda, because she is the way she is and she awakens something in you. I also told her that this is her responsibility as a professional to solve. This staff member decided to stay and not leave her work.

Elsie tells me about the feedback she got from this supervisee, who considered that this way of understanding the situation was of great help. It is a question of acceptance of the situation and the ability to remain professional; the advice helped her to realize that their behaviour is not because they want to be mean to her personally. The clients are trying but they are not capable of doing anything else.

Importance of self-knowledge

According to Elsie, the professional responsibility of a facilitator is to promote healthy environments at work, which reduces stress and heavy workloads for the people who work in the organisation. She also advocates the importance of self-knowledge and self-awareness to be able to take professional responsibility. Answering my question of how she would have dealt with the situation before taking part in training focusing on self-development she answers:

> I am not sure, but I think I probably would not have perceived the situation properly. If I had felt that it was difficult to deal with, I would not have let it into my awareness. Now I could dig into the issue, because I had the experience and the awareness. I have become aware that it is a gift to be reminded about those feelings that people awaken in us. It is something one can learn from and get clarity about oneself. We can be thankful to those people that awaken things. When Agda is dead, there will be another person who may be even more difficult. In this profession, you will always meet those people; consequently, you need to learn about what happens within you.

This citation could be an indication that Elsie has integrated the approach of the psychosynthesis education, in which difficulties are regarded as something to learn from and that you can only understand others to the extent that you know yourself. The case of knowing oneself and one's own defences is similar to knowing something about how defences of another person work.

Modelling communication from her own feelings

As a facilitator and a guide, communication skills seem more important in the profession and Elsie mentions the ability to communicate in accordance with her own feelings. As described above, a challenge for Elsie during the training was to learn to put words to her feelings. She is convinced that it is important to share feelings and she gives the reasons:

> I try to communicate my feelings. I think it is important since I want to model that I try to learn from my feelings. It's a real challenge but I notice that it makes a difference in the group when I do that. It's as if I raise the level of communication, I show myself as human and I become a part of the group.

Elsie also considers that part of her task in supervision is to make professionals aware of the difference between different ways of communicating. Elsie considers that communication based on your inner feeling enables you to avoid awakening the resistance of others and that it is a matter she wants to teach the supervisees.

> To let the experience of what happens in me have bearing on what I say is a new way of communicating. With this way of thinking, it is possible to reach far. It is about the difference between the sense of using your head in addressing people, or using your stomach.

Elsie describes how she can help professionals to get a grip of this difference in how to communicate with the help of some exercises. Another method that Elsie learned is the use of affirmation cards; these enable her to put words to her feelings in the group. The inspiration for this came from the psychosynthesis training. It helps people to find a natural way of addressing their feelings of the present moment in relation to those words on the cards.

Self-disclosure

Elsie describes how she includes herself in the group by also take a card. She has found it useful to include herself as a human at work, but she has been hesitant in how to do that in a proper way without losing her professionalism. She says:

> I help myself by taking a card too. I think I gain in communication by showing myself to be human. Not too much, just so much that I become a fellow being. Previously, this was a difficult issue for me. It was difficult to find a proper balance.

Elsie mentions that self-disclosure is a concept in professional supervision; there are different opinions among different schools of supervision. Elsie says that her hesitation concerned being too private in her profession.

Summary

In relation to the purpose of this study, to explore what people learn in a training focusing on self-development, Elsie describes the change she has experienced by understanding the spiritual quality in herself during the psychosynthesis education. She mentions a new sense of "feeling whole" instead of "feeling half", which makes a difference in how she experiences her work:

- She has come into contact with feelings that she previously had rationalized away. She has learned to put words to her feelings and to communicate them.
- She has learned about how defences work, how feelings of sadness can be rationalized away and operate from the unconscious in groups of supervision.
- She learned about her own position in terms of closeness and distance in relation to others in the group.
- She describes a transformation to a sense of being whole, described by a bodily feeling of assurance, a stability that she uses when supervising the group, by just sitting in the room being present. She describes how she is able to create that trusting and supportive atmosphere that is needed in supervision in order to support others in opening up to difficult issues.
- In this case, Elsie applies her self-awareness in understanding implications of the situation. She understands how fears can be projected into the field, which she earlier had difficulties in recognising and was unconscious about. She is aware of the importance of staying open, to not be afraid and start to defend herself.
- Elsie has learned to use her experiences of the lived body in her profession. She uses her feelings of empathy, her intuitive way of responding to moods through the small signals of the field.
- She has understood the difference between being an expert and being a guide as a professional. She now works in a client-oriented way and her task is more about asking the right questions and not about being the one

who has to give all the answers. She has learned to trust the collective
knowledge in the group.

- She recognises the importance of being oriented towards clients in the
profession, which she calls a serving attitude. Clients ought to be seen as
subjects to be cared for rather than as objects or as "trying old people".
- She has become aware of the professional responsibility of developing
self-awareness about her own reactions when difficult feelings arise in
relation to clients. The attitude in the psychosynthesis training that
"difficulties are something to learn from" is an important part in this
insight.

Being professional from a point of reference of being whole seems like a
different project for Elsie. From a new point of reference, Elsie described
changes in her relation to professional life. From an expectation of learning
about some tools that are useful at work, which Elsie had at that start of the
training, she learned about how she could use herself as a tool. Elsie's client-
oriented way of relating to work seems more authentic in that this way of solving
her professional task does not drain her energy in the same way as the expert
way of solving her task as a supervisor did.

Kristina 64

Kristina started her psychosynthesis training fifteen years ago. Her profession at
that time was as a teacher in a folk high school, a residential college for adult
education. At the time of the interview, she has been working for the past six
years as a diploma therapist at the same residential collage, where she now sees
students but as clients in therapy instead. The school needed to develop support
for their students and the head of the school encouraged Kristina in her choice
to enter the psychosynthesis education. Although her professional life now is
mainly as a psychosynthesis therapist at the residential school, the interview deals
mostly with experiences from her teaching career. Her professional transition
from teaching to therapy gradually developed, as the student health of the school
needed a psychotherapist. In talking about her professional career, Kristina
describes how she for many years worked as an uneducated teacher. She tells me
that she had been working in many different types of education. She started her
career with a few years in primary and secondary school and after which she
worked in adult education such as with study-circles or teaching prisoners in jail.
Late in her career, she came to the residential school where she found a format
of schooling that was acceptable to her. At this stage, she had reached a point in
life when she wanted to enter into teacher training. She considered that she

finally had found a form of school where the whole human was accepted. The teacher training and the therapist training were only some years apart. Kristina's reasons for starting the psychosynthesis training were both private and professional. In her private life, Kristina was in what she calls a midlife-crisis, when she started to question the meaning of life and consider questions about meaning and human suffering in life.

Most important insights

From the start, Kristina was very enthusiastic about everything in the psychosynthesis training. She felt confirmed in her beliefs and it felt like coming home. This was important for Kristina. She says that she had been searching for a place where the whole human was included.

> Things that I heard in here were touching something deep inside me. It was nothing new, it was more like recognition of something I already knew and now I found the language for it. It was like finding acceptance of my specific nature. I know I was right, I can and no one should come and tell me from the outside that it is in one or another way! I felt recognised and my own thoughts about life were confirmed. Life has more to it than just harsh rationality; it was of vital importance to me to find another way of relating to life. There is something else, another dimension including the aspect of being human.

Kristina connects this feeling of recognition to the expression of "divine homesickness" coming from transpersonal psychology, which is part of the psychosynthesis theory. She says:

> It's that divine homesickness, or longing for something else; to get a name for something you already know, which you have carried your whole life, that it is natural and many people feel the same. It was a kind of Aha-experience; it made me happy for many days. It was such a repressed part of me, I had not taken it seriously, but I knew that I could give it a home and a place in my life.

This citation describes how Kristina found a philosophical framework, which she could accept and identify with, where the whole human was accepted and the individual needs were taken into account. Kristina's personal process has in much concerned an understanding of herself. It has also been a matter of finding a direction, which was in alignment with her identity. She is now happy that she waited until the age of 46 to study psychology, when she found a psychology where the whole human was included and one did not have to "cut off arms and legs" as Kristina experienced the psychology at the university.

Exploring the Self

The most important insights that Kristina refers to is the theory of psychosynthesis as such. She specifically mentions the egg-model, which describes the human psyche and the process of human development according to Assagiolis theory (see chapter 4). The other vital part of the training was that she learned many useful pedagogical methods from the pedagogy of experiential learning, which she could apply in her self-centred teaching at the residential college.

Initial pattern

Looking back at her life, Kristina sees a person searching for a position where the whole human is accepted. She had been fighting against rigid systems all her life. In her early years in school, she describes herself as a small girl, even tiny, often sick, shy and scared. When she grew older, she became more confident and capable. She describes her struggle in younger years of choosing a professional career; she had thought about medicine and psychology, but had dropped those areas since she felt, as she expresses it, as if one had to "cut off both legs and arms" to fit in. Kristina says that in one sense she never wanted to be a teacher either. Her genuine interest was mainly about human relations, not especially the teaching profession. She was very critical about school and her experience was that no one, neither student nor teacher, was allowed be themselves. For a long time in her career as a teacher, Kristina worked in the profession without having a formal teacher education. To stay out of teacher training was a kind of a protest against the rigid system, according to Kristina.

Acceptance of specific nature - allowing individuality - taking on authority

Kristina worked her way through different kinds of school systems in order to find a place that suited her. After coming to this school, the residential college, she felt she had found the right format; she entered a professional training in the seminar for folk-high-school adult education teachers.

> For me it is important to treat people with human consideration, I experienced a difficulty in achieving that at the primary and secondary school, which I perceive as a monster with feet of clay. When I was a teacher in prison, a personal contact became really important to make anything happen. Later, when I came to the residential college for adults I felt a freedom to work in the way I wanted to and each teaching style was accepted in this system.

Kristina gives different examples from her own schooling, which describes the difference between a system taking individuality into account and a system that is insensitive to the unique individual, according to Kristina. The first example is

from her best time in school, it was during the "girl's school", which she went to at the age of 13-16 years. This school was a rewarding experience where Kristina felt appreciated and where they worked creatively.

> From them I received recognition; they saw my potential. I was good at reading and writing; I was selected to activities like theatre, choir. They perceived me as competent and when there were activities, I was selected to everything and I felt great.

The second memory concerns her experience of rigid systems. Kristina recalls a memory from a traditional upper secondary school, which she describes as an awful experience. She says:

> At high school, I met old traditions and I became anonymous. Teachers addressed me with my last name. There was no care and no integration between subjects. There was a situation in which I was reported for cheating in translating a text from Latin into Swedish. From that year the rules were changed, it was no longer permitted to write Swedish translations. I was reported for cheating. My teacher did not talk to me; this report was his only way of informing me. No one stood up to defend me. I received a lower mark for good conduct that year. From this, I learned how school should not be.

This was an insensitive school system where the individual was not respected. According to Kristina's experience, this kind of school system was abusive and unfair. No one listened or asked about the student's needs. Kristina still considers that school has the potential to be very good. In the example where it works well, she felt seen, accepted and stimulated.

From "not belonging" to "coming home"
As described earlier, she had been fighting to be accepted as a unique individual during her entire life. In the psychosyntesis education her own thoughts about life were confirmed. Kristina describes a change from having a feeling of "not belonging" to a situation in life in which she felt as if she was "coming home". So what can such a transformation imply? In regard to the feeling of "not belonging", Kristina relates how she felt abused by authorities, both in relation to her father and in relation to rigid traditional systems in school. She did not feel she was accepted according to her specific nature. Instead, she adopted a survival strategy of being rebellious, not wanting to be like them. Her rebellious side resulted, as mentioned above, in not entering into formal teacher education, as her father wanted her to do. She describes how she was seen as the rebellious teacher in school:

> With my rebellious side, it was easy to be a teacher. I was on the pupils' side. Pupils liked me; I think they experienced my loyalty.

When Kristina describes herself as rebellious, she says at the same time that this was easy in her relation both to colleagues and to students. The difficulty was not that she did not feel respected by the traditionalists at school or by the students. The difficulty with such a strategy was that she felt like an outsider, not belonging in the organisation; not belonging anywhere.

> No, it is more on an emotional level. I did not feel un-loyal towards my colleagues. It was more a feeling of not belonging. It is more about how I feel on the inside.

She learned that her protest has roots in her relation to her father, who was authoritative and had expectations on Kristina that she should educate herself to become a teacher. Since Kristina disliked her father, she really did not want to do as he said and she chose the other side.

> My father was not a supportive authority. It was like a protest against him to side with the students. I was accepted by the other teachers, but inside I felt I did not belong and sometimes I had a feeling of despair concerning the establishment and the rigid systems. The school is really a colossus on clay feet.

When Kristina entered the psychosynthesis training, she said that it was like "coming home". She found a framework, which she could identify herself with and in which she felt that she belonged. At this time in Kristina's life, she was in a midlife crisis during this period; she reasons about how she lived with the question of why a crisis comes as soon as something is perfect in life.

> I was in a great anguish and I lived with the question of whether life really should be like it was for me. I saw this training as a saviour and had the expectation that I would come out as a ready-packed, happy human, with a direction in life. The model of Assagioli's egg gave me an explanation concerning crises. It is about the understanding of hindrances coming up from the unconscious on a person's way of actualising himself. The feeling arises that as soon as we are about to reach something, life will crash. It is the same if you are at the top or if you are at the bottom of the egg; it is a sign of coming closer to your potential.

This egg-model, describe the human psyche according to the psychosyntesis theory, helped Kristina to put up with the difficulties that came frequently in this period of her life and it helped her to find the direction that she was longing for in life.

Later in the interview, Kristina tells me that the psychosynthesis education was a point of departure for her development. She continued her development by deepening her understanding of spiritual matters through taking part in further education based on transpersonal psychology.

> For me this was not the end of my development. Psychosynthesis took me to a station where I gained an understanding for the human aspect; it is an attitude, a way of meeting people. Nothing is strange or incomprehensible; to be human includes all. It is an attitude that includes an understanding of insecurity and unpredictability in life/…/I consider psychosynthesis as an umbrella. I had to fill it with more substance and I have continued to develop myself in accordance with the Diamond-approach of self-realisation. This is an approach that has taken psychosynthesis a step further according to some philosophers in the field.

Kristina describes how she continued to find deeper layers in herself through supervision and therapy within another therapeutic school using a transpersonal approach although Psychosynthesis gave her a structure for thinking about the human aspects.

Professional self

Taking on professional authority

For Kristina, "Coming home" is something that implies trusting her own values. She says that her rebellious side eased and she has grown to trust her own style. There was no longer anything that stopped her from being the person she wanted to be. In her personal work in psychosynthesis training, she learned in depth about teaching through addressing the students' unique self in a student-oriented pedagogy. This was of value for Kristina, it was a conviction that she had carried through her own schooling, but now felt confirmed in. Kristina is proud and filled with self-respect of her persistence in finding a way of being the teacher she wanted to be, not giving up and dropping her own values.

> I had not tried to squeeze myself into a form I did not want to have. I felt free to be as I wanted. In that sense, there is a tradition in the folk high school of tolerating different styles and personalities. I also found that the school I liked best was the one where students came of their own free will. I had some years when I worked in prison and where it was necessary to create a personal contact in order to get anything to happen. Imagine if you are in a prison for 7 years, how important human encounters must be. When I worked in the obligatory school system, I did not experience those deep relationships.

According to her values, she wanted to be able to meet every student as a unique individual, supporting them in finding their own style and expression. Free will and personal meetings are important conditions for student learning according to Kristina.

The feeling of "Coming home" also gave implications to how Kristina developed her way of teaching. She gained lots of inspiration and learned many tools useful in teaching, in line with her vision of addressing each individual in

her teaching. The pedagogy of the folk high school and that of the psychosynthesis education are reminiscent of each other. In the teacher-education she says that she learnt it on a theoretical level, but in the psychosynthesis education she could see it come into practice. The pedagogy used is built on experiential learning especially focusing on the individual self in education. Experiential learning involves pedagogy similar to what she learned in her teacher training, learning to teach adults in the folk high school. Experiential pedagogy was talked about in the context of adult education and lifelong learning, but Kristina had not often seen it come into practice. She says:

> Now, in this psychosynthesis education it was used and I could see that it was not only empty theories. It was connecting to personal experiences, confirming identity and integrating knowledge. To see that put into practice helped me to feel freer in work.

Thus, "Coming home" could be expressed as entering into a world that felt familiar and supportive. She finally trusted herself and her own authority grew stronger in the style that she believed in.

Creativity

Kristina describes how she could use many different exercises. She gives an example illustrating how she creatively worked with her students with inspiration from psychosynthesis and experiential learning. She says:

> In English classes, I was inspired by a book written by Diana Whitmore, *The Joy of Learning*. We did many exercises from that book in English lessons. We covered many things that we had done in psychosynthesis training, but not in such therapeutic depth. I felt freer in my relation to the subject I teach. My teaching became much more differentiated. We had lessons outdoors; we used arts, music or stillness to find other levels of knowledge. We talked a lot about personal choice and preferences almost to the extent that it became a joke in the class.

Kristina then mentions that students were sometimes a bit critical against this teaching and that she gradually learned to balance her playfulness. As Kristina wanted to provide a student-centred teaching, she also felt that she wanted to listen to their criticism and meet their need of seriousness as well.

Flexibility

Another part of the student-centred education, according to Kristina, is to be open to the questions of the students. Kristina contrasts the guiding student-centred approach with the traditional approach of the expert. The guide is the one that gives structure and supports the students in following their own questions. Kristina says:

> In much, it was a matter of guiding each student to find their own way, to awaken
> their joy and curiosity. It was also a question of the students doing their own searching
> not me serving them. They had to search for knowledge and I could provide support
> by giving tools and structure.

To support students in their own searching did not always imply that Kristina could stay out of being an expert. She gives an example where one student was critical to her teaching and wanted to learn grammar. Kristina did not consider that grammar should be given priority, but she wanted to respect the request from the student.

> Now if I am serious in my ideas about following their questions, I have to respect
> their requests. If they have the knowledge, they can judge for themselves. If they do
> not know grammar, it is difficult to have an opinion of whether it is important or not.

During the interview, Kristina hands over a case-story, in which she has written about the experience of teaching grammar. She describes how she could teach the subject according to the request from the students, but still find ways to include the students' personal situations.

Importance of the group

Kristina realized the importance of the group in several ways. First, she considers the confidence of the group to be an important condition for being able to address the self in education. A trusting and positive atmosphere is crucial for students to dare to be themselves and to achieve a deeper contact with other people according to Kristina. She says:

> We did that actively, the confidence of the individual is necessary to be able to open
> up to learning. One needs to be someone in the group and have the permission of the
> group to be someone, to accept each other's differences. That was something I
> consciously started to work with/…/ from the very beginning of the class we started
> to make place for the individual, in the beginning in a quite a relaxed way talking about
> favourite food, interests, or something personal. We interviewed each other, changing
> places and roles, moving around and things like that in order to strengthen individuals
> in the group.

Another part of her pedagogy is to be able to actively use the difference between the group-members in the learning process. She gives some examples from her teaching in Swedish lessons where she uses methods from the pedagogy of experiential learning.

> I became more relaxed in relation to the subject; it is like making the self visible in all
> activities in the classroom. One example is an exercise in which everyone read a text
> and then had to write the last chapter by themselves. When reading these endings in
> front of each other it became obvious that each ending was different, this reflected

something about the history of each student. It is as if each person leaves a fingerprint in what they do. This provides something to discuss, their view of reality, what it is like to wear those glasses, based on individual experiences. Sometimes the students had to guess who the author was while I was reading the story. Another approach when you have read a text is to reflect what you found familiar or unfamiliar in the text using techniques of reading and writing diary or reading logbooks.

Using differences in the class in teaching is important in the student centred way of working. Kristina gives other examples from her teaching. Her aim is to highlight the importance of context in understanding things. She says:

Everything we did was set into a context. One year we had the motto "Nothing exists in a vacuum" as a point of reference. Everything we read or wrote was referred back to that.

Each person became aware that their own story was colouring their understanding of the situation.

Life as an inquiry into finding an authentic way of living
As described earlier in this portrait, Kristina considers that the psychosynthesis training brought her into an important "station" but that her searching has continued. When I asked her if there was anything she missed in the psychosynthesis training, she mentioned how she still found it difficult to be met as an individual and a unique self even in the psychosynthesis training due to the size of the group. She felt that it was difficult to be there with openness and that she needed to continue her inquiry into life, finding her place. When she reflects on her past, she describes how she in the first place was mainly interested in personal encounters and that she did not really want to work as a teacher. During her process of personal development, she became aware of how she found it difficult to maintain her ideas about individualization. Nowadays, in her professional development, she works mostly as a psychosynthesis therapist as a member of the student health team at the same residential folk high school for adult education. She describes how many students entering into residential school, often have difficult backgrounds and need to learn to deal with their emotional needs. It appears that Kristina now at the end of her professional career has reached a professional situation with possibilities for real meetings.

Summary

In relation to the questions of this study, Kristina describes a personal transformation from a point of reference where she felt "not belonging", to the point of reference where she felt she was "coming home":

- Kristina found that psychosynthesis theory was like an aha-experience in that it confirmed her own thoughts about life. It is like an umbrella for human understanding; it is a theory accepting the whole human being.
- She gained a sense of belonging to something greater, with which she could identify herself.
- From the psychosynthesis theory, she acquired an explanation to why crises come as soon as things seem safe and all right, which was a support during a difficult period in life.
- She learned about her rebellious side not wanting to be as others, a part which she identified as being a reaction, a protest to her father who was not a good authority, who she did not want to be alike.
- With this sense of belonging, she found it easier to take on her professional authority with individualized forms of teaching.
- Her creativity was stimulated by the pedagogy of experiential learning used in psychosynthesis training. She found tools suitable for her student-centred teaching.
- She deepened her understanding of the difference between the professional approaches of being an expert or being a guide as a teacher. Being a guide is to support students, so that they can find their own questions, but also to give methods and structures in their searching.
- The need for flexibility in the professionan is highlighted by Kristina. The approach of an expert has never suited Kristina, although she can be flexible if the questions of the students call upon such a teaching approach.

During the interview, Kristina describes a person that had searched during her entire professional life for a place where "the whole human" was accepted. She feels proud of herself that she has not compromised with the need of finding an authentic expression of herself as professional. In her personal process, she says that she has developed a greater sensitivity and she found it difficult to stay open in the classroom in this new way of relating to others. Another consequence was that Kristina gave up her teaching and nowadays she works as a therapist. The interpersonal relationship in the therapy room provides more opportunities for authentic meetings than the teaching situation in the classroom. This is also a place where she can make use of her sensitivity. She also continues her process of development, which she did not feel finished with, in the psychosynthesis training.

Chapter 9

Thematic Analysis

In this final part, I intend to present what participants learn in an education of personal development applying psychosynthesis as a method. These themes build on the presented portraits, in which the participants describe their experiences. This systematisation intends to give a more general understanding of what the participants learn. The purpose of this analytical step is to distance the analysis further from the basic result into a wider hermeneutic spiral, which starts with the individual experience in each portrait. Three main themes were identified, based on the six portraits. Each of them characterizes different aspects of what learning about oneself means for the participants professionally. The themes should not be regarded as completely separate from each other; instead, they overlap. The identified themes are: "Awareness of personal resonances", "Awareness of point of references", "Situational awareness".

Awareness of personal resonance

"Speaking from different places" is an expression that the participants mention repeatedly in different facets. "Speaking from my defensive part", "speaking from my rebellious side", "speaking from my ideals", "speaking from my head", "speaking from my heart" are all expressions that indicate an increased awareness and differentiated understanding of their own experiences in communicating with others. These expressions describe an understanding that actions are informed by bodily signals and perceptions; in that sense, communication is associated with various bodily experiences.

Qualities of Communication

Part of being aware of personal resonance is to be able to discriminate between different kinds of communication. It is to be able to discriminate between open and defensive qualities of communication. It is to be able to give attention when defences are activated in oneself or in others and to understand when resistance can grow in communication. Those mechanisms are described in the following text.

Open or defensive

Different qualities of communication are exemplified in the interviews, in the dynamics between open or defensive communication. After learning more closely about their own and other's difficulties in life, of how humans develop defensive strategies and behaviours, often hiding their wounded feelings in relation to others, the respondents describe how they feel more empathy towards others at their workplace. According to the participants of this study, having empathy can be expressed by having more realistic expectations on oneself and others and by having a greater acceptance of the fact that "humans are humans". Understanding the different backgrounds of the participants in the psychosynthesis training, resulted in an attitude of humbleness and tolerance towards those struggles that can be connected with being human at a workplace (compare with Anders). One important insight in this process was described as abandoning the idealized expectation of professionals as "always pepped up and motivated" in their profession.

Defensive communication was exemplified by the "rebellious teenager" (Elsa) or the "truth-teller" (Lena). The interviewed persons said that, in some cases, it could be useful to speak from that part of their personality that represents intellectual sharpness. However, sometimes these might emerge as part of a defensive behaviour, and might appear as accusations, causing unwanted reactions or resistance from others. In Lena's case, with the truth-teller, when it comes from the heart, it is an important contribution to clarity. When it comes from the head, in a rational way, it can be perceived as a harsh accusation. Several among the participants describe a process of de-construction and de-learning from earlier unconscious patterns. Learning about their own and other's defensive patterns has been supportive in being able to take on a professional responsibility by, what the participants describe as, developing a more mature and adult way of communication.

Humanistic and rational communication

Another way of describing openness and defensiveness used by one of the participants in this study is the expression "humanistic" or "rational" communication. A "humanistic" way of relating is when people get the feeling of being listened to, when they feel recognized and respected. This humanistic way of relating is mentioned as more effective in professional life; speaking from a humanistic approach makes the organisational resistance seem to fade away. Rational communication is detached from human considerations of the unique individual and people may feel objectified instead of feeling seen. This may

awaken people's defences which is not perceived as successful in the long run, according to the participants (Compare with Anna Greta).

Resistance as something to learn from

According to several respondents, part of having self-knowledge and self-awareness is the ability to work with resistance and the defensive mechanisms on the organisational level. Defensive behaviour follows the same mechanisms individually, as well as on a group-level, according to some of the participants (Anna-Greta, Lena, Anders). A new attitude learned in the psychosynthesis is, according to several of the participants, helpful in this understanding of resistance at the workplace. This attitude concerns openness, curiosity, and a willingness to listen and learn from that defensive behaviour. Resistance could be perceived as a source of information rather than as a personal criticism (Anders, Anna-Greta). Understanding resistance at work through the notion of mood, resistance could be considered as mood of hostility, which discloses something about the world and of self, which could be worth listening to in making decisions at the workplace.

Insight reported by the respondents in this study is the ability to read the signals of the field along with sensitivity to the limits of other persons. It provides the possibility to be more respectful and less abusive to other persons. The participants report that awareness of their own defensive behaviour has contributed to an increased awareness and a possibility to make the active choice of staying open rather than to react defensively falling back into old patterns.

Sources of knowledge

The expression of speaking from different places indicates that self-knowledge and self-awareness involves an increased ability to discriminate between different sources of knowledge in responses. "Speaking from the heart", "feeling knowledge" is a level of knowing where knowledge is integrated into one's own experience, into the self. "Speaking from the head" is something different, it is associated with rational thinking in which theories are un-known to the unique self and human needs are not taken into consideration. The awareness of the difference between speaking from the head and speaking from the heart seems crucial; and as mentioned above, in the distinction between humanistic and rational communication, a rational way of speaking is no longer a desirable option in professional life, according to some respondents.

Having self-awareness and self- knowledge creates a greater trust in one's own subjective responses. To let oneself respond intuitively in situations, allowing intuition and feelings to be guiding information in the professional

situation is now more of an option. An awareness of one's own patterns, having tested and challenged one's own fears in the training makes it safer to use a greater register of responses according to the participants. A respondent in this study exemplified how he could allow himself to be angry or very structured in some situations; these reactions were earlier prohibited and did not belong to that person's register of responses. A trust in intuitive responses and sensitivity to the field is mentioned in connection to working with groups, in classrooms, in groups of supervision and in meetings at the workplace.

Professional influences

So how is this awareness of personal responses used in the profession? Below follows a description in three parts describing changed relationships, skills that are related to using personal responses together with how respondents now understand their professional task.

Changed relationship – Authentic communication

A professional situation illustrating authentic communication is exemplified by Anders when he, as a leader in a group meeting, consciously stays open responding intuitively to the field. He challenges himself, taking a risk in staying open to the situation, knowing that his work involves saying those things that is needed in the situation. At the same time he is, as all humans, sensitive to the group mechanism and the risk of being excluded when confronting the group. However, relating to the group in this way is worthwhile considering the rewarding feeling of trust that is created in the group if he succeeds in telling the truth of the situation to the group, according to Anders. During the psychosynthesis training this kind of trust and authentic communication was experienced and explored. The interviewees claim that with such an openness and honesty, it is possible to transcend a difficult situation at work. In this case, it creates a close relationship, a quality of face-to-face meeting between the leader and the members of the group (Anders, Anna Greta).

Useful skills

The interpersonal work with projections is particularly mentioned as helpful in understanding how defensive communication works. Learning to understand one's own involvements in the dynamics of projections creates an understanding of how conflicts appear and how one can deal with conflicts. Some of the participants describe how they have learned exercises, which they use professionally to practice communication from their own centre; this supports an open communication avoiding projections and the awakening of defensive

communication. The understanding of their importance of their professional self at the workplace has increased. Several of the participants realize the importance of a respectful attitude, which they now use professionally. Sensitivity and respectful behaviour in ethically difficult situations is learned from imitating teachers at the psychosynthesis training. The point is to protect the vulnerable individual by setting limits to the group (Elsa). These insights may be seen as a skill that is possible to practice, as well as a changed way of being as a professional person. The participants also mention that they learned tools to deal with difficult feelings; tools such as participating in groups of supervision, in peer-dialogs that can contribute in easing difficult feelings, which are awakened in relation to others (Elsie). Some of the participants recommended therapy, in order to have the "possibility to reflect together with a fellow human being on the journey of life" (Anna-Greta).

Perceived changes in professional task
According to the participants in this study, part of the professional task is to set limits in relation to bosses or to heavy workloads, avoiding stress that makes them fall back into old defensive, rational, behaviour, in which human consideration is not included (Elsa and Anna Greta). Part of the professional responsibility is to continue the process of self-development in the profession (Elsa, Anna-Greta, Elsie). Taking professional responsibility is to identify defensive behaviour when it appears and create circumstances in which those difficult feelings of the professional can be dealt with if they arise. The professional task of creating nurturing relationships at the workplace seems more important. A willingness to consider their own defensive behaviour in difficult situations, in supervision or together with colleagues, is now part of the professional task in order to cope with difficulties in relations.

Awareness of points of reference

Regarding the different portraits, each one of the interviewees mentions a transformation of the self, which gives implications for how they perceive their professional identity and their work. Transformations are described as changing from "being a warrior" to being a "spider in a web" (Anna Greta), from "lonely fighter" to "a piece in a jig-saw puzzle" (Anders), "naïve to mature" (Lena), "from being half" to "being whole" (Elsie), "from doing" to "being" (Elsa) and lastly from "not belonging" to "coming home" (Kristina). These are all transformations that involve changes in their professional understanding and intentions. As the participants learned more of their history by taking part in

psychosynthesis training, they said that an awareness of their culturally shaped beliefs and value system grew. Their own personality became more distinct from the other participants in the education. Their own style became visible individuals develop towards an authentic self that is distinct from the They.

The process of transformation creates a new sense of self, but also a deeper sense of self, which contributes to a feeling of trust in one's own style. Awareness of your own assets and limitations during the education become information about "who you are", your identity and professional style become clearer. Understanding self-awareness and self-knowledge in a profession concerns an awareness of your professional identity and the values that are important to your own person in the profession. In this process, one can say that you identify your own unique self as developing towards an authentic expression of self.

At the same time, understanding the self as pliable and not fixed is helpful in understanding how the self is in a constant developmental process. It seems as if the transformational process and a new understanding of the self open up new possibilities in the process of becoming professional. Learning about oneself, being a member of a group and learning theories about human conditions in the psychosynthesis education opens up new possibilities, but also increases the awareness of one's own choice in developing a professional style in line with personal preferences and potentials (Anders, Kristina, Elsa).

As a professional, there is a range of possible choices in professional situations. In this development, different professional approaches merge as options; the participants of this study describe that they now approach their professional task differently. Self-awareness and self-knowledge may concern learning about personal trajectories exploring the values and the cultural traditions that we are born into and the reasons behind the formation of the self and the certain set of values that we have.

Authentic self - coming home

A couple of respondents (Kristina and Lena) mention that taking part in a process of finding self is associated with the experience of receiving recognition of one's specific nature. A person with the experience of being recognised in his or her specific nature, as a unique human being, gains the insight of how important that experience is for development. It creates trust in oneself and one's own values; it supports the professional to take on his or her own authority. The experience of recognition contributes to inspiration and a sense of belonging to something greater. One of the respondents illustrates how her

creativity was stimulated when she felt that she was "coming home" within the theoretic frame of the psychosynthesis education. This was an experience with feelings of joy and inspiration in work sensing contact with a greater whole; it was something that transcended the individual. In this case, this sense was achieved by the theories around psychosynthesis, which were in line with her unique being. She felt that she found a theory in which the whole human was included, this resulted in a fulfilling feeling that she had longed for (Kristina). Other participants reported how they, through this experience, became more aware of how important they are in their professional position, having the potential of being significant for the development of other persons at the workplace. To be able to give colleagues, students or clients a sense of being recognized, accepted and respected with a sense of belonging, is now important and part of a professional task (Lena, Elsa, Kristina, Elsie).

Flexibility

Being self-aware, having self-knowledge is not only a case of development and having trust in your own style as defined by the participants. It is about the ability to be flexible in your responses to others. The participants of this study outline how they have learned that sometimes it is more important to be open and sensitive to what is disclosed in the situation. Sometimes it can be helpful for the group if someone takes the initiative to create a structure in order to fulfil a task efficiently. Flexibility involves adjusting to the situation and being less controlling, opening up for what happens in the situation, trusting your own responses. One way of regarding this comes from one of the participants who said "I always previously wanted to control myself, wanting to be the same, but this is not as important as it used to be. I often surprise myself when reflecting afterwards, in feeling that it was very clear-sighted of me to be so structured at that moment" (Anders). Being authentic becomes in that situation "Being with". In this example, the point that is disclosed in the situation is the need for a leader to take the position of being structured, which seems the most meaningful way of being in the situation, since it gets the work done. Another expression of flexibility is to meet other persons as they are (Lena). Understanding self-knowledge and self-awareness from the perspective of flexibility is related to being aware of one's own identity and style, not losing oneself, although responding in a trustworthy manner according to the situation. To stay in oneself in the situation is not to abandon others, it is to "be with"; being present in the situation, open for what discloses itself, to relate to others in a different way.

Professional influences

So how is this knowledge of one's own professional point of reference used in the profession? Below comes a description in three parts describing changed relationships, skills and changes in how respondents understand their professional task.

Changed relationships

Expressions of changed professional relationships are noted among the participants. It as appears that their process of finding a new point of reference and a trust in themselves, also leads to a greater trust in others. Those participants who describe themselves as authoritative leaders mentioned a process of opening up for the world letting others in. It was a process of learning about their own patterns, which belonged to a system of beliefs learned through earlier experiences. This transformation was a process of grounding with implications for interpersonal relationships, involving closer relationships described by the metaphors of "piece in a jig-saw puzzle" or the "spider in a web". These terms indicate closer relationships compared with the previous sense they had of themselves, such as the "lonely fighter" or the "warrior". It is a process of narrowing down their own importance giving more space to others. With this new point of reference, other professional possibilities appear as important in their professional leadership; these may be such things as listening, negotiating, supporting, discussing and the possibility of "holding the anxiety of others" (Andres, Anna -Greta).

Some of the participants describe a process of standing their own ground, discriminating between self and others, finding self; they outline a process of increasing their own importance, learning to trust their professional competence, setting limits to work or taking a greater professional responsibility.

Among the participants of this study, other professional ways of being, such as the facilitator or the guide, have become available as a result of their awareness of themselves, when they have gained self-knowledge. Those ways of being are client-centred and are mentioned as more meaningful; instead the intention is to actively involve the others, giving responsibility to colleagues, students or clients (Kristina, Anna Greta, Elsa, Anders). The way of the expert, the one who knows all the answers, becomes difficult. Among the participants of this study, the expert is often associated with being rational and having all the knowledge in the head, as described in the theme of "Awareness of personal resonances".

Useful skills

Many of the respondents say that they have learned tools for working with identity issues with clients, students and groups. As a teacher, there is a lot to learn from the pedagogy used in the training of experiential learning (Kristina, Elsie, Elsa). The teachers who were involved in this study, describe how they have learned to create an open and allowing atmosphere, where the individual feels accepted and the students feel welcomed and dare to be themselves. There are also pedagogical methods of how to work creatively with individual differences in the group (Kristina Elsie).

Perceived changes in professional task

The acceptance of and trust in one's own style, the experience of meaning and to find an authentic way of inhabiting the occupation seems to have become more important according to the participants (Lena, Kristina, Elsa). Recognising the potential in developing one's own identity enhances the awareness of one's own importance of being a "significant other" in a professional situation. To take a professional responsibility involves that you take issues of identity and human needs seriously at work, recognising and affirming the unique person. An approach such as this is part of the task of creating an inspiring and fruitful work atmosphere. This insight seems to be applicable on every level in an organisation in relation to the students, clients or colleagues. Being professional is a matter of being closer in relation to co-workers and having a willingness to listen and let go of control, trusting the collaborative process rather than trying to steer and control the outcomes. Managing time and stress seems important in relation to issues of recognition of a person's specific nature and identity, in the same way as in the theme of "Awareness of personal resonance" (Elsa).

Situational awareness

"Situational awareness" is a theme that belongs to being self-aware and having self-knowledge. According to the understanding in this study, some of the insights that interviewees learned concern how they, along with the process of understanding themselves, learn to examine some of the entwinements that they have been involved in during their professional life. By scrutinising their former beliefs that were taken for granted and their pre-understanding connected to their initial patterns in their natural attitude, their understanding of the complexity of professional situations is more differentiated.

Part of the world

A greater trust in oneself, standing one's ground in the profession and at the same time regarding things in a greater context, changes the professional relationship with the professional situation. The participants of this study exemplify how, through the learning process in the psychosynthesis education, they gained an enhanced awareness concerning some of the intertwinements of professional situations, in which they are involved.

The awareness of entwinements could be exemplified with some expressions from the participants such as "standing one's ground - regarding things in a greater context", or as in the development described as changing from a state of "naivety" to a "state of maturity". Another example described by one of the participants of this study is moving from "rebellious teenager" to a "grown up person". To be "rebellious" or "naïve" indicates a situation in which the professional is acting defensively in a situation. Being "grown up" or "mature" in a professional situation indicates a different awareness of what is at stake in difficult situations at work (Lena, Elsa). The meaning that the participants put into these concepts is that it is a process of understanding oneself and one's own reactions in a situation, but it is also a process of understanding "the wider picture," the influences coming from the "world" that affect the situation; these influences may be from the culture, the history and other circumstances of the context. Being professional with self-awareness, having self-knowledge, seems to imply the ability to see through some of the entwinements between oneself and the world. This deepened understanding of the situation seems connected to the work with projections in the training.

Standing one's own ground

A point that was learnt by the participants, described in the results, is the ability to discriminate between themselves and the world. Starting from the perspective of the individual self, understanding their entwinement, there is a common expression that appears, which is "I no longer take things personally" (Lena, Elsa, Elsie). After a personal developmental process, changes in their emotional life are reported. Difficult feelings and defensive patterns are not awakened to the same extent as before. This change could be illuminated with the case of Lena. She became aware of herself as a person who had taken too much of a responsibility for the emotional wellbeing of her parents. The insights about her childhood and the process around her parents in the psychosynthesis training helped her to feel less of a responsibility for the feelings of others. This insight made it easier to confront difficult issues in her profession in that other people's

responses felt less heavy to carry. This was a transformation involving emotional and bodily changes that brought in a feeling of easiness. Several other insights were important, such as the knowledge she gained from the exploration of the sub-personality, the "truth teller"; as well as the transformation from "naïve" to "mature", which was a process of de-learning of behaviour, of learning not to awaken people's reactions in the same way as before. Part of the process of maturation was to learn about her own involvement in projections; learning about the emotional dimensions of certain beliefs in the pre-understanding of what happens in the world. She learnt to accept her "humanness", her tendency to idealize others, as well as her high expectations of herself and others. This understanding has contributed to her development process. A further insight connected to her maturity was a changed attitude, realising that persons are much greater than their problems. Lena learned that she was not so enmeshed with others, her patterns of defensive behaviour were no longer so easy to awaken, and she now feels freer in relation to the world.

Seeing things in a wider context

So how is a professional situation constituted? What is it that influences a professional situation? What is the meaning given to the expression "getting a wider picture" in a professional situation? A few examples from the portraits will illustrate some of the dynamics that are recognised to influence the professional situation after a process of personal development. Aspects influencing the professional situation may involve historical traditions within the profession, systemic position, cultural contact and future potentialities.

Being a symbol of the institution as professional
A situation from a difficult meeting with an angry parent illustrates how the professional becomes the symbol for authority. The parent felt threatened and she turned into a defensive behaviour projecting her anger at the headmasters. In Lena's attitude of not "taking things personally", she understands that the anger concerns her professional position and the authority that belongs to being a headmistress rather than herself as a person. It is a situation where Lena is typified, seen as a function rather than a human unique being. A naive response to a situation like that would have been to react to that aggression by using her sharp truth teller in order to defend herself. Instead, she realizes that the issue is greater than the actual discussion and needs to be dealt with in another situation.

History comes into the here and now

A similar situation was referred to, exemplifying the difficulties with projections that hinder real communication in a situation. It was a situation, which became much too infected in regard to the issue dealt with. Again, it is an example from the school; a parent accused the school for not taking proper care of her child. The participant of this study acted in a responsible and professional way, making an inquiry in the organisation into the circumstances. According to this investigation, proper actions were taken and there was no reason for such accusations. Using her professional judgement, she understood that this actual situation was more about the parent's own difficult history at the school than about the child in question. Being self-aware, having self-knowledge implies an understanding of the fact that difficult feelings emanating from another time could be awakened in a situation motivating the strong reactions in this particular situation.

Position in a system

Another way of understanding the professional situation is expressed by the metaphor of the "spider in a web" or the "piece of a jig-saw puzzle". One participant says that he has turned into a "system freak". This transformation indicates an understanding of the situation that the persons in a system are influenced by their position in the system (Anders). Against the background of his personal story of the "lonely fighter", the awareness of his own position in relation to the professional positions of others helped him realize that the distrust to others and his need to control the situation made him take too much responsibility in the system. He was giving too much power to his own position. Being self-aware and having self-knowledge seems to imply a more realistic idea of one's own importance in the professional situation. In Anders' case, other persons in the organisation became more important and worth listening to. Part of the systemic understanding is how different parts in an organisation are related (Anna-Greta). What is relevant for the individual and what is relevant at a group level? Being self-aware, having self-knowledge seems to promote the ability of relating theories about existence in general to experiences of oneself as a unique self. Respondents relate how they find it easier to balance between individual and organisational needs. A development towards a holistic way of thinking is supported, as well as the ability to ask questions relevant to different levels in the system. "To be a leader is to have knowledge of how a system works" was a statement that Anders made in relation to his new way of relating that was described by the metaphor of the "piece of a jig-saw puzzle".

The situation in a cultural context

The awareness of how the context affects the organisation is also something that belongs to seeing things in a wider context. No matter how professionals exert themselves, there are factors in the surroundings of the organisations that influence the developmental potential of the organisation. As a professional, you may have visions about how to develop the school in the future, but the context of the school influences how far the organisation is possible to develop. In Lena's case, when she went into the profession as a headmistress, she wanted to explore what she could achieve within the political and economic frames in the school-system. She says that she was surprised how much other aspects of the context influenced the possibilities. She mentions things that she now understands as important parts of the context, which may set limits to what is possible to do (Lena). Examples of this might be the level of education and the attitude to schooling of parents in the local village, gossip, bad reputation and the attitudes of local authorities. Evidently, Lena's developmental process from naïve to mature continues in her professional life.

Future in the here and now

Regarding the different persons of this project, different developmental trajectories are represented. There are those who have learned to trust themselves, no longer having to take too much responsibility for others, who now are able to take a step back and distance themselves from enmeshment with others in professional situations (compare with Lena, Elsa). Others learned to trust other people and are in a process acquiring a greater closeness in their relationships, developing sensitivity of human needs in professional situations (compare with Anders, Anna-Greta). It would be reasonable to think, that new possibilities that appear and the meaning that professionals make from understanding the complexity of a professional situation, differ from person to person, depending on what they orient themselves towards and which questions they ask in their inquiry into life towards developing as professionals.

Professional influences

So how does this situational awareness come in to expression in the profession? Below follows a description in three parts describing changed relationships, skills that are related to situational awareness and finally, changes in how respondents understand their professional task.

Changed relationships

Illustrating this changed attitude to relationships, one situation is represented by the example of Elsa, who experienced a greater degree of presence when she was with her baby. She described her feeling of being in a relationship, for the sake of her child; feeling the seriousness in just "being", breaking her patterns of "doing", which were part of her former behaviour. The feeling of "being" is not connected with anything one does; rather it is an immanent, bodily feeling. In professional situations, a state of being is described as a feeling of safety, a bodily feeling of tranquillity that radiates security, which influences the atmosphere in a group inviting others to dare to be present in the professional situation as well. Several of the participants describe this sense of being. During the psychosynthesis training, the basic experience of "being" came from the work with their own wounds and defensive patterns. Sometimes it is described as a spiritual experience and sometimes as a quality of "being" or a feeling of being "whole" or "coming home". It is a process of coming closer to one's own truth, towards finding an authentic expression in life. This is a sense that is conceptualised by some researchers as presence (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009).

In the case of Elsie, she described how she found strength in her personal process of accepting her own existential condition of living without a parent. This was a feeling of becoming whole that she could make use of in her profession. Such an experience could support her in her understanding of the suffering of others. Transferred to the professional situation, she could understand how resistance was projected into the group she was supervising. She could understand how clients in the elderly care could awaken difficult feelings in their care workers, the professionals that participated in her group of supervisees. It is a situation of understanding and seeing things in a wider context in a professional situation. This wider context includes a deeper relationship with herself and her emotional life, as well as helping her in seeing the implications of the situation. It exemplifies the interconnectedness between life and world, in immanent aspects as well as in transcendent aspects of self.

Another situation illustrating the interplay between self and world, the aspect of the personal/professional, is seen when the teacher describes how to listen to the energy in the classroom before making plans for further lessons. She is using her subjectivity, creatively "being with" her students in the situation, as well as having contact with the goal, the professional expectations of her profession. She uses her understanding of the atmosphere, of moods in the classroom, understanding when it is time to make new plans.

Useful skills

A skill that could be mentioned is the reflective ability of the person who learns to shift the focus of reflection between objects in the world, in this case theories and methods in the profession, and his or her personal experiences in the situation. Another matter that could also be considered as a skill, is the ability to consciously immerse oneself in the situation using one's own subjectivity, trusting intuitive responses to the situation. Through the learning process in psychosynthesis training, several respondents describe how theories about the human condition become integrated into their experience, which supports the understanding of the complexity of a situation. Having theories and methods about the human condition, gives rise to another set of questions when reflecting upon what happened in a situation at work.

Perceived changes in professional task

In this sense, the participants prefer to speak about a way of being and it seems less relevant to talk about skills or methods. They feel different and those feelings that were difficult before, either do not appear at all, or they mean something else. The participants in this study describe a changed perception of what belongs to the professional task. They mention the benefits coming from having self-awareness and self-knowledge. Part of the professional responsibility is to take actions so that personal development can continue (Lena, Anders and Elsie). Attitudes that belong to this theme include the importance of a professional attitude when working with care service; being for the sake of others; using one's own subjectivity in order to understand and transform a professional situation.

Chapter 10

Self-awareness and self-knowledge in professions – theoretical analysis

The three themes describing what appears as most significant in having self-awareness and self-knowledge in professions are identified as "Awareness of personal resonance", "Awareness of points of reference" and "Situational awareness". Each theme involves both immanent and transcendent aspects. They all include answers to the research question concerning what people might learn in psychosynthesis training, which they later use professionally. The following analysis aims at a deeper theoretical understanding of what these insights might mean professionally. In the following text, I analyse each of them separately even though they should be regarded as interrelated.

Awareness of personal resonance

In our life-worlds, we are always bodily present with bodily actions and responses to others (Bengtsson, 2005). The theme "Awareness of personal resonance" concerns self-awareness and self-knowledge about the quality of those responses. It appears that the participants have learned to understand and give attention to immanent experiences; they are increasingly able to observe these experiences and make use of them in their profession. Furthermore, the participants have developed an awareness of their own emotional responses, which implies changes in their responses to others. This change took place through exploring earlier unconscious patterns, resulting in a break in their natural attitude (Bengtsson, 2005). Several of the participants described a development where situations, which earlier awakened defences or feelings that were difficult to handle, now were gone (Lena and Elsa). These changes could indicate a synthesis on the psychological level that imply changes in the personal resonance (Todres, 2007).

The participants describe how they, throughout the education, have learned to understand their own personal defensive patterns by facing their primal wound in therapy. This understanding shows how wounds on the personal level, wounds created though disturbances in early relationships, can hinder openness on the existential level (Todres, 2007). Examples of this were given by Anders in

the way he confused, what he calls, survival issues related to childhood experiences with existential issues. The process of facing primal wounds in education contributed towards enhancing feelings of empathy and humbleness in relation with the human condition in professions, something that is mentioned by all the participants. It can be seen that new feelings of empathy and a new sensitivity of other people's limits lead to changed actions and responses to others at the workplace.

With those new insights, the participants described situations of authentic communication. They also learned how to communicate their feelings to others in a new way, with honesty; they no longer had to defend themselves. Instead, they mention how they have contact with a wider range of feelings than before (Anders, Elsie and Anna-Greta). Different ways of putting words to feelings were learned (Elsie). Through participating in the practice of group-work in the psychosynthesis training the participants learned by observing their teachers new ways of facilitating and assisting in ethically sensitive situations or in conflicts at the workplace (Anders, Elsa, Elsie). The participants specify how they in different exercises explored different qualities of communication and how they learned new methods in the training (Elsie, Elsa). One method was to communicate from one's own feelings, avoiding the awakening of defensive behaviours in others. Other methods were learned in the interpersonal group while working with projections.

The participants have become increasingly aware of new dimensions of communication and the difference between rational and humanistic communication (Anna-Greta), which indicates an understanding of closeness and distance in relations. To rationalize, according to this way of thinking, is to exclude the human needs in communication, a way of typifying, not seeing the unique person behind the professional person, only seeing the professional in his or her function. To communicate from a rational side in an impersonal way in professional situations creates a distance in relationship (Schutz, 1967).

The participants also mention a shift in interpersonal relationships. They have become increasingly skilled in differentiating between "from which places" they communicate. There is an important difference if a person communicates from a defensive, a mental or from an empathic side. To have this awareness means an ability to discriminate between responses and resonances in communication and in reflections about what is at stake in the professional situations. Further, it exemplifies how embodied knowing becomes important information as was described by the different concepts of the somatic compass (Finlay, 2011) or gut-instinct (Barnacle, 2009).

The participants further describe how they learned and developed their sensitivity to make use of the shifting moods in the workplace (Mulhall, 2005). This is shown in what the participants call an "increased sensitivity to the field" at the workplace (Anders, Anna-Greta, Elsa and Elsie). It is an awareness that came from learning about their own defences and how difficult feelings can be rationalized away and be projected into the field of groups and organisations. As it appears, the participants learned how moods communicate something about the relationship between self and world, to which it could be worth listening. This insight gave possibilities to work with resistance at the workplace. A consequence of such an insight is that you as a professional do not have to take things so personally and feel the need to defend yourself. Rather, it is to stay open in the interplay between self and the world, understanding the wider context (Lena). Evidently, the participants have developed a greater trust in themselves ,their self, something that also seems to imply a greater trust in others; this supports an attitude of openness towards others in the professional situation. The participants exemplify how they participate differently in the professional situation with an immanent sense of wholeness, security, maturity and stability, and that radiates something to the group. These are indications of a development in both immanent and transcendent aspects in line with what Todres' describes as personal and transpersonal dimensions of being professional (Todres, 2007).

Self-awareness and self-knowledge

"Awareness of personal resonance" includes both an immanent and a transcendent aspect. The participants describe both a change in how they resonate in relation to others and a change in how they are able to transcend the immediate situation; and consciously observe and make use of these resonances as information in professional situations. In this development, openness and defensiveness, empathy and resistance are sensed on a bodily level. They also learned how to put words to their feelings and to communicate them to others in a new way. The conclusion is that there are skills that can be learned, connected with communication, dealing with resistance and protection of the vulnerability of others. Such skills can be learned by participating in the exercises of the education.

Awareness of points of reference

The second theme of self-awareness and self-knowledge is "Awareness of points of reference", indicating that the participants have gone through a process of

transformation that concerns their sense of identity. Through being able to perceive illusions of self, connected with earlier patterns, and not be deceived by them, they could challenge these patterns and beliefs that were previously taken for granted. Breaking old patterns is to break old illusions, as in the analogy with the emperor's nudity mentioned by O'Connor and Hallam (O'Connor & Hallam, 2009). Old patterns and responses are not completely eliminated, but other possible ways of being become available, according to the results in this study. In this process of deconstruction (Brooks, 2009), challenges from the trainers in the education and other students in the group have been important. These processes can be reached through different methods of distancing, described as an important way of learning (Bengtsson, 1993 b).

The participants describe a transformation of self, attaining an understanding that has implications for how they experience professional situations in a different way. Main patterns of action have been deconstructed and expanded, resulting in the emergence of a more authentic identity (Mulhall, 2005). Todres described self-identification as part of an ontological striving that sometimes led to self-objectification. To take part in a process of therapy opens up for other kinds of self-identification than the premature self-understanding formed in childhood (Todres, 2007). For the participants of this study this change introduces new ways to approach and understand their professional situation. To describe these patterns of behaviour the participants make use of metaphorical understanding, as in the theory of archetypes and myths used in the psychosynthesis. This is a process helpful in learning to observe themselves, to see themselves distancing from the natural attitude in gaining self-knowledge (Bengtsson, 1993 b).

For the participants, the knowledge learned in psychosynthesis education indicates that a process of development has taken place. This development has followed different lines of progress. Some of the participants are in the process of opening up in their relations to others and are more inclined to share and to hand over responsibility to others than before (Anders, Anna-Greta). For them, trust in others has increased and interpersonal relations seem to become more important. Features such as communication and listening, negotiating, supporting, having dialogues with others and holding the anxiety of others become important. Some of the participants seem empowered by their insights and are stimulated to take on their own authority (Lena, Elsa, Elsie, Kristina). They have become increasingly aware of their own values and what matters to them, which make them trust themselves; and their identity seems clearer. This development could be understood as a development towards authenticity with a

greater awareness of their own quest, according to the ideas of Heidegger. Each person is born with a curiosity which gives rise to questions that may be asked Mulhall, 2005) (see above, p. 94).

When the participants of this study gain in awareness of their own point of reference which also involves new understanding of self, other possibilities become available and new ways to practice the profession evolve. However, as Dall'Alba points out, when we shape our professional identity there are no limitless possibilities, we develop through certain trajectories and it matters to us who we are becoming. We are likely to avail ourselves of those opportunities that advance our sense of who we are (Dall'Alba, 2009).

Professions often demand flexibility on behalf of the professional in order to enable individualised ways of working. Even though the participants have developed a stronger sense of their own identity and awareness of their own preferences, it appears that this development also leads to the possibility of being flexible. In the results of this study, there are some of the participants that say how they now prefer, for example, participation-centred ways of approaching their profession. Flexibility is expressed by the participants in this study, both in responses to the needs of the situation and in responses to the needs of other persons. One way of understanding flexibility and the potential of taking on a multiplicity of identities in professional responses, is through the paradox of human development suggested in the dialectic process of self-finding and self-loosening processes (Todres, 2007). This involves a dialectic relation between following your own quest and allowing your own style in searching for authenticity, but it is at the same time a process of opening up for the significance in situations, responding according to what is needed in a self-loosening process.

Another relevant insight gained in the training, concerns how you as a professional person are important in the development of identity of other persons. It results in an increased willingness for being there for others in their processes (Elsa Elsie, Kristina). The participants of this study also describe how they learned tools to create an open atmosphere in order to support others to dare to open up and show themselves as unique individuals. Authentic communication creating security to stay in oneself in the situation, it is to "be with" being present in the situation. Participating with openness and vulnerability in the group provides possibilities for a trusting and soulful atmosphere (Todres, 2007).

Self-awareness and self-knowledge

Awareness of our own point of reference includes both immanent and transcendent aspects of self. In this theme, the awareness of issues of identity seems most important. Identity is something that becomes clearer and of which many aspects were previously un-reflected, hidden in the natural attitude (Bengtsson, 1999). The participants learn to observe and to recognise their special identity and sets of values and beliefs against the background of the others. Immanently, to be recognised as a unique individual and to be true to oneself gives feelings of inspiration and creativity and a sense of coming home (Kristina). To open up for new self-understanding gives a sense of "being more than" the former self-objectifications and it provides a sense of agency (Todres, 2007). The immanent aspect also includes knowledge about the experience of anxiety and the insight that anxiety communicates something about how to find ourselves in relation to our own existence in the world (Mulhall, 2005). This is an insight that can be described by the situation when Anders learned to deal with unpredictable professional situations at work or when he lost his job.

The transcendent aspect concerns how the participants now perceive work with their own and other people's identity as more important than before in their profession (Lena Elsa, Kristina). They have also learned participatory ways of working by taking part in the psychosynthesis training. The participants of this study mention how they learned methods such as experiential learning and ways of creating nurturing relationships in order to support the development of the identity of their students. At the same time as the emergence of a clearer identity occurred, a greater possibility arose for flexibility in responding to others and to situations at the workplace. It is reasonable to think that the training, through the work of sub-personalities and multiple identities, creates a greater flexibility. These insights provide a possibility to respond from different points of reference in professional situations.

Situational awareness

In the theme of "Situational awareness", the participants describe changes in their own reactions and responses to other persons and parts of their profession. It is also a theme that concerns increased awareness about ways of participating in professional situations. The theme of "Situational awareness" also includes an awareness of entwinements and the complexity of professional situations. The change is best described as a deepening of immanent experience and a broadening of transcendent aspects towards a widened understanding of the world. This is a change that is described by one of the participants as "standing

one's own ground – getting a wider picture" (Lena). This expression may indicate a greater awareness of the entwined character of the life-world (Bengtsson, 1993 a). The participants show a greater awareness of how their own situation is part of a greater context. It is about the transpersonal development of the participants, who are able to embrace ambiguity to a greater extent, embracing both personal and general aspects in the organisation, according to the model suggested by Todres (2007). Examples are given where the participants mention changes in the ability of balancing between individual needs and organisational needs (Anders). They also mention an ability to think holistically, which means that they can understand particular situations in relation to the system (Anna Greta). Further, they mention a greater awareness of how the context is influencing the present moment (Lena).

Professionally, the participants have developed a stronger sense of agency and a greater degree of self-acceptance, which is part of the benefits often mentioned together with therapy according to Todres (2007). The participants in this study describe how there is a change in embodied feelings in the professional situation with increased feelings of trust in themselves, security and of being whole or of coming home. All embodied feelings belong to the immanent experience and self-awareness. This new security is considered to influence the atmosphere in the room and invite others to dare to open up. In this development towards a greater openness, the participants mention the importance of therapy and of learning about their own wounds and defensive patterns. The results show that the participants have come in contact with new feelings of easiness and joy in life and are less heavy-minded. Elsie describes the importance of increased empathy and sensitivity for the small signals in the field, which helped her to build the trusting atmosphere needed for supervisees to open up. She mentions how she understood that her "being there" as a person in this mood with vulnerability and empathy was more crucial than having all the answers as a professional. The participants in this study showed an increased willingness for "being there" for others; a change that is often implicitly learned in therapy (Todres, 2007).

The changes in immanent resonances to other people and objects allow professional situations to be approached with a different attitude. Several of the participants mention how they now understand the participatory way of working in depth. The facilitating and mentoring way of working becomes more important, in which it is a matter of assisting the experience of others, e.g. giving space for the "otherness", being there, and being with the other person. It is about attunement to the other person's experience rather than having all the

answers. The participants in this study show how they experienced the soulful qualities entering a group of supervision, or a team meeting, when they stay present in an undefended way. This development indicates increased awareness of the potential in staying open, to let oneself be moved and touched by the moods of the situation (Todres, 2007). It is like entering into the unknown, into a clearing, trusting the transpersonal qualities in authentic response with the needs of the situation (see above, p. 98) Sensitivity to the field and a trust in personal resonances are mentioned as important points that were learned.

One way to understand the deepened awareness of how to participate in professional situations seems to be in terms of responsibilities. It is about finding a realistic understanding of how to take responsibility in professional situations, and about trusting the knowledge that is distributed among the co-workers or among the members of the group. The participants described how they learned that they had taken too much responsibility and listened to little (Anders, Anna-Greta, Elsie). Some of the participants described a process towards an increased agency, taking on more of their professional responsibility (Lena, Elsie). In the cases of Elsa, Elsie and Kristina, the development indicated a change leading to taking responsibility in a different way. It is about understanding the responsibility connected with the position in the system and in groups. In a position of taking too much or too little professional responsibility, either way influenced the possibility of being present in relations at the workplace.

Another way of understanding what the participants expressed is through the concept of ambiguity. The participants show an increased awareness of the context expressed by a realistic understanding of their own position in the system (Anders), or the context of restrictions at the workplace (Lena). According to Dall'Alba, there are no limitless possibilities. A professional situation has the character of what was called by Heidegger "thrownness," which means that the possibilities available in professional development are not endless. The present situation is dependant of traditions in the past, as well as what is coming in the future (Dall'Alba, 2009). In her argumentation, she discusses how development is present in the tension between polarities of continuity and changes, possibilities and constraints, openness and resistance, individuality and otherness.

Extending this reasoning with the theory of transpersonal development and the theory of "embracing ambiguity"; according to Todres (2007), human development takes place in the tension between the possibilities of unspecialised nothingness as a counterpoint to specialized forms of being. He describes a rhythm, in which self-loosening and self-finding processes are mutually

supportive. Self-loosening provides experiences of wholeness when a widened story begins to take form; old objectifications seem un-necessary and unworkable. Different parts of the profession are understood in an integrated way. An example of self-loosening processes in this project is when the participants learned consciously to stay open and immerse themselves, giving attention to their own resonances in a situation (Anders, Elsie, Lena). This way of participation in the professional situation is an example of artistry or flow and could indicate a high level of integrated knowing. This involves being there with openness, giving space to what will emerge, trusting "a felt sense" in the situation rather than relying on reflected knowledge.

Self-awareness and self-knowledge

Professionals with self-awareness and self-knowledge in situations at work seem to improve their ability to consciously use reflection and shift between being immersed in the situation and transcending the situation, observing the situation from a distance in a process of reflection. It is about using different ways of knowing and to let oneself be informed by subjective responses to the situation. It is also about learning techniques for reflection both in meditation and in participating in a mood of vulnerability in reflective practices; being with, being there, giving space. As Dahlberg puts it, the intention of this kind of reflection is not to dissociate oneself from the situation and leave things behind. It is rather a process of letting the true meaning of the object emerge (Dahlberg, 2006).

Something we are or a skill to learn

In the discussion about how to teach professional competence in relation with personal qualities, an initial question on the philosophical level is whether these qualities should be considered as talents or as the disposition of a person; or whether those qualities were possible to learn in an education. The expression "*something you are or a skill we learn*" was frequent in the discussion about phronesis, tact or authenticity as qualities of the professional person. This expression indicates that these qualities are different from other kinds of competence, or different from skills that belong to the profession; they are not learned in processes of normal theory and skill acquisition. Now, after working my way through this empirical study, the conclusion is that there is an entwinement, a dialectic relation between what we are and the skills we learn. The arguments for this conclusion are found in the results of this study and are as follows.

In the process of learning about self, the participants experienced changes in their emotional responses to their environment, a change in awareness of personal resonance, awareness in their own point of reference and in their situational awareness, which could be considered as part of who they are. This study has touched upon self-awareness as the immanent experience of the subject, also called the first person perspective. The participants describe a change in their immanent experience after processing emotionally difficult experiences in the psychosynthesis training. The participants in this study develop a greater sensitivity and trust in their intuitive responses that they use in understanding professional situations. The participants describe a process of transformation where they understand themselves differently, gaining new points of references and the ability to stay open in relation to their professional world. These are all changes that indicate a difference in who "they are" in relation to themselves and in relation to their world. At the same time, they are not completely different; they report how easy it can be in stressful situations, to fall back into old patterns again, into fixed identifications, losing their openness to the world.

In what sense could self-awareness and self-knowledge be considered as connected to "a skill we learn"? In this case, it involves being able to observe oneself taking a second person perspective on the basis of self in the work situation, using the immanent experiences as information in the professional situation. For example, subjectivity is used in understanding when stress becomes destructive, understanding when it is time to use a method in order to remain open in the professional situation. It could be to enter into supervision to ease up difficult feelings and defensive behaviour. It is a way of consciously calibrating the "somatic compass" as expressed by Finlay (2011). Several of the participants interviewed in this study mention how they learned ways of being from teacher modelling, from theories of the training and from different methods which they brought into the profession. They describe ways of dealing with ethically sensitive situations or communication in conflict resolution. Those skills were learned by the experience of participating in group-work at the training and through teacher modelling of respectful behaviour and attitudes. This means that the training is not free from theories and skills, possible to learn as in a normal academic course.

However, the learning process in the training was different from "ordinary skill acquisition", according to some of the participants. Theories and methods were integrated into the experience of each person through the process of experiential learning. Personal experiences and pre-understanding involving

emotions, identity and questions of meaning were engaged. For example, understanding projections theoretically was not considered to make any sense before the participants could understand their own involvement in projections and the emotions connected with taking back projections. According to the theoretical approach in this study, we expand "what we are" when theories and methods are integrated into the unique self and become a part of our tacit understanding. However, we can consciously take a second person perspective on our professional situation through reflection in deciding the right method for the purposes we want to reach. We can also consciously work with our relationship to the world; we can observe ourselves taking responsibility for keeping up the relationship between the subject and world. This we can do by asking for help in overcoming difficult situations in which we tend to forget about our humanness and be rational or defensive.

In relation to professional knowing, and the difference between the logics of technical rationality and the logics of judgment, professional judgement has both an objective and a subjective side. The conclusion in this study is that the work that is done in gaining self-awareness and self-knowledge is concerned both with "what you are" and with "skills that you have learned". It is a matter of integration and this dialectic relationship exemplifies the entwined character of the life-world (Bengtsson, 1993 a) On the other hand, the educational settings in professional education need to offer situations where those kinds of experiences can be made, along with learning theories and methods of the practices belonging to the profession.

PART VI

Chapter 11

Discussion

The results in this study are based on a qualitative research approach; more specifically, a phenomenological life-world approach aiming at finding a deepened understanding of self-awareness and self-knowledge in professions (Bengtsson, 1999). When discussing the possibilities of generalization, Dahlberg et al. (2008) argues that practicing a reflective life-world is a way to reach beyond the individual and the individual experiences. When the participants of this study exemplify how they use their insights from their education in psychosynthesis in professional situations it also shows what it means to have self-awareness and self-knowledge in professions. Although there are rather few participants, it is what they say that is interesting and not the number of people expressing a specific experience. The results are presented in three steps where the analysis starts close to the individual experience in portraits; secondly, a thematic analysis is carried out and finally a theoretical analysis expresses a more general level. However, it cannot be claimed that the results are of a universal character; rather, they should be seen in a context (Bengtsson, 1999; Dahlberg, et al., 2008). This study is carried out in a context of six participants and the experiences they told in 6 interviews. Those experiences should also be seen in connection with human growth, professional development and in particular self-development. The contribution of this study will be discussed in relation to other research and theory in the field that was presented initially in this thesis. I will end the discussion with some suggestions for further research.

Education in the human aspects of professions

In this study, research on professional development involving the personal aspect in professions was presented; aspects like reflection and artistry, tact, authenticity and judgement were mentioned as different conceptualizations of the human aspect in the profession. The results from this study gave rise to some questions and the following section will connect to different strategies in education concerning the personal aspects of professions.

Education in tact

Tact was described by van Manen (2002) and was considered to be a talent that a person brings into the profession. He argued that tact concerns the development of the human potential through human growth, with elements of education, of aesthetics and ethics outside professional training in a personalized way of searching. According to van Manen tact is also about sensitivity and psychological understanding of others. A person with pedagogical tact was also described in terms of having a positive attitude; not having impossible attitudes and values such as having an attitude that the future is hopeless or to refuse to take an active responsibility for the future (van Manen, 2002). According to my understanding in this study, this could be regarded as a rather static view of people's ability to develop those competences. The conclusion based on the results of this study is that such qualities as sensitivity, attitudes and values are not so fixed and can be changed by education in self-development. The participants describe how their sensitivity for others, their understanding of the human condition has changed toward an increased sense of tact. The participants also report a new sense of easiness and joy in life in general, which spread into professional life (Anna-Greta).

Reflective practitioner

Schön discusses the reflective practitioner in terms of artistry, talent, intuition and integrated knowing, which were considered as possible to develop in practical training at the workplace, in internship or in studios together with a mentor (Schön, 1987). According to the results in this study, participants describe the education in self-development as a practice in itself for learning how to deal with relational and ethical issues. Apart from attaining awareness about their "personal resonance", "points of reference" and "situational awareness", the participants describe how they learned from the example of the trainers and by the interpersonal relationships that occurred in the group. The participants in this training also describe how they learned skills in communication and conflict resolution with inspiration from participating in the interpersonal groups. An important insight that was mentioned by the participants involved the exploration of the dynamics of projections and understanding their own involvement in projections. It has been considered that those insights were impossible to learn theoretically, although they were mentioned as crucial in understanding the complexity and the entwined character of professional situations (Bengtsson, 1993 a). Schutz describes in his theory about interpersonal relationships, the influence of our own subjectivity in understanding others

(Schutz, 1967). It was expressed by the participants in this study that they developed a greater empathy and understanding of the human condition at their workplace.

A question is then, if there is a need for specially trained teachers as mentors in, what Schön (1987) terms as, the design studio when learning about those issues in professional purposes. This study indicates that learning from "mentors" modelling those skills is supportive in developing skills like this. What is then the requirement of the "mentor" in the "studio" among students learning about human aspects in the profession? Is there a need for specially trained teachers as mentors in, what Schön terms as, the design studio when learning about those issues? If so, another question that may be asked is whether professional training at the university may provide such practice or should it be assumed that students seek this type of exercise outside the professional training? Such a solution would raise another set of questions; amongst other matters, concerning student economy and the readiness of entering that kind of training.

Authenticity

Laursen (2004) describes authenticity as trustworthiness and integrated knowing, when personal and professional aspects are in agreement. He argues that development of authenticity can be supported through engaging the student as a whole person in processes of reflection and through participatory ways of teaching (Laursen, 2004). The results in this study, concerning learning about the human aspect in the profession, also points to the importance of integrating theories and methods into the unique self. According to the results of this study, it seems as though there is inspiration to be found in identity work but there are difficulties as well. However, there are a set of questions that can be asked such as what it means to find authenticity. Are there degrees of authenticity that develop over time? Understanding development of authenticity as an indefinite process of change through challenging illusions, as described by O´Connor and Hallam, indicates that education may well be a place for challenging beliefs and supporting a process of change towards a more authentic identity. Processes of reflection and deconstruction may be used in transcending the natural attitude (Bengtsson, 1993 a; Brooks, 2009). However, this study shows that challenging the illusion of premature self-understanding might require extensive work in therapy in order to process difficult experiences from childhood and find the personal security that is needed to dare to open up in reflective practices. In the results of this study, the importance was particularly pointed out of a trustful

atmosphere in the group and the security of the leader to break these illusions of premature self-understanding. This influences the possibility for change and development towards authenticity. A question is then, how far or how seriously those issues will be taken in professional training, as there needs to be awareness about the complexity and the strengths and limitations with such a theory.

Professional-in-relation

Concerning professionalism-in-relation (my translation), Aspelin and Persson (2008) argue for a relational view on professional development and suggest a model in which students in teacher education develop professionally in the tension between the personal and the socially defined expectations of the profession. Further, they argue that personalized relationships are prior to the social expectations within the profession. Relationships are described in terms of closeness and distance, in personal and impersonal relationships. Key concepts are also creativity and the ability to attain coexistence, which describes a tension where individual creation falls short without a reception from the teacher. Aspelin and Persson develop their theory aiming at understanding professional education and the pedagogical relation on an ontological level. So far, they argue for personalized relationships and an active participation in the social setting that is offered in a professional training. However, reading Aspelin and Persson, it is not easy to understand if there are practical implications in terms of curricula or pedagogical methods in teacher training supporting those ideas (Aspelin & Persson, 2008, 2009). For instance, Neckmar argues for the importance, when building up supportive learning environments, of having clear strategies of how to proceed in order to achieve such relationships and such a work climate in an education (Neckmar, 1998). Critical questions that may be asked in relation to this theory is if personal relationships arise by themselves, or need there be strategies for how to develop relational capacity or creativity in professional training. A conclusion based on the results in this study is that professional persons are not always particularly open and can be rather impersonal and rational. Not all persons have the necessary trust in other people that is needed to express creativity. The participants described how they needed rather extensive work to recognise and transform defensive self-understanding. The results in this study exemplify how professional ways of being can be learned that allow creativity and personalized qualities in relating to other people. For instance, Anders and Anna-Greta mention how they experienced increased trust in themselves that led to a greater trust in others and in the process of projects at work. Elsa and Elsie describe how they, by finding security in themselves

became more relaxed and able to listen to the needs of the group. Understanding this development from a life-world perspective, a change in self may imply changes in the relation to other people and objects of the world. Furthermore, as described in this thesis, the development in interpersonal relationships, as well as development on a transpersonal level, has implications for how to approach a professional situation. This study shows that there are skills to learn that enhance the capability of creating a trusting atmosphere and enables personalized relations.

Professional judgement

Judgment is described as the personalised choices of the agent and the recipients when they apply all their resources of knowledge, their values, feelings and imagination within and outside the conscious awareness (Polkinghorne, 2004). As referred to by Polkinghorn, Aristotle pointed out how phronesis was partly connected with character training in childhood involving the experiences of parental love and partly supported by studying philosophy and ethics, together with discussions of a person's own experiences in particular situations. As Polkinghorne considers that phronesis develops during childhood in relation to parents love, it could be asked whether phronesis in this sense can be developed in adults who have not experienced this in childhood (Polkinghorne, 2004). The participants of this study describe a development with an increased awareness and transformation of their own subjectivity. They all describe a change in how they use subjectivity in understanding professional situations. In my study, themes like "awareness of personal resonance", "awareness of points of reference" as well as "situational awareness" describe aspects of that awareness.

This study shows that the participants increased their capacity in several of the mentioned areas, which are described within the conceptualisation of phronesis. Another question to ask is if the character education that may have been obtained in childhood is enough for the wisdom needed in a profession. Does this theory open up for more therapeutically oriented parts in professional training. This study showed the benefits of processing difficult childhood experiences. Or can reflective practices discussing ethics in relation to personal experiences from professions be considered as a proper level for enhancing a development towards phronesis in professions.

In service training in self-development

The course in self-development focused on in this study is arranged as in-service training, but it is also for private purposes. The course is announced as training

in self-development towards personal leadership. The psychosynthesis was described as an integrative psychology influenced by psychologies of psychoanalysis, existential therapy and transpersonal psychology (see further description chapter 4). This study gives an inside perspective of how participants learn and in what situations they make use of the insights they gained in a course focusing on self-development. The results show that it is possible to learn and develop self-awareness and self-knowledge in education, which was one of the questions of this study. This also implies a development of "what we are" and of "skills to learn". In the literature review some other courses focusing on self-development were mentioned such as "Courage to teach" (Palmer, 1998), the programme of "existential leadership" (Andersson, 2005) and of "psychological and pedagogical development" (Sandvik, 2009). These were qualitative studies and they all describe the possible outcome of such programmes. In the comparison of theories and designs about self-development related to professional development, there appear to be many similarities in the discourse of self-development. However, the theoretical basis and the arrangement of the courses vary and it is difficult to compare them. There is one difference I would like to comment, which is of significance according to the understanding in this project, and that is the presence of the therapeutic element.

Therapy or transpersonal levels of reflection

Comparing the results in the review written by Poutiatine (2005) of the "courage to teach programme", similarities can be recognised in what participants learn in terms of issues about identity and reflection. The "Courage to teach" programme is based on transpersonal and existential theories using a deep level of reflection where people reconnect to personal purpose and find creativity and renewal in their profession (Poutiatine, 2005). He also shows an integration of personal and professional life that is recognised in the themes of this study as "awareness of points of reference" and "situational awareness".

However, there are fewer issues in Poutiatine's results associated with matters that in this study are represented in the theme "awareness of personal resonance". According to the interpretation in this study, there seems to be a dividing line between courses that have elements of therapy processing childhood experience and courses that base their practice on reflection.

The "courage to teach programme" uses a method of reflection called "circles of trust"(Palmer & Scribner, 2007) Understanding this circle of trust from Todres (2007) theories describes human development through self-defining and self-loosening processes of reflection it could be said that a "circle

of trust" is a source of opening up rather than therapeutically processing difficult memories behind the defensive patterns and difficult experiences. A circles of trust, could be described as a reflective practice that is open to transpersonal qualities; the purpose is to return to "non-specialised forms of consciousness" (Todres, 2007) and open up for change and renewal (Palmer & Scribner, 2007).

If we compare the results from the studies presented by Poutiatine, on the outcome of the "courage to teach programme" (Poutiatine, 2005), with the results of this study, there are similarities in what participants learn. One point is that there are indications that it is possible to reach far with vulnerability, authentic communication in reflective practices with specially trained facilitators. But there are also expressions in the results of this study in which participants describe how they lived with the belief of "I manage without a father" (Elsie), or "I am not wanted" (Elsa) or "No one will help me if I fall" (Anders). These are all illusions connected with premature self-understanding related to difficult feelings; feelings that might be too difficult to convey in an everyday setting or in reflectional practice. Several participants in this study mentioned the importance of therapeutic elements in the training, when they were assisted in processing difficult feelings that they had rationalized away for many years.

A critical question in relation to this study is whether patterns of defence can be reached through reflections in groups without elements of therapy. Or is there a risk that people stay in fixed self-objectification with a premature self-understanding, which hinders the process that leads to participation with vulnerability, being there for others, making space for what will emerge? It could also be that if participants 'open up' they may easily fall into old defensive patterns, which was easily done according to the participants of this study. These results indicate that, for some professionals, therapy is supportive in developing professional understanding and in reaching behind defensive patters and belief-systems of the individual.

The idea of education as the emperor's new clothes

The research object of this study concerns whether and how the human aspect can be developed in professional training. Different aspects within the discourse of self-development were described and different kinds of training were presented. An empirical study was carried out and the results indicate that there are strategies for supporting a development of the professional as a person. However, several considerations need to be clarified when approaching this personal aspect of professional training. There are several considerations to be made in terms of aims and means of supporting self-development. Questions

concerning the matters of entering the personal sphere of integrity and of ethics are important.

Discussing the design of courses in self-development through the model of transformation of selves, understanding self as an illusion, self was defined as a point of reference with certain beliefs, according to O'Connor and Hallam. The transformative situation in which illusions should be challenged is metaphorically described as the emperor's new clothes (O'Connor & Hallam, 2009) (see above, p. 106). In transferring the analogy of the emperor's new clothes onto education supporting self-awareness and self-knowledge, it may be asked which requirements are needed for having those positions of the child, of the emperor or the crowd. Who will be the significant other, who is allowed, or able to tell the truth? Is it a teacher or could it be a colleague at work or a peer in the educational setting? Or does it need to be a trained therapist? What is the strategy of the emperor whose illusions are up for challenge? Is it to keep up the façade at any price or is he willing to open up for change? What is the requirement of the crowd? The crowd needs to have empathy to support the emperor in case the illusion breaks, since this might be connected with difficult feelings. Or is it a crowd in the mood of a battlefield where there are warriors and fighters (Anna-Greta, Anders). The results of this study further indicate that it is possible to educate students and to develop both "who we are" and "skills we need" professionally, but we have to put ourselves in that position. We must consider which type of education that can offer those kinds of experiences. For example, if I have difficulties in personal resonance it seems as if the therapeutic elements need to be there. And the question is can we make such arrangements in professional training to enhance self-development? Or would it be acceptable to develop self-awareness and self-knowledge in professional education through creating reflectional practices with openness in soulful atmospheres (Todres, 2007). Or would it be accepted to develop self-awareness and self-knowledge in professional education using elements of therapy as well?

Is it possible to challenge the illusions that people bring to an education by approaching people with openness and authentic communication in processes of distancing and reflection? The conclusion of this study is that it is possible to come far with existential and spiritual designs of courses in self-development. However, the psychoanalytic part with elements of understanding defensive behaviour and confronting repressed difficult feelings connected with a primal wound would contribute with a foundation of maturity that influences both immanent and transcendent aspects in personal resonance, professional points of references and the situational awareness.

To continue the analogy with the emperor's new clothes, understanding education as a process of challenging old illusions and finding new ways to understand professional situations, the conclusion of this study is that there needs to be an awareness of the agreements and commitments for what different kinds of courses in self-development can contribute with. The different elements that build the course conditions what might be learned. There are different agreements and commitments involved in the courses and reflectional practices; these are presented in the chapter 3. Overlapping aims and methods might occur, although an awareness of the complexity of the area is crucial. A conclusion of this study is that there is a need of agreement concerning theories, methods and the strategies independent of whether the course is carried out within or outside academia.

Course design towards self-development

In previous research, reviewed earlier in this thesis, several key factors that were important for the outcome of the education were mentioned. Among other things it was important that participants had a belief in the transformative potential of the course (Poutiatine, 2005). The way psychosynthesis is designed with educational parts as well as experiential parts with therapy, interpersonal groups, individual therapy and leader approach are all parts that have been shown in earlier research to be beneficial for courses in personal development (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). In the results of this study, interpersonal therapy and individual therapy are particularly mentioned as valuable. This kind of therapy engages the deeper layers of the professional person and several factors appear to be important in those kinds of courses.

The importance of free will

One critical question is whether professional education in self-development including elements of therapy would be suitable to offer in a workplace or in professional training. Hornborg described a situation in which courses in personal development were bought and were offered to the entire staff of schools or local authorities. In these cases, some professionals were critical against involving psychology and discussing personal matters in front of colleagues (Hornborg, 2012). According to the results in this study, participants entered the training primarily as part of their own searching, even though their insights became important in their profession. Several participants describe a tough period and it would be difficult to imagine this kind of education as obligatory at the workplace or in a professional education.

Lasting changes depending on length of education

Considering the question raised by Payne, of whether training in personal development will give lasting changes (Payne, 1999), participants in this study describe changes in how they approach and experience their work. Compared with the study reviewed by Payne, it appears that the length of the training and the content of the education, carried out within the frame of this thesis, were sufficient for lasting changes. Personal experiences are described as less heavy, less stressful and more filled with tranquility and joy. However, here we have not pursued whether the clients or students of the professional would benefit from this knowledge. When it comes to the question of integration into everyday life, the participants in this study say that it was only after three years in the education that the main transformation occurred. This is an indication that self-development is a long-term process rather than a quick fix.

Theories and methods

In the results of this study, the psychosynthesis models that were most often mentioned in relation to learning about self concerned exploring early relationships. In fact, all of the participants referred to a "primal wound" and a "survival personality" including an initial pattern associated with that part of their personality. Several participants mentioned a change in identity, or the development of a flexible identity, resulting from the work with the primal wound and sub-personalities. This part of the training aims towards exploring the strategies that people develop in response to their earlier relationships. The use of the model of the primal wound and survival patterns seems to be vital in the stories of the participants. To touch on the personal experience involving the emotional level that can be hidden in early experiences seems crucial to the participants in this study. Other theories mentioned were models based on the Scapegoat complex and Shadow. These were important in the understanding of the projective character of the situation; understanding the entwinement in the professional situation.

Therapy

The interpersonal therapy training in groups is mentioned as helpful in learning about projections. The processing of difficult experiences with a therapist seems to be important in the development towards self-awareness and self-knowledge. The relevance of therapy in professional training is often a difficult issue, because recommending therapy could be considered as entering too much into a private domain of the professional student. However according to Zehm (1999),

it is not unusual that the teacher students have difficult childhoods and defensive behaviours that can prevent them from creating a nurturing learning environment (Zehm, 1999). Taking those indications seriously would require a change in attitude in educational policy, for instance in teacher training. What are the possibilities of having an interpersonal group in a teacher education? Interpersonal therapy is managed by specifically trained leaders and facilitators. What are the conditions for introducing such an element in the teacher training? There are professions, such as psychologists, who must participate in therapy during their professional training. This could imply that there is an attitude within other professions that has to be challenged and altered. Without having carried out scientific research on the matter, I have noticed that there is a range of courses addressing for instance teachers and professionals in human resources that focus on social relations, communications, and various methods of conflict resolution based on psychological theories. When it comes to practical training, workshops can be seen based on drama pedagogy rather than interpersonal groups or encounter groups.

Group-process

Several participants in this study explained how participating in a cohesive group seems important for their process of developing self-knowledge. This circumstance is in line with earlier research, for instance the research of Zehm. He suggests that one way to organise group experience could be to have a cohesive group of teacher students that follow each other's developmental processes during their professional education (Zehm, 1999). The results of his study also show that the group was important in developing a new point of reference. Neckmar even mentioned the small collaborative group as important in the process of self-development (Neckmar, 1998).

Experiential learning – student centred ways of becoming professional

The results of this study indicate that student-centred or client-centred ways of being professional seemed more important after participation in the psychosynthesis training. The participants said that they learned how to individualize and to work with groups, creating a trusting environment that functioned as a supportive climate where individuals dared to be themselves. This is in line with the results in the research of Neckmar, who argues for student-centred approaches in education; they appeared to be supportive in the

process of developing the personal aspect in professional training (Neckmar, 1998).

Modelling

Several participants in this study mention an increased awareness of the modelling aspect in the profession. Situations were exemplified when professionals realised their value for others in situations of being a significant other for pupils in the classroom in identity work, in communicating feelings in the supervision group or in modelling respectful behaviour within the professional situation (Elsa, Elsa). Other research concerning teacher educators, mention the aspect of modelling as important in communicating the ideals within the profession to teacher students (Lunenberg, et al., 2007).

Self-development towards individualism

Another question on a general level is concerned with what type of person that is shaped in an education like this? In Chapter 5, critics of the psychological discourse in professional development mention a number of aspects that were considered as difficult when psychology enters into professional life. The education mentioned in their studies was not particularly specified in terms of theories, methods and range, although psychosynthesis as a method was mentioned as one of their objects for criticism. Their concerns seem to be discussed on a general level rather than according to systematic research. The following discussion will concern only the results of this specific study, not all of the education that is mentioned in the critique of Hornborg (2012) and Johansson (2008). The presented results in this study are based on a qualitative research design and show the lived experiences of six persons that have participated in at least two years of a psychosynthesis programme. Accordingly, these results cannot be generalized to apply to all courses in self-development, not even for all participants in psychosynthesis. Nevertheless, I will discuss what is seen in the results in relation to the critical questions listed in chapter 5.

There are a number of expressions often used in the discourse of self-development, according to critics, that may indicate a development towards individualism in society. The influences from psychology were considered to go hand in hand with individualization and concern was expressed that struggles of class, social injustices and exploitation were left behind. Johansson argues that psychology was the new "opium for the people" (Johansson, 2008). Hornborg warns for the rhetoric of adaptation (Hornborg, 2012). The results of this study do not support this understanding. The participants in this study describe an

increased acceptance of the human condition at the workplace. Moreover, they express how they have less need for "heroes" and "warriors". Important insights that are mentioned include the capacity to see through entwinements and that the participants have less need of idealizations. They have also learned about using the stress level as information, they have learned to set limits. In relation to their profession, they have learned to balance between personal needs and organisational needs. Some of the participants mention how they take on their professional authority and ability to use their voice in the system.

Psychosynthesis as an alternative therapy

In the results of this study, there is little focus on political or economic issues. The questions that were asked in the interview focused on insights and experiences from the participants' professional life and did not ask specifically about political or economic matters. However, my own experience of participating in a psychosynthesis training, which (in Sweden) still belongs to an alternative method of therapy, is that the discussions about legitimacy, mentioned by Hornborg (2012), questions of professional titles, leader-competence and economy are highly interesting within the discourse of psychosynthesis and are often discussed. Efforts concerning internal quality control, authorization and legitimization are made by the organisations. The training is also quite expensive; only a few of the participants receive financial support from their employers. This might also be expected to influence the people who have the opportunity to participate.

The ideal of the perfect human in constant change

The ideal leader in the management discourse is according to Johansson (2008) taken as a model for the perfect human. Qualities are mentioned such as being dynamic, colourful, inclined for change, emotionally intelligent and having the ability to see others. He argues that those ideals heighten expectations and for those who do not find their potential, feelings of inadequacy and alienation may increase. Feelings of failure would then in turn create further need for guidance (Johansson, 2008). According to the results of this study, those ideals seem to be developed and held in high regard within the discourse of psychosynthesis. At the same time, the participants say that they have less need for idealizing other people, they have a greater self-acceptance and have gained the understanding that people develop different styles. For the participants in this study, self-development does not seem to be about developing the perfect persona; rather, an attitude is fostered that everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Some

participants talk about an awareness of their own position in relation to the system. Anders expressed that "a system cannot function due to heroic efforts of perfect people, but instead in processes and with teams who make things happen".

The idea of "You can never change another person, you can only change yourself"

What happens in an organisation if all difficulties are explained by individual causes? What happens when the interest of searching for explanations on the structural level is overlooked and people instead find solutions of their own? The risk is that people leave too early and that individual solutions are prioritized over systemic solutions (Johansson, 2008).

There are examples in the results where professionals seek their way through different professions in order to find a position that seems meaningful for them. However, does that necessarily mean that they become detached from their local communities or lose their interest for social change or for other people? In the results, there were examples where participants say that they take themselves more seriously after learning more about themselves. In Kristina's case, the education led her away from the teaching profession into the therapeutic profession. Throughout her life, she has sought for genuine encounters. She found that genuine meetings felt most meaningful and those were possible to arrange in smaller groups and in the therapeutic work rather than in the large classes encountered in her profession as a teacher at the folk high school. On the other hand, Elsa returned to teaching, a profession that she previously had dropped out of due to difficulties in her early career. She now felt more mature and equipped to shoulder the responsibilities involved in educating students; she had learned to set limits and had found a balance between the demands of the profession and her personal needs as professional. At the time of the interview, Elsa perceived the teaching profession as more meaningful than a management discourse, which she now described as permeated with status-thinking and such like. Kristina and Elsa indicate that the logic of following our own interest does not exclude possibilities of exercising power in the system.

Setting myself first

Hornborg (2012) argues how the attitude of "setting myself first" creates an individualistic culture and detached ways of relating to other humans. In the results of this study, the participants describe their awareness of closeness and distance in relationships. The participants mention a change in which

relationships become more important, they take themselves and other humans more seriously. It is a question of realizing our own value for others, as well as how other persons matter to us. The participants in this study talk about a development towards empathic understanding and awareness of authenticity in relation to other people and an ability to communicate more effectively. This process seems to imply a change that could be described as restoring a balance between self and others, between giving and taking. They define themselves in a different way in relation to others, which seems to mean new ways of relating to other people. Understood from a life-world perspective, this development of the individual cannot be seen in isolation; life and world are connected, a change in self means that intentions and relationships become different.

Relevance for professional education

In this study, I have highlighted key aspects of professional development related to the professional as a person. I have shown the complexity of the area but also the possibility to influence the development of self-awareness and self-knowledge in an active way through education. This study contributes to actualize processes of personal development in relation to professional development.

In this study, based on a phenomenological research approach, I have specifically sought a deeper understanding for what participants learn and what it might mean to have self-awareness and self-knowledge as it is developed in psychosynthesis training. Individual experiences from professional situations were asked for and the results exemplify what can be learned. However, it does not provide answers whether participation in psychosynthesis training somehow creates changes that may hinder the professionals in their work. It would be interesting to find out the limitations of the psychosynthesis training in a further study, asking questions about the education. One possible way could be to interview people who have participated in the first two years, but decided that two years was enough.

It would be interesting to find out whether the perceived change has repercussions that are visible to others in the person's environment. According to Payne, there is little evidence that self-development is beneficial to clients in therapy (Payne, 1999). It would be interesting to design a study that would capture the experiences of clients. The reception and the context when those who have taken part in the training of self-development came back to their usual surroundings have also proved to be important in keeping up the changes, according to Andersson (2005).

In conclusion the result of this study do not provide any obvious answers. They illuminate possibilities but also the complexities of these questions.

Chapter 12

Swedish Summary

Introduktion

Syftet med denna avhandling är att studera betydelsen av yrkespersonlig utveckling. I propositionen om nya lärarutbildningen SOU 2008:109 nämns "mogen självkännedom" som en förutsättning för lärarens relationella kompetens och möjlighet att fostra och skapa positiva lärmiljöer i skolan. Mogen självkännedom beskrivs som en naturlig talang, men också något som kan utvecklas i en yrkesutbildning genom handledning av experter. Däremot sägs inte explicit vad dessa handledare skall vara experter på. Avhandlingens viktiga forskningsfråga är vad deltagare lär sig i en psykosyntesutbildning som de senare använder i yrkeslivet.

Bakgrund

Frågeställningen utgår från ett intresse för skol- och personalutveckling. Historiskt har förändringar i samhället lett till ökat fokus på individens roll inom yrkeslivet. Dessa förändringar brukar beskrivas som ett skifte från ett modernistiskt till ett postmodernt (Hargreaves, 1994) eller senmodernt samhälle (Giddens, 1991). Det har inneburit decentralisering av makt från centralt hierarkiskt styrda system mot ökat inflytande för individen. Med större frihet för individuella och lokala anpassningar förväntas man bättre kunna möta ett lokalsamhälle i snabb förändring. På skolans område har genomförts en rad reformer, t.ex. överföring av ansvaret för skolans styrning från stat till kommun 1991. Marknadskrafter släpptes in i skolan genom friskolereformen 1992, som också möjliggjorde en spridning av huvudmannaskapet. Därefter infördes en ny läroplan, LpO 94, baserad på mål och resultatstyrning. Skolan har genomgått en demokratiseringsprocess, och på lokal nivå prövas olika former för föräldrar och andra intressenter att delta i t.ex. självförvaltande skolor eller brukarråd. I samband med denna förändring har kravet på uppföljning av resultat ökat, och olika system har utvecklats för att mäta kvalitet och måluppfyllelse i verksamheten (Ds 2001:48; SOU 1992:94; SOU 1995:103).

Den reflekterande skolan är en av flera organisationsformer som motsvarar den decentraliserade och individualiserade skolformen. Den professionelle

förväntas här ta ett större ansvar för skolans utveckling i sin helhet. Man utgick ifrån ett "bottom - up" perspektiv med antaganden om att professionella själva kunde avgöra vad som behövde utvecklas och förbättras med utgångspunkt i den egna situationen. Typiskt för denna verksamhet är principer som att lära från misstag, att våga pröva, att inte veta på förhand och att våga utnyttja den potential som finns i att släppa in olika perspektiv i verksamheten (Lindqvist & Magnusson, 1999; SOU 1992:94). Den reflekterande skolan hämtade inspiration från den "lärande organisationen", en modell som var vanlig i näringslivet vid denna tid (Fullan, 1996; Scherp, 2002; Senge, 1995).

En idealbild av den individualiserade skolan beskrevs i *Lärande ledare* (Utbildningsdepartementet, 2001). I denna modell lades tonvikt på individualisering, autonomi, självförverkligande för både lärare och elev. Relationer med elever och kollegor förväntades ha hög kvalitet och lärarollen skiftade beroende på elevens behov. Experten, undervisaren, mentorn, handledaren, utvärderaren och metodutvecklaren var exempel på roller som läraren skulle behärska. Ett personligt syfte och engagemang i arbetet antogs vara motiverande för den professionelle.

Denna vision hade högt ställda ambitioner och beskrev ett förändrat läraruppdrag med krav på god förtrogenhet med innehåll och metoder, men också på personliga kvaliteter såsom engagemang, flexibilitet och relationskompetens. I propositionen för den nya lärarutbildningen (SOU 2008:109) gick att utläsa ett ökat fokus på evidensbaserade metoder och didaktik. Intresset riktades också på läraren som person och stort utrymme gavs för sociala relationer, ledarskap och konflikthantering i den utbildningsvetenskapliga kärnan. Studenterna måste kunna utveckla en mogen självkännedom, vilket enligt propositionen är möjligt genom goda samtal om relationsfrågor under sakkunnig ledning.

Inom "evidensdebatten" speglades olika synsätt på vad lärare behövde kunna i yrket. Polkinghorne (2004) beskriver skillnaden i syn mellan teknisk rationalitet och omdömesrationalitet. Det teknisk rationella lägret representerade en tro på att evidensbaserade metoder är det som skapar förändring. Yrkeskunskap blev då att behärska och välja rätt metoder, och med detta synsätt blev implementering och mätning av resultat viktigt. Omdömesrationalitet, å andra sidan, ansåg att de mänskliga relationerna är avgörande. Yrkeskunnande handlar då om det situationsbundna, att förstå människor, att kunna relatera och vara kommunikativ. Polkinghorne valde de Aristoteliska begreppen episteme och techne för det tekniskt rationella och fronesis för att beskriva omdöme. Han menade att det fanns en obalans i evidensdebatten med en överbetoning på det

tekniskt rationella och att omdömet kommer i skymundan. Polkinghorne menade att fronesis skiljer sig från episteme och techne eftersom det inte är en färdighet eller metod utan snarare beskrev hur man är som människa i yrket (Polkinghorne, 2004).

I denna studie anses självmedvetenhet och självkännedom utgöra en aspekt av fronesis eller praktisk klokhet. Fronesis får beteckna de aspekter av yrkeskunnandet som har med relationer, det situerade, och hanteringen av det komplexa och motsägelsefulla i situationen. Det har att göra med den subjektiva erfarenheten i yrket och utgörs av emotioner, föreställningar och intuition. Det handlar också om ett förhållningssätt där personer behandlas som tänkande och kännande varelser snarare än som resurser. Fronesis beskriver en deliberativ reflektionsprocess, där den professionelle står i kontakt med både innehåll, elev och situation och med elevens bästa för ögonen. Fronesis handlar om unika situationer snarare än regler och rutiner enligt Polkinghorne (2004). Enligt Aristoteles är fronesis en produkt av den fostran man fått, men den går att utveckla genom samtal om etiskt svåra situationer (Polkinghorne, 2004).

Denna avhandling tar fasta på att fronesis eller den praktiska klokheten är kopplad till personen i yrket. Att utveckla personen är inte detsamma som att utveckla kunskap om teorier och metoder. I professionsforskning inom skolans värld har det funnits begrepp som inbegriper olika aspekter av omdöme, som till exempel den reflekterande praktikern (Schön, 1983, 1987), pedagogisk takt (van Manen, 2002), den autentiske läraren (Laursen, 2004) yrkeskunnande-i-relation (Aspelin & Persson, 2009).

I avhandlingen studeras hur man kan bidra till utveckling av dessa kvaliteter. Schön (1987) betonar vikten av erfarenhet i praktik, lärlingskap, studio och dialog i utvecklingen av den reflekterande praktikern. Van Manen menar att takt handlar om attityder och förhållningssätt och personligt växande men säger ingenting om hur detta skall utvecklas (van Manen, 1990). Laursen tar hjälp av traditioner inom existentiell terapi och menar att trovärdighet och autenticitet utvecklas om lärarstudenter får tillfälle att utforska yrket i relation till egna värderingar, syfte och motivation i livet, egna talanger och begränsningar (Laursen, 2004). Aspelin & Persson menar att relationella aspekter, förmågan att omfatta andra, att skifta mellan elevens perspektiv och pedagogisk profession, kan läras genom att arbeta med sociala relationer och interpersonella relationer i utbildningen (Aspelin & Persson, 2009).

Denna bakgrund visar att den mäskliga aspekten i yrket är viktig, men att den är svår att fånga. Gemensamt för de olika inriktningarna är att dessa kunskaper inte lärs genom erövring av teorier och metoder utan beror på hur man är som

människa. Däremot ges ingen enhetlig bild över hur denna aspekt kan utvecklas eller vilken sorts sakkunnig ledning som avses.

Inom terapeut- och ledarskapsyrken finns en tradition att tänka om personlighetens betydelse i yrket, och personlig utveckling är inte ovanligt i dessa professioners yrkesutbildning. Enligt en sammanfattning av Mandell motiveras dessa inslag av att den vi är som person har betydelse för hur arbetet genomförs och hur teorier och metoder används. Det är bl.a. viktigt att ha färdigheter i kommunikation och att kunna läsa icke-verbala uttryck. Man behöver ha medvetenhet om sin egen förförståelse, öppenhet och äkthet och ett icke-dömande förhållningssätt. Man menar också att det är av vikt att förstå sina känslor inför andra och att ha en känsla för gränser (Mandell, 2007).

Syfte och frågeställning

Syftet i denna studie är att undersöka vad deltagarna lär sig genom att delta i en kurs för personlig utveckling med psykosyntes som metod. Syftet är att förstå självmedvetenhet och självkännedom så som det utvecklas i psykosyntesutbildningen. Fokus är inställt på hur ökad medvetenhet och kunskap om sig själv kan påverka professionellas relation till arbetet. Att ha självinsikt och självkännedom som professionell säger i sig inget om utvecklingen av personliga egenskaper. Intresset i denna studie är att undersöka om själva processen att lära om sig själv också påverkar den professionelles omdöme, känsla för takt, autenticitet eller relationella kompetens. Deltagarna intervjuas om situationer i yrket som de hanterar annorlunda efter psykosyntes-utbildningen. Av särskilt intresse är att veta vilka moment i utbildningen som varit mest avgörande för deras utveckling. Forskningsfrågorna är specifikt:

- Vad lär sig deltagare i en psykosyntesutbildning som de senare använder i yrkeslivet?
- Vilka delar av kursen anser man vara viktigast för utvecklingen av en mogen självkännedom?

Tidigare forskning

Forskning om vad som lärs i personlig utveckling återfinns inom psykologi och pedagogik, och den har beröringspunkter med forskning inom fortbildning i yrket och livslångt lärande. Den har också beröringspunkter med terapi och det finns forskning inom hälsoområdet som visar på effekter av terapi för välbefinnande och livskvalitet i människors vardagsliv. Denna forsknings genomgång kan delas upp i två kategorier; 1) Forskning som behandlar strategier för självutveckling inom yrkesutbildning och 2) Forskning om fortbildnings-

kurser för professionella med ett huvudsakligt fokus på personlig utveckling. Forskningsfält om samband mellan terapi och livskvalitet har valts bort då fokus i denna studie är just personlig utveckling i relation till yrkesutbildning. Tyngdpunkten i kapitlet utgörs av forskning om personlig utveckling i relation till läraryrket och lärarutbildning, men även andra yrkesområden förekommer.

Självutveckling i relation till professionell utbildning
I kategorin "forskning som behandlar strategier för självutveckling" spårar Zehm de historiska rötterna till vad han kallar "självutvecklingsrörelsen" i progressivismen och till tanken att individen har en potential som kan utvecklas via utbildning. En växande medvetenhet om den egna förmågan ansågs frigörande för individen. Ur progressiva idéer växte ämnet utbildningsvetenskap fram, och man utnyttjade psykologiska och sociologiska teorier och metoder för utveckling av människan (Zehm, 1999). Han menade att det redan tidigt fanns varnande röster för en alltför objektivistisk syn på utbildning och det argumenterades för att professionella behövde subjektiva kunskaper såsom god intuition i yrket. Zehm beskrev också hur självutvecklingsrörelsen i Amerika fluktuerande i betydelse under 1900-talet, vilket han kopplade samman med svängningar i konjunkturen. I kristid ropas efter förbättrade elevresultat och ökad effektivitet i undervisningen och rationella synsätt tar över (Zehm, 1999).

Under 1960-talet handlade flera arbeten om vikten av självutveckling för lärare, bl.a. Jersild (1955), som ville fokusera lärares existentiella villkor och vad som krävdes för att på djupet möta studenter. Utöver kurser i självutveckling tar Zehm också upp att det finns många lovande inslag i lärarutbildningen som stödjer utvecklingen av personen inom diskursen som rör den reflekterade praktiken. Han menade dock att det finns skäl att återta ett fokus på personlig utveckling i lärarutbildningen då en gemensam begreppsapparat för vad det innebär att vara människa i yrket skulle kunna lösa många problem när det gäller utveckling av generella kompetenser i yrket. Detta gäller också diskussionen kring antagning till yrket (Zehm, 1999).

Ett annat sätt att beskriva utvecklingstrender inom lärarutbildning gjordes av Korthagen (2004). Han beskrev det dominerande perspektivet de senaste åren med fokus på lärares kompetens. Forskningen på området syftade till att korrelera lärares beteende med studenters framgång. Korthagen menar att denna inriktning ledde till långa listor av kompetenser som lärare skulle ha. Detta bidrog i sin tur till en fragmenterad syn på vad lärare bör kunna. Han tecknade en bild av hur den humanistiskt orienterade lärarutbildningen kom och gick ganska obemärkt under 1970-talet. Korthagen menade att den ändå bidrog till en förändrad syn på kompetens så att personliga egenskaper som t.ex. kärlek till

barnen, entusiasm och flexibilitet räknades. Korthagen föreslog en realistisk, holistisk syn på lärarutbildningen och positionerade sig mellan dessa perspektiv. Han menade att det inte bara är kompetenser och observerbara beteenden som kan påverkas i yrkesutbildningen utan att även djupare lager i personligheten behöver engageras (Korthagen, 2004). Korthagen & Vasalos introducerade begreppet "core reflection" and "deep learning" med influens från positiv psykologi (Vasalos & Korthagen, 2005).

När det gäller forskning som berör självutveckling i yrkesutbildning genomför Neckmar (1998) en studie av vårdlärarprogrammet. Lärarstudenterna ombads utvärdera om deras utbildning förmådde förbereda dem för personligt utmanande situationer i yrket. De fick också ange vilka moment som de menar verkat stödjande för den egna utvecklingen. Resultatet visade att det område som ansågs minst personligt utmanade var sådant som handlade om innehållet, medan det som berörde möten med elever ansågs svårt. Ett resultat i hennes studie var att strategin för personlig utveckling inte uppfattades på samma sätt av alla studenter. Slutsatsen som drogs i studien var att denna skillnad kunde bero på lärarutbildarens skicklighet i att implementera de aktuella momenten (Neckmar, 1998).

Payne (2001) refererade i en forskningsöversikt resultatet av personlig utveckling inom olika terapeututbildningar. Hon menade att det fanns få forskningsprojekt som kunnat visa att antaganden bakom personlig utveckling stämmer och ger kundnytta. Payne menade att det fanns för lite forskning på området när det gäller kundnytta, utbildningstid och kursutformning i relation till resultat. Hon menade också att forskningsmetoder behöver utvecklas som bättre kan fånga det som sker (Payne, 1999).

Självutvecklingskurser som kompetensutveckling
Den tidiga formen av kurser med fokus på självutveckling för professionella var de klasiska T- eller sensitivitetsgrupperna i början av seklet med Kurt Lewin som förgrundsgestalt. De gav tillfälle att i grupp öppet visa inre känslor och släppa den sociala fasaden i möten med andra (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). Forskning visar att deltagare ofta upplevde positiva förändringar i dessa kurser, men svårigheter uppstod då yrkespraktiken ofta var helt skild från atmosfären i utbildningspraktiken (Derefelt, 1975; Ellström, 1992; Moxnes, 1997).

Andersson (2005) genomförde en kvalitativ studie med intervjuer före, under och efter det att chefer genomgått en 5 veckors utbildning i "Existentiellt ledarskap". En symbolisk interaktionistisk referensram användes för att förstå de personliga konflikter som uppstår under utvecklingen av ledarskap. Resultatet visade att man omförhandlade sin identitet under utbildningen, men att man

hade svårt att behålla förändringen då organisationskulturen inte tillät dessa förändringar. Resultatet blev ofta att man bytte arbetsplats eller arbetsuppgift. Andersson drog slutsatsen att kontexten betyder mycket och att chefen på arbetsplatsen behöver efterfråga de kunskaper som lärs (Andersson, 2005).

Sandvik (2009) utformade ett eget handledningskoncept för förskolelärare, "psykologisk pedagogisk utveckling". Programmet har en utbildningsdel utgående från självpsykologisk teori och en handledningsdel som diskuterar filmade sekvenser från den egna yrkespraktiken. Sandvik använder en fenomenologisk hermeneutisk analys i sin forskning. Resultatet visade såväl en ökad teoretisk förståelse för barns utveckling som en ökad villighet att ta barns perspektiv och att vara barns självobjekt. Deltagarna beskrev en ökad känsla av själv, självkänsla samt en förändrad didaktisk attityd och relationell kompetens.

Ytterligare ett program, med personlig utveckling som förtecken, är "Courage and Renewal" utvecklat av Palmer (1998). Det har en utbildningssekvens på åtta helger utspridda under två år och syftar till att överbrygga klyftan mellan lärares inre och yttre liv enligt mottot " living divided no more". Tanken i utbildningen är att stimulera lärarens inre liv och väcka känslan av kall och engagemang i yrket. I en forskningsöversikt över studier gjorda på programmet visar Poutiantine (2005) att deltagarna beskrev förändringar som rör undervisningsskicklighet, dispositioner och förhållningssätt, personlig och professionell växt, samt berättade om integration mellan det personliga och privata. Poutiantine påpekade att deltagarna ofta upplevde förändring på några av de listade områdena, och att avgörande för vad som lärs var i vilken mån deltagarna trodde på kursens koncept.

När det gäller forskning om vad som lärs i psykosyntesutbildning specifikt finns få studier gjorda. Cullen visade i en enkätstudie hur chefer angav att de fått stöd i sin process av självförverkligande genom att gå i en psykosyntes utbildning (Cullen, 1996).

Föreliggande studie bidrar till forskningsfältet genom att ge en djupare förståelse för vad det kan innebära i den praktiska vardagen att ha självmedvetenhet och självkännedom. Genom deltagares egna exempel på förändrade upplevelser i yrket systematiseras fenomenet självmedvetenhet och självkännedom. Poängen med att fånga innebörden av självmedvetenhet och självkännedom på detta sätt är att kunna säga något om vad som står på spel när det gäller yrkesutbildning och utveckling av mogen självkännedom som går att återföra till lärarutbildningen.

Psykosyntes är en integrativ terapiform som bygger på psykoanalytiska, humanistiska, existentialistiska och transpersonella teorier. Utbildningens

inledande första steg omfattar två år och innehåller sammanlagt 16 utbildnings-helger inklusive två sommarinternat. I utbildningen ingår litteraturstudier, skriftliga självreflektioner, 50 timmar egenterapi samt utvärdering via självvärdering varje år. Det professionella steget har motsvarande omfattning och upplägg, dock med ökat fokus på klientarbete (PSI, 2011).

Psykologiseringen av samhället

I kapitel fem tas ett steg tillbaka från bilden av en samhällsutveckling mot individualisering, professionell utveckling i stort och den psykologi som presenteras som fortbildning för professionella genom självutveckling. Denna rörelse är inte unik för Sverige och kallas New Public Management (Hood, 1991; Hood & Peters, 2004). Den uttrycker en politisk reformiver för att utveckla effektivitet på arbetsplatsen. I kapitlet redovisades kritik mot psykologiseringen ur filosofiska, etiska, religiösa, vetenskapliga och ekonomiska perspektiv. Madsen (2010) undrade vad den ökade spridningen av psykologiska teorier säger om samhället och om det är till gagn för oss eller om det rent av kan vara skadligt. Han menade att det finns en ovilja inom den psykologiska disciplinen att ta reda på psykologins gränser. Exempel på kritiska frågor som kan ställas handlar om behandling av barn, diagnos, om vad som är normalt eller onormalt (Madsen, 2010).

Johansson (2008) belyste frågan från en politisk ståndpunkt och undrade om psykologi var ett nytt "opium för folket" som bidrog till undvikande av att ställa frågor om klass, och social orättvisa Han menade att problem på den samhälleliga nivån riskerade att osynliggöras. Han ifrågasatte också förändringsidealet inom management kulturen både på individ och organisatorisk nivå. Han menade också att iden om den perfekta ledaren som ständigt kan utvecklas är överdrivet och att det snarare bidrog till att skapa utanförskap och känslor av otillräcklighet och misslyckande. Enligt Johansson var också iden om förändring och utveckling kraftigt överdriven och bidrog till en falsk bild av verkligheten som han menade fortfarande består av hierarkiska organisationer och tråkigt arbete. Johansson menade att psykologi använd för effektivisering av arbete tenderade att bli materialistisk snarare en del av en existentiell livsfilosofi. Ytterligare frågor som togs upp och rörde självutveckling är hur det går när gammal visdom skall föras ut på den kapitalistiska marknaden och användas i personliga syften snarare än i ett kollektivt sammanhang för att stärka gruppen(Johansson, 2008). Hornborg (2012) tog upp frågan om legitimitet för kunskapsområden som räknas till alternativa behandlingsformer, vilket Hornborg kallade lekmannaterapier, som står utanför myndighetskontroll och

legitimationskrav. Hon ifrågasatte de verksamheter som innebär egna legitimeringssystem inom sin egen tradition. Hon pekade också på de problem som uppstår i samband med integrering av nya tankar i ett etablerat samhälleligt system (Hornborg, 2012).

Madsen (2010) såg likheter mellan funktionen av religion och psykologi och menade att psykologin har gått in och tagit ett allt större ansvar för människors lidande som tidigare låg på religionen. Han undrade om den nyandlighet som kan ses i olika terapiformer är en föraning om att religionens tillbakatåg (Madsen, 2010).

Teoretisk referensram livsvärldsfenomenologi

Den teoretiska referensramen som valts för att förstå vad personer lär sig i en utbildning och hur lärares relation till arbetet ser ut, består av analytiska begrepp från fenomenologisk livsvärldsansats. Ansatsen innehåller ontologiska antaganden om vad det innebär att vara människa i världen, om att ha kunskap och att lära. Ansatsen som den är utvecklad i Göteborgstraditionen bygger på fenomenologer såsom Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty och Schutz. Självet blir i denna mening det levda, den subjektiva erfarenheten.

Enligt livsvärldsfenomenologin är liv och värld sammanflätade, vilket innebär att personen måste förstås mot en bakgrund. Inom perspektivet finns några begrepp som beskriver personen i relation till sin värld. Det ena är begreppet ”naturlig inställning” som beskriver hur människan i sin vardagsvärld lever oreflekterat, nedsänkt i sin tillvaro där erfarenheter och perceptioner tas för givna. Denna inställning är naiv men kan överskridas och förgivettaganden kan göras till föremål för reflektion (Bengtsson, 1999; Claesson, 2004; Dahlberg, et al., 2008).

Inom livsvärldsansatsen är den levda kroppen så som det beskrivs av Merleau-Ponty (1962/2009) av särskilt intresse. Begreppet levd kropp fokuserar både fysiska och mentala aspekter i relation till världen. Kroppen är en förutsättning för vår existens i världen och för vår möjlighet att få perspektiv och skapa mening (Bengtsson, 2005). Relationen mellan kropp och värld tas mestadels för given, och mycket av professionell kunskap är förkroppsligad och oreflekterad. Vissa yrkesgrupper såsom terapeuter är dock tränade i att observera andras kroppsliga uttryck och även i att lyssna till sina egen erfarenheter av subtila signaler i kroppen. Kroppen kan med detta sätt att se användas som ett instrument att förstå situationer i yrket (Barnacle, 2009; Finlay, 2011).

Ett annat sätt att beskriva individens förhållande till sin värld är genom begreppsparet autentisk in-autentisk lånat från Heideggers existensfilosofi

(Mulhall, 2005). Individen föds in i tillvaron och har till en början en vag uppfattning om tillvaron. Hon är till sin natur född till att söka mening i tillvaron, att följa en riktning, vägledd av en känsla av nyfikenhet och förundran över tillvaron. Individen har en självrefererande förmåga och varje situation kan värderas som autentisk eller in-autentisk utifrån en strävan att hitta sitt unika uttryck, sin unika väg. Ett in-autentiskt liv beskrivs som att misslyckas med att ställa de rätta frågorna i livet som leder till att hitta sin väg. Istället identifierar man sig med "mannet" det vill säga kulturellt och socialt definierade kategorier (Mulhall, 2005). Detta resonemang överfört till yrkessituationen är att man som professionell går in i en socialt och kulturellt definierad roll som finns oberoende av person. När man tar sig an ett yrke är utgångspunkten på så sätt alltid in-autentisk men det hindrar inte att arbetet utgör ett stort inslag i den professionelles självdefinition och att det kan innehas på ett autentiskt vis. Stämning och ångest anses viktiga och visar på något i relationen mellan individ och värld (Mulhall, 2005).

Enligt resonemanget ovan, idén om att autenticitet rör självdefinierande processer i utveckling av identitet, så belyses också mänsklig utveckling genom möjligheten av öppenhet till världen genom icke självdefinierande processer. Todres (2007) beskriver med utgångspunkt i Heideggers filosofi en fenomenologisk förståelse av en förkroppsligad andlig dimension som både är personlig men som övergår det personliga d.v.s. utgör en transpersonell dimension. Han menar att det existerar en tvetydighet och en spänning mellan det personliga och det transpersonliga som alltid finns närvarande i människors jordiska liv och som skapar motivation och kreativitet. Genom denna spänning skapas möjligheter till integration och förståelse av motsatser, av del-helhet, enhet-skillnad, unik-universell. Todres beskriver människans vara i världen utifrån något han kallar "frihets-såret" (min översättning) vilket innebär att människan är fri att förhålla sig öppen mot världen, att tas i anspråk av världen men friheten är inte obegränsad, vi är också där för andra och har behov av andra. Men det finns flera sätt att "vara där" och tona in på andra. Att inkludera möjlighet till frihet i samband med samvaro, innebär ett förhållningssätt där man "finns där för andra" på ett sätt som " låter andra vara de dom är". Detta beskriver ett kvalitativt annorlunda sätt att vara att låta någon eller något vara, " låta saker visa sig" snarare än att göra saker för att uppnå något. Enligt Todres kan människors öppenhet mot världen hindras av allt för fast självidentifikation, och terapi kan vara ett sätt att vidga självförståelsen och våga öppna upp. Han beskriver hur utveckling sker mellan självdefinierande och icke-självdefinierande processer och hur upplevelser av separation i samband med identitetsutveckling

växlar mellan upplevelser av helhet i icke-självdefinierande processer som kan utgöra erfarenheter som stödjer varandra. Han menar då att man behöver skapa inkluderande miljöer som rymmer processer av båda slag. Professionella förhållningssätt utifrån ett transpersonellt perspektiv innebär då inte i första hand något man gör eller skall uppnå det är snarare att "vara där" med öppenhet välkomnande i en atmosfär av frihet, "låta andra vara" och att ge plats för andra att öppna sig och utvecklas. Det innebär också att vara där med empati, att låta sig bli berörd av andra och stödja den andre. Att delta i professionella situationer med detta förhållningssätt ger förutsättningar för uppkomst av själfull samvaro (Madsen, 2010)

Inom livsvärldsansatsen utgör erfarenheten en utgångspunkt för kunskap. Kunskapen är beroende av sammanhang och personliga intentioner. Den absoluta neutrala kunskapen i en situation går inte att uppnå utan erfarenhet, och den innehåller subjektiva dimensioner såsom perception, kroppsliga sensationer, känslor och estetiska upplevelser. Man kan inte reducera erfarenheten till något enbart objektivt, mätbart, biologiskt, kognitivt eller psykologiskt, utan erfarenheten är subjektiv och sammansatt (Bengtsson, 1999). För att möta detta integrativa synsätt på kunskap krävs en lärande teori som förmår inkludera förändringar inom de olika dimensionerna. Lärande i relation till naturlig inställning handlar om reflektion och förmågan att skifta mellan naturlig inställning och distansering (Bengtsson, 1999). Lärande i relation till autenticitet - in-autenticitet handlar om dekonstruktion av socialt och kulturellt inlärda mönster (Brooks, 2009; Mulhall, 2005). Lärande i relation till personligt - transpersonligt handlar om integration av tvetydigheter yrket. Uttryckt i termer av reflektion och distansering utgör integration den situation där kunskapen har gjorts personlig (Bengtsson, 1993 a; Todres, 2007). Som utgångspunkt för den förändring som kan ske i en utbildning, används i avhandlingen en teori om självet som utgår från att människan har både kreativitet och möjlighet att utveckla ett autentiskt uttryck. På så sätt kan hon eller han påverka sin värld samtidigt som självet också påverkas av erfarenheter i sin omgivning (O'Connor & Hallam, 2009).

Metod

Metodologiskt är denna studie kvalitativ intervjustudie där professionellas erfarenheter i yrket står i fokus (Kvale, 1996). I intervjuer har sex personer beskrivit situationer i yrket som de menar att de hanterat annorlunda efter att ha genomgått en utbildning i personlig utveckling. Alla har deltagit i en grundutbildning under minst två år i psykosyntes. Samtliga intervjupersoner har

valt att fortsätta på det professionella steget och befinner sig i olika stadier i terapitutbildningen. Intervjuerna genomfördes efter utbildningen och frågorna ställdes på ett sätt som gav intervjupersonen utrymme att beskriva situationer i yrket där de använder sig av kunskaper de lärt i psykosyntes. Man kan anta att deltagare som fortsätter efter den grundläggande utbildningen har funnit metoden hjälpsam. Deltagarna representerar olika yrken såsom lärare, rektor, folkhögskolelärare, handledare inom rehabilitering samt chefer inom industri och socialförvaltning.

Forskningsprocessen är av livsvärldsansats där deltagarnas erfarenheter kommer till uttryck, och en tolkning sker med hjälp av teoretiska begrepp (Bengtsson, 1999). Redovisningen av resultaten startar i en empirinära beskrivning med ett narrativt framställningssätt (van Manen, 1990). Därefter sker en systematisering baserad på porträtten vari tre teman identifieras. I det sista steget används livsvärldsfenomenologiska begrepp med avsikten att få en fördjupad förståelse för betydelsen av självkännedom i yrkessituationer. I tillägg har också distansering skett genom kritisk granskning i seminarier och handledning under avhandlingsarbetet.

Resultat – Porträtt

Lena 57
Lena arbetar som rektor i en skola på en mindre ort på landsbygden i Sverige. Det är en skola som organiserar både förskoleverksamhet, låg och mellanstadium. Hon är utbildad mellanstadielärare och har lång yrkeserfarenhet inom skolan. Lena började psykosyntesutbildningen under en tid av omställningar i sitt liv. Som en engagerad lärare hade hon upplevt många utmanande situationer under sitt yrkesverksamma liv. Hon säger sig ha en god teoretisk förståelse för det som hände i situationer men upplevde ofta att det var svårt att förstå sig själv känslomässigt. Lena började utbildningen för att tillgodose ett privat behov, men senare bestämde hon sig för att ta det professionella steget till diplomerad psykosyntesterapeut. Hon arbetade några år som terapeut i egen regi men sökte sig så småningom tillbaka till skolan på en befattning som rektor för att prova sina kunskaper på en större grupp.

Lenas viktigaste insikter från utbildningen är att hon funnit en inre frid och kommit tillrätta med sitt känsloliv. Hon ifrågasätter inte sig själv som tidigare och hon tar inte saker så personligt längre. Lena berättade om flera insikter under utbildningen som åstadkom denna förändring. De viktigaste delarna som Lena tagit till sig var arbetet med tidiga relationer till föräldrar och lärare och att identifiera delpersonligheter där hon fått insikter om sina tidigare mönster och

försvar. Hon nämnde också att hon förstår många saker i sitt yrkesliv genom begrepp som "skugga", dvs. delar av personligheter eller situationer som finns oreflekterat men ändå påverkar skeenden. Begreppet "syndabock" nämndes också av Lena när hon insåg att hon som professionell ledare och symbol för en myndighet blev den som fick bära skulden i sammanhang då andra inte orkade ta sin del av ansvaret för en situation. I sitt tidigare mönster beskrev hon sig själv som en "sanningssägare" med höga ideal och idéer Hon hade höga krav på andra och hon kunde alltid komma med åsikter och inspel om hur saker borde vara. En insikt var att hon också ställde samma höga krav på sig själv vilket gjorde att livet kändes tungt att leva.

Genom att utforska relationen till sina föräldrar insåg hon att de inte kunnat möta upp henne känslomässigt under barndomen, vilket hon kopplade samman med sitt behov av att bli sedd som det unika barn hon var. Sammantaget, höga ideal, intellektuell skärpa och en längtan av att bli sedd gjorde att hon kunde använda sin delpersonlighet "sanningssägaren" på ett sätt som kunde såra andra. Hon berättade om hur föräldrarna och senare en chef blev arga över att höra sanningen och det kunde slå tillbaka på hennes själv. Lena beskriver sin utveckling från naiv till att bli mera mogen då hon nu förstod dynamiken i sitt tidiga mönster och att hon lärde sig att moderera användningen av "sanningssägaren".

Lena beskrev situationer i yrket där hon upplevde sig stå på en stadigare grund i sig själv i relation till personalen på arbetsplatsen. Hon berättade att hon inte är så sammanvävd med sin praktik utan att hon kan skilja ut sig själv från andra på ett tydligare sätt. Hon är mer medveten om egna värderingar och visioner men också om sina egna begränsningar, vilket tidigare var förgivettaget och oreflekterat i en naturlig inställning till livet. Hon säger sig ha fått en större bild av hur historiska och kulturella influenser påverkar den professionella situationen på arbetsplatsen.

Anders 45

Anders arbetar som teknisk ingenjör i industrin och har en hög ledande position. Han började sin utbildning i psykosyntes i en period i livet då han mådde bra. Han hade nyligen blivit fri från en dålig relation och haft en bra period på jobbet då han kunnat förverkliga många saker. Detta tillstånd av frihet var nytt för Anders och var något som han ville försöka bevara. Han hade tidigare ledarutbildningar inom projektledning och ekonomi och ville nu lära sig mer om sig själv för att undvika att falla tillbaka i gamla mönster. Anders säger att hans önskan var att utveckla en kongruent personlighet och ledarstil, där tänkande

och handlade är i överensstämmelse där privat och professionell person är samma sak.

Anders viktigaste lärdom var att han utvecklat ett nytt förhållande till oförutsägbarhet och ovisshet i livet. Förändringen bestod i att kunna hantera de svåra känslor som är förknippade med att möta det oundvikliga och acceptera att man står maktlös i vissa situationer. Anders berättade att det handlar om att hantera ångest och acceptera känslor av meningslöshet, hopplöshet, och tomhet snarare än att försöka kontrollera situationer för att undvika att de svåra känslorna uppstår.

Han berättade om ett vanligt mönster i sitt tidigare liv som han kallade "den ensamme kämpen", ett mönster där han hade svårt att släppa taget om situationer och där han kunde bli envis och köra över andra i sin iver att lyckas med sina projekt. I det tillståndet kunde han bli okänslig och ha svårt för att lyssna på andra och att be om hjälp. Anders menade att det blev en vändpunkt då han fick bearbeta situationer av maktlöshet och ensamhet under barndomen med stöd av en terapeut. I denna process under utbildningen utvecklade Anders en tillit till sig själv som också ledde till ett ökat förtroende och en större lyhördhet för andra på arbetsplatsen. Han bytte referenspunkt från "den "ensamme kämpen" till att se sig själv som en "pusselbit" ingående i en helhet. Anders gav exempel på situationer i yrket där han kom närmare i relation till andra på arbetsplatsen och såg sig mer som en del av ett system. Arbetet har fått ett annat innehåll, processer och relationer blir viktiga snarare än resultat och produkter. Anders menade att även om han tvingades ge upp ett projekt, eller att saker och ting tog en annan väg än han förväntat, så kom erfarenheten och idéer att leva vidare in i nya projekt, i ny tappning. De svåra känslorna dök fortfarande upp, men han menade att det gick fortare att återta balansen när han tvingades ut i det okända vilket han numera kan accepterar som en del av livet.

Anders berättade att de viktigaste inslagen i utbildningen förutom terapin, var att delta i en grupprocess och att få del av andras erfarenheter. Kunskapen om egna och andras mönster och försvar gjorde att han insåg hur mycket varje människa bar med sig in på arbetsplatsen. Han menade att han fått mer realistiska förväntningar, och att man inte kan bygga en organisation på antagandet att människor inte är människor. Han säger sig nu ha lättare att diskriminera mellan organisationens behov och det personliga behovet på arbetsplatsen. Ibland får man som chef komma med svåra besked som drabbar de anställda privat, och Anders menar att han lärt sig att möta starka reaktioner utan att gå i försvar vilket skulle förvärra situation.

Anders berättade också om hur han lärt sig att använda sig själv som ett "instrument" i yrkeslivet. Han hade fått en ökad känslighet för stämningar på arbetsplatsen, vilket underlättade att förstå signaler från "korridorsnack" och i möten mellan människor på arbetsplatsen. Vid flera tillfällen under intervjun nämnde han kongruens som viktigt för ledarskapet på en arbetsplats. Kongruent betyder enligt Anders att det man säger stämmer överens med hur man agerar. Han kunde använda sig själv genom att medvetet göra sig öppen för andra och sträva efter att vara trogen mot sig själv och sina egna känslor i situationen i autentiska möten med andra.

Anna-Greta 55

När Anna-Greta började utbildningen i psykosyntes arbetade hon som chef i äldreomsorgen. Hon var tyngd av ansvar och hon längtade starkt efter inre frid. Utåt sett var hon framgångsrik, men hon sökte ett annat sätt att förhålla sig i yrket. Vid tiden för intervjun hade Anna-Greta bytt jobb och arbetade som koordinator för ett stort projekt inom socialtjänsten för att samordna och utveckla kvalitetsarbetet inom denna sektor.

Anna-Greta berättade att hennes viktigaste insikt handlade om att hon blivit medveten om och kunde observera sina tidiga handlingsmönster. Hon hade utvecklat en stark och oberoende person som inte brydde sig särskilt om andra. Den logik som hon levt sitt liv efter var "attack är bästa försvar", vilket liknade krigarens sätt att hantera livet. Hon drev sin vilja stenhårt med eller mot andra. Som chef kunde detta beteende fungera menar Anna-Greta, men det var en del av en överlevnadsstrategi som inte gav mycket utrymme för andra och som hade ett pris av att bära tungt ansvar. Hon beskrev att bakom detta mönster fanns rädslor och en enorm känsla av ensamhet efter att ha blivit övergiven av sin far som lett till föreställningen att hon inte kunde förlita sig på andra utan upplevde att hon ständigt behövde försvara sig själv. Efter flera år av terapi i utbildningen vågade hon möta sina känslor av sitt tidigaste sår i relationen till sina föräldrar. Anna-Greta beskrev att hon efter det kunnat se sitt gamla beteende och att det var smärtsamt att se hur hon tidigare agerat i relation till andra, men att hon försökt att förlåta sig själv. Hon menade att hon nu känner sig tryggare i relation till andra och kan vara mer respektfull mot andra människors gränser genom att se när deras försvar sätts igång. De nya insikterna har ändå lett till att hon nu känner sig mer glädjefull och inte längre upplever livet som ett straff och hon tar inte saker och ting på så blodigt allvarligt som tidigare. Ett tecken på förändring är att hon kan släppa kontrollen, inte känna samma behov av att planera allting i minsta detalj utan vågar vara öppen för saker när de kommer. Hon är inte alltid på väg utan kan stanna upp och lyssna på andra.

Yrkesmässigt ser hon sig själv mer som en "spindel i ett nät", som koordinator av en verksamhet snarare än en "krigare". Denna förändring har medfört att hon litar mer på andra och kan ta emot hjälp. Förändringen visar sig också då hon sätter samman grupper, eftersom hon försöker samla så mycket olikheter som möjligt snarare än att som förr, omge sig med ja-sägare. En annan stor skillnad är att hon nu lägger sig vinn om att ha ett "humanistiskt" snarare än ett "rationellt" sätt att relatera till personer på arbetet. Hon menar att om man är personlig och närvarande i mötet når men den andre på ett djupare sätt. Att utstråla lugn skapar trygghet och möjliggör personliga relationer. Hon ser att en del av hennes jobb numera är att hålla undan stress som kommer uppifrån i organisationen och menar att hon också har ett ansvar för att hantera sin egen stress. Hon nämner hur hon lärt sig att ta hjälp av terapi alternativt handledning när hon märker att hon håller på att falla tillbaka i gamla mönster.

Anna-Greta berättade att hon alltid har varit teoretiskt intresserad och talar nu om att hon fått ett nytt sätta att förstå kunskap efter att ha deltagit i psykosyntesutbildningen. Hon pratade om att "känna kunskapen", att förstå teorier i relation till den personliga erfarenheten vilket gör kunskapen mer integrerad. Hon menar att hon mött mycket av psykosyntesens teoriinnehåll tidigare på socialhögskolan men att det då hamnade i "huvudet". Nu när hon kan sätta sig själv och sitt eget liv i relation till teorierna är de användbara på ett helt annat sätt. Hon menade att hon utvecklat en förmåga att tänka holistiskt och syftade då på att hon kan sätta det unika fallet i relation till helheten inom socialtjänsten. Om man skall kunna hjälpa andra så behöver det unika fallet förstås på sina egna villkor. Förhållningssättet att allting hänger ihop är starkt inom psykosyntesen, vilket Anna-Greta tagit till sig och försöker tillämpa i sitt arbete med att koordinera kvalitetsarbetet inom socialtjänsten.

Elsa 37

Elsa arbetade vid tillfället för intervjun som mellanstadielärare. Hon var inne på sitt tredje år av psykosyntesutbildningen och hade bestämt sig för att utbilda sig till diplomerad psykosyntesterapeut. Motivet för att gå i personlig utveckling var, både av privat och av yrkesmässig natur. Hon hade en traumatisk upplevelse från sina första år som lärare, bytte därefter yrkesinriktning och arbetade som chef under några år men var nu tillbaka i skolans värld. Hon längtade efter en mer mogen relation till föräldrarna och hon kände sig även undrande inför sin relation till män. Hon tyckte sig inte ha något värdefullt privatliv då all tid gick åt till arbete.

De viktigaste förändringarna som Elsa berättade om är dels att hon gått från ett tillstånd av att bara "göra" till ett tillstånd av att också "vara" och kunna ha

mera tid med andra. Dels känner hon sig mindre arg i arbetet och brusar inte upp lika lätt som tidigare. Hon upplever sig vara mera vuxen i yrket vilket hjälper henne att ta sitt professionella ansvar. Det som hjälpte henne mest till självinsikt var att utforska omständigheterna runt födelsen och de tidiga relationerna till sina föräldrar. Delpersonlighetsarbetet har också varit viktigt för Elsas utveckling. Hon nämnde också gruppen för "interpersonal" där hon fått se hur hon själv är inblandad i projektioner.

När hon blickade tillbaka på sitt liv under utbildningen såg hon en person med ett mönster som liknande arbetsnarkomani, vilket hon definierade som ett mönster av att arbeta många timmar och att vara en person som löser sina problem genom att arbeta mera. Hon kunde se att detta mönster dels hade rötter i bondekulturen, i familjen där hon växte upp, men att det också hade rötter i en föreställning om att inte vara önskad i familjen utan vara tvungen att förtjäna sin plats. Elsa beskrev att hon insåg under utbildningen att hon var önskad och älskad som barn, vilket ledde till att hennes behov av att prestera för att få vara en del av gruppen minskade. Hon kom också att förstå att hon hade en stark delpersonlighet som hon kallade den "rebelliske tonåringen" som dök upp i pressade situationer i klassrummet. Den rebelliske tonåring var ofta irriterad, ironisk och tyken vilket hon nu inser inte är ett acceptabelt vuxet beteende i ett klassrum. Under sin tidiga tid som lärare upplevde hon ibland disciplinproblem i klassen och Elsa insåg att ett sådant defensivt beteende skulle ha kunnat vara en del av det som väckte oro i klassen.

Med den ökad trygghet som Elsa nu känner agerar hon annorlunda i relation till yrket. Hon har blivit mer självständig i förhållande till gruppen och kan sätta tydligare gränser för elever men också för arbetet. Hon menar att läraryrket är ett yrke där man aldrig blir färdig utan man kan arbeta ihjäl sig om man inte sätter gränser. Hon menar att det är viktigt att vara en vuxen förebild för elever som ofta inte känner sina egna begränsningar. Hon berättar också att hon kan se sig och sitt liv i ett större sammanhang och har kommit att ifrågasätta om hon vill vara med och delta i jakten på status som pågår i "mainstream"-samhället vilket hon mötte under sin tid som chef.

Elsa beskriver också att hon inser efter sin egen process hur viktig hon är som person i barnens identitetsutveckling. Att hon är närvarande i sin "vara" inställning och bekräftar barnen i stället för att bara vara verksam i sin "göra" inställning och komma till lektionen helt utschasad utan ork att se barnen. Elsa berättar att hon också lärt sig att hantera etiskt svåra situationer att hon har lärt genom att delta i gruppprocesser och att studera psykosynteselärarnas respektfulla sätt att bemöta människor. Konflikthantering är också något som Elsa nämner

att hon lärt från arbetet med projektioner. Den ökade tryggheten i relation till gruppen har också lett till att hon är öppen och lyhörd för gruppens behov.

Elsie 63

Elsie arbetar som handledare inom habilitering inom äldreomsorgen och är utbildad socialpedagog och dramapedagog. Hon började psykosyntes-utbildningen efter att ha varit nära en utbrändhetssituation i rollen som projektledare inom ett EU-projekt för långtidsarbetslösa. Hon kände att hon behövde förnyad inspiration och nya verktyg i sitt yrke som handledare.

Den viktigaste förändringen som Elsie berättade om är att hon fått en ny "holistisk upplevelse av livet". Hon berättade att hon från början ville få nya verktyg i sitt arbete men att hon insåg att det verktyg som skulle utvecklas var hon själv som person. De viktigaste helgerna som hjälpte Elsie till insikt om sig själv var arbetet med de tidiga relationerna till föräldrar. Hon berättar om hur hon i en övning under födelsehelgen mötte blicken hos en manlig ledare och insåg att det var så ett liv skulle kunnat levas. Elsie växte upp utan en pappa och hade oreflekterat accepterat det som en naturlig del av livet. Under denna övning insåg hon värdet av att ha en far och vad hon har gått miste om i livet. Första åren av psykosyntesutbildningen gick ut på att sörja det som varit och försonas med sitt öde som faderlös berättar Elsie.

Efter att ha gått igenom denna process kände sig Elsie starkare även i sitt arbete. Hon säger sig förstår nu på djupet hur försvar kan utvecklas och hur känslor av sorg och övergivenhet finns som en förträngd del i många människors liv. Hon har fått en förståelse för hur svåra känslor kan rationaliseras bort och inser att dessa ofta finns outtalat närvarande i de handledningssituationer som hon leder. En bättre förståelse för hur försvar fungerar gör att hon kan förstå att rädslor och svåra känslor projiceras ut i gruppen under handledningssituation. Hon känner sig inte längre rädd för dessa utan är tryggare i sig själv, vilket verkar lugnande på alla i gruppen enligt Elsies berättelse. Hon känner att det är en del av hennes arbete att avlasta och underlätta för de människor som bär ett tungt ansvar inom vården. Hon menar att med denna insikt följer också att man som professionell tjänar andra, att man inte är på arbetet för sin egen skull utan man är där för att stödja klienter eller patienter som av någon anledning inte klarar sig själva. Denna inställning utgör grundvalen i yrket för Elsie och hjälper henne att förstå och tolka när ansvarsfördelningen kommer i obalans. Elsie påpekade att det är den professionelles ansvar att lösa upp knutar som uppstår i relation till vårdtagare och det kan man göra genom att delta i självutveckling och handledning. Ett förhållningssätt som hon anammat från psykosyntesen och

som hon brukar förmedla är att man kan vara tacksam för svårigheter som uppstår och ta dem som utgångspunkt för att lära sig mer om sig själv.

Elise gav exempel på hur hon uppfattar yrkesrollen på ett nytt sätt, hon är inte längre experten som förväntas ha svar på alla frågor vilket hon gjorde förr, utan hon uppfattar nu att arbetet mer handlar om att guida människor och att ställa de rätta frågorna. Genom att lita till det kollektiva kunnandet i gruppen snarare än att ha egna svar på allt, känner hon mindre stress i yrket.

Hon utnyttjar nu mycket sin intuition och känslighet för fältet i gruppen. Hon lär också ut hur man kan kommunicera utifrån ett eget centrum, vilket är ett sätt att tala så att man undviker att väcka andras försvar. Att sätta ord på sina känslor är en process som hon själv kämpat med och tränat under utbildningen. Graden av att vara personlig eller privat är ett vanligt diskussionsämne inom handledarprofessionen. Elsie tar också upp att hon har fått idéer om hur man som grupphandledare kan hantera öppenhet om sina egna tankar och känslor i handledningssituationen.

Kristina 63

Kristina har arbetat i många år som outbildad lärare bl.a. i grundskolan, på fängelser och på olika studieförbund. Vid tillfället för intervjun arbetade Kristina på en folkhögskola med uppgiften att vara samtalsterapeut. De yrkeserfarenheter hon delade med sig av handlar mest om tiden som lärare på samma folkhögskola. Under hela sitt yrkesverksamma liv har hon sökt efter ett sammanhang där man tar individuella hänsyn och där "hela människan räknas". Hon berättade att hon uppfattat skolan som en "koloss på lerfötter" och att hon under sin egen skoltid led av den opersonlighet som rådde och att hon endast upplevde korta perioder av trivsel i skolan. Kristina började sin psykosyntesutbildning tätt efter att hon gått en folkhögskolelärarutbildning. Psykosynteutbildningen blev ett ställe där hon tyckte sig se folkhögskolans tankar och idéer omsatta i praktiken. Hon hade också genomgått flera kriser i sitt privatliv som gjorde att hon ville lära mer om sig själv.

Det viktigaste som Kristina berättade var upplevelsen av igenkänning och bekräftelse på sina egna tankar som hon fick i mötet med psykosynteteorin. Hon fann äntligen ett forum som tog hänsyn till det mänskliga och fick bekräftat att det var den egna sanningen som räknades och att "ingen skull komma och tala om för henne vad som var rätt eller fel". Hon beskriver händelsen som en andlig upplevelse som gjorde att hon hittade en kontakt med ett större sammanhang. Hon behövde inte längre känna sig oförstådd och utanför. Det var en upplevelse av att få bekräftelse på något man redan vet, något som inom transpersonell psykologi kallas."Divine Homesickness" berättar Kristina. Hon

arbetade också med sina tidiga relationer under utbildningen och berättar att pappan inte var någon positiv auktoritet i hennes liv. Hon drog slutsatsen att skälet till att det dröjde så lång tid innan hon utbildade sig till lärare var en protest mot fadern. Efter det personliga arbetet kunde hon återta sin egen auktoritet. Kristina berättade att psykosyntesen blev ett avstamp i hennes utveckling och att hon vidareutvecklats via andra andliga riktningar.

Professionellt ledde denna igenkänning till att hon fick inspiration i läraryrket och hon menade att via psykosyntesen lärde hon sig att arbeta erfarenhets-baserat, och hon fick idéer om hur man arbetar med individualisering i klassrummet. Hennes huvudämne var svenska och det fanns många kreativa sätt att ta sig an ämnet. Med ett ökat fokus på individualiserade arbetssättet framstod behovet av tryggheten i gruppen som viktigt. Detta skapade ett tillåtande klimat där var och en vågade öppna upp för lärande. Detta var viktigt eftersom många elever som kom till folkhögskolan hade dåliga skolerfarenheter.

Andra saker som framstod som viktiga vara flexibilitet i relation till elevernas behov. Kristina ansåg att om man menade allvar med att undervisa utifrån elevernas behov så får man ibland kompromissa med sina egna preferenser. Ett exempel gavs där eleverna vill lära sig grammatik vilket Kristina själv inte skulle prioriterat i undervisningen. Kristina pratade om respekt och att eleverna inte själva egentligen kan avgöra om grammatik var viktigt innan de vet vad det innebär för språkinlärningen.

Kristina talade också om vikten av att ta tillvara elevernas olikheter i undervisningen. Hon berättade att under en termin hade de som motto att "ingenting existerar i ett vakuum", och att varje enskild berättelse sattes i relation till en kontext. Alla elever gjordes medvetna om hur deras egen historia färgade deras förståelse av saker.

Resultat – Tematisk analys

De teman som framträder som en central meningsstruktur när det gäller självmedvetenhet och självkännedom i yrket är "medvetenhet om personlig resonans", "medvetenhet om personliga utgångspunkter" samt "situations-medvetenhet i yrket". Det första temat "medvetenhet om personlig resonans" indikerar en ökad medvetenhet och förmåga att förstå sina egna reaktioner i samspel med andra människor och företeelser. Detta medför en ökad medvetenhet om olika kvalitet av kommunikation. Man skiljer på humanistiska sätt att kommunicera i form av öppen empatisk kommunikation och rationella defensiva sätt att kommunicera. Här ingår vidare en ökad medvetenhet samt tilltro till egna subjektiva responser. Det andra temat "medvetenhet om

personliga utgångspunkter" byggs upp av erfarenheter kring förändrad identitet i utbildningen, vilket medför förändringar i den professionelles intentioner och preferenser i yrket. Personliga värderingar blir tydligare och ges större betydelse i arbetet. Nya professionella förhållningssätt öppnar sig i yrket, möjligheten för personliga val i yrket blir både tydligare och används i större utsträckning. Samtidigt anser man sig ha en större flexibilitet att möta andra på deras villkor och agera på det sätt som situationen kräver. Det tredje temat "situationsmedvetenhet i yrket" visar en ökad förståelse för komplexiteten i yrkessituationer. Deltagare beskriver en förändring när det gäller att sätta den unika situationen i relation till de generella krav som finns i yrket. Dels innebär denna förändring att man känner sin egen utgångspunkt men också att man förstår hur kontexten påverkar situationen. Här talar man om både historiska traditioner, social omgivning och framtida utvecklingsmöjligheter. Man talar också om en ökad medvetenhet om den egna platsen i systemet.

Resultat – Teoretisk analys

Om personliga kvaliteter i yrkeslivet skall betraktas som talanger eller är något man kan lära är en filosofisk fråga. Uttrycket "något som man är eller färdigheter som man lär" fanns ofta i beskrivningen av fronesis, takt, autenticitet eller professionell - i- relation. Uttrycket visar att dessa egenskaper skiljer sig från andra typer av yrkeskompetens och inte kan liknas vid lärande av teori och förvärvande av skicklighet. Efter att ha genomfört denna empiriska studie drar jag slutsatsen att det finns ett dialektiskt samband mellan "den vi är och "de färdigheter vi lär". Genom att analysera deltagarnas upplevelser med hjälp av livsvärldsansats och slutligen via begreppen självmedvetenhet och självkännedom som en kunskapsform, så blir det tydligt att deltagarna förändras. Detta gäller både i känslan av "vem man är som människa" och att det är kopplat till att man erövrat färdigheter och metoder att använda i yrket. En förändring i "medvetenhet om personlig resonans", om "medvetenhet om personliga utgångspunkter" och "situationsmedvetenhet" beskrivs som förändringar av personligheten. Deltagarna beskriver en förändring i hur de svarar an på omgivningen efter bearbetning av känslomässigt svåra upplevelser i barndomen. Deltagarna har utvecklat en känslighet men också ett förtroende för sina responser, som de sedan använder för att förstå professionella situationer. Deltagarna berättar också om en transformation där de förstår sig själva på nya sätt, hittar nya utgångspunkter och förhållningssätt. Detta är alla förändringar som tyder på en skillnad i "vem man är som människa". Mycket av den tidigare

personligheten finns kvar. Samtliga deltagare berättar också om hur lätt det är att falla tillbaka i gamla mönster och förlora sin öppenhet mot världen.

I vilken mening kan självmedvetenhet då anses vara kopplad till "färdigheter vi lär"? I det här fallet handlar det om att kunna observera sig själv i arbetssituationen, att medvetet ta hjälp av den subjektiva erfarenheten som information i den professionella situationen. Det är ett sätt att lyssna till sig själv, sin somatiska kompass (Finlay, 2011) eller magkänsla (Barnacle, 2009). Flera av deltagarna berättar hur de lärt sig nya handlingssätt i etiskt svåra situationer genom att delta i gruppprocesser och att följa lärarnas exempel och respektfulla beteende. De beskriver också hur de lärt metoder och teorier som varit viktiga för att förstå och handla i situationer på arbetsplatsen.

Slutsatsen i denna studie är att det arbete som görs i utbildningen för att uppnå självmedvetenhet och självkännedom både handlar om "vad du är" och "färdigheter som du lärt". Det speciella som deltagarna rapporterar är att kunskapen integreras. Enligt de teoretiska synsätt som livsvärlden erbjuder så utvecklas kunskap från erfarenhet. Vi utvidgar "vad vi är" när teorier och metoder integreras i det unika jaget och blir en del av den naturliga inställningen. Det är en fråga om integration. Å andra sidan kan man argumentera för att yrkesutbildningar behöver erbjuda situationer där erfarenheter av det här slaget kan göras.

Diskussion

Inom professionsforskning presenteras olika sätt att konceptualisera det personliga i yrket, såsom takt, reflekterande praktiker, autenticitet och "professionell-i-relation". Omdöme eller begreppet fronesis får beteckna den kunskapsform som inkluderar den personliga tolkningen i yrket. I samband med dessa begrepp beskrivs också olika idéer om hur dessa kvalitéer skall utvecklas. Van Mannen (2002) talar om bildning i allmänhet som ett medel att utveckla takt. Schön (1987) talar i termer av praktik, eller övning i studio under mentorskap som ett sätt att utveckla artisteri i yrket. I samband med den autentiske läraren talar Laursen (2004) om trovärdighet då personlig och professionell person är integrerade med varandra. Han förespråkar ett holistiskt arbetssätt av lika delar undervisning, teori, metod och praktik, där hela personen engageras. Aspelin & Persson (2008) erbjuder en relationell modell för professionell utveckling och presenterar en ontologi där professionell utveckling sker i spänningsfältet mellan person och förväntningar i yrket. De beskriver ett spänningsfält som utgår från studentens kreativa strävan och samtidiga behov av att bli mottagen på ett personligt plan i utbildningen.

Polkinghorne (2004) beskriver omdöme som ett sätt att använda hela människan. Det kan vara personliga värderingar, känslor och fantasi på såväl medvetna och omedvetna plan i yrket. Det kan också handla om att göra personliga val där både den professionelles och mottagarens väl tas i beaktande. Utveckling av fronesis är delvis beroende av den karaktärsdaning man fått som barn av sina föräldrar, men den kan också tränas genom filosofiska och etiska samtal med utgångspunkt i den egna erfarenheten.

Resultaten i denna studie visar att deltagande i en utbildning i självkännedom kan bidra med psykologisk förståelse, en ökad känslighet och förändrade värderingar och attityder till andra människor i yrket. Detta är en utveckling som talar för att en sådan utbildningsinsats skulle kunna finnas inom ramen för en professionsutbildning snarare än att förläggas till en privat bildningsresa som van Manen (2002) föreslår. Mitt resultat visar att själva formen i psykosyntes-utbildningen i sig utgör en praktik, eller en studio, där man utforskar nära relationer, tränar på hur man hanterar etiskt känsliga samtal, konfliktlösning och olika sätt att förhålla sig i professionella situationer. Resultaten talar för att möjligheten till sådana erfarenheter skulle kunna erbjudas inom ramen för professionsutbildning. När det gäller autenticitet, så visar min studie på vikten av att engagera hela människan och den inspiration det kan innebära att bli sedd för den man är, att få stöd att utvecklas yrket i enlighet med egen stil. Men mitt resultat visar också på djupet i en sådan process. Deltagarna i denna studie har arbetat i flera år med sig själva innan de vågat släppa på gammal självförståelse och öppnat upp för nya sätt att vara. Flera av deltagarna pratade om vikten av en trygg miljö för att våga utmana egen självförståelse formad i tidiga relationer. Det behöver göras tydligt vilka förutsättningar som finns inom yrkesutbildningen och miljön där autenticitet och egen stil kan utvecklas som inte bygger på traditionella sätt att vara. Min slutsats är att det behöver finnas en tydlighet i vad man menar med autenticitet och vad man tänker sig uppnå med detta sätt att tänka om professionell utveckling.

I diskussionen ställs också frågan hur en professionell utbildning som baseras på ett relationellt synsätt skall utformas för att stödja professionell utveckling. Enligt Aspelin och Persson kan professionell utveckling ske genom att studenten kreativt kan möta det sociala sammanhang som utbildningen utgör (Aspelin & Persson, 2008, 2009). Utifrån denna ontologi måste det specificeras hur denna relation kan stödjas i form av undervisningsformer och professionella förhållningssätt. Enligt denna studie har deltagarna lärt nya sätt att förhålla sig i yrket där utrymme också ges för andras utveckling. Resultatet visar att vara

professionell både handlar om att förhålla sig personligt i relationer men också att kunna ge utrymme för andras växt, och att inte komma med alla svaren.

När Polkinghorne (2004) diskuterar professionellt omdöme, så beskrivs hur den professionelle använder hela sin person, sin subjektivitet i tolkning av situationer i yrket. Han beskriver också hur subjektivitet påverkas av den karaktärsdaning som skett i relation till föräldrarna i barndomen. Man kan fråga sig om fronesis i denna mening kan utvecklas hos vuxna som inte haft detta i barndomen. Enligt mina resultat beskriver deltagarna både en förändring avseende medvetenhet om personlig resonans, personliga utgångspunkter samt situationsmedvetenhet. Detta tyder på en förändring som innebär en ökad tillit till subjektivitet men också hur detta kan användas på ett konstruktivt sätt.

I diskussionen tas också frågor upp om hur man kan närma sig det personliga i yrket. En central fråga är om man skall lita till processer som utgår från filosofiska och etiska studier och samtal, om man skall utgå från olika metoder för reflektion eller om det behövs terapeutiska inslag? Frågan är om utvecklingen av personlighet och karaktär skall förläggas inom professionsutbildning, fortbildningskurser eller om det skall lämnas åt den enskildes bildningsresa. Resultatet i denna studie ger inga självklara svar, den visar på möjligheter men också på komplexiteten inom området.

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