

**"Finland and the World
at the Dawn of 2007"
Report of a Listening Post
held on 8th January**



Encouraging The Reflective Citizen

Part 1. THE SHARING OF PREOCCUPATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

In this part of the Listening Post participants were invited to identify, contribute, and explore their experience in their various social roles. This part was concerned with what might be called 'the stuff of people's everyday lives' that related to the 'socio' or 'external' world of participants.

Part 2. IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES

In Part 2 the aim was to collectively identify the major themes emerging from Part 1.

Group 1

- Slowness - speed
- Care - deterioration
- On your own - feeling of inadequacy
- Burden - hope
- Powerlessness impacts large systems
- Keeping quiet about distress and need

Group 2

- Talk of the middle-aged
- Lightness - heaviness
- Haste, speed - slowness
- The difficulty of being here and now
- The difficulty of understanding: meaningful - meaningless
- Helplessness, being lost

Group 3

- Clarification of concepts and giving of definitions
- The meaning of time: the past, the future, the present
- Taking responsibility
- Contradictions: slowness - speed, profundity - superficiality, stopping - acting, individual - system
- Disgust and frustration towards systems
- The focus of speech in local and internal
- Externalisation of evil: can I hide, exclude myself from evil?

Consultant group

- Being at the pulse of time
- Collective drunkenness and illusion
- Difference between generations: young - old, lightness - heaviness
- Difficulty to keep conflicts in mind
- Hanging Saddam Hussein: am I good or bad?
- Going downstream - upstream

Part 3. ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

In this part of the Listening Post the members were working with the information resulting from Parts 1 & 2, with a view to collectively identifying the underlying dynamics both conscious and unconscious that may be predominant at the time; and, developing hypotheses as to why they might be occurring at that moment. Here the members were working more with what might be called their 'psycho' or 'internal' world. Their collective ideas and ways of thinking that both determine how they perceive the external realities and shape their actions towards them.

Group 1

Starting point: Remaining quiet at the time of distress

- Question of the relationship between an individual and the system and the use of power
- One remains quiet to avoid other people from silencing him with rejection, by leaving alone
- An individual is at risk of being destroyed if he raises his voice. The need of being accepted is tested.
- Psychological work is interrupted when the dialogue is interrupted
- Facing the border: inability to continue under the terms of the system and inability to keep quiet. The feeling of burden will become more evident if continued.
- Overwhelmingness of the system: one cannot have a dialogue with the system
- Rituals, automated functioning, speak without saying anything, creating and illusionary reality
- Difficulty to understand: causes shame, collapse of one's own identity
- The middle-aged are responsible for the world they do not understand
- It is destructive to talk only about threats, one must also have hope
- Reality gives strength to carry on
- Is it naïve to be happy?

Group 2

Inadequacy as a middle-aged person, man, parent, mother and child

- Who should be talking when discussing the state of the world and Finland in 2007?
- Who are invited, is the sample representative?
- Internalised supremacy -> how to live gracefully with the fact that we are not omnipotent?

- Responsibility and power -> can you assign the kind of responsibility you have never had?
- The task of assuring oneself that one is good enough
- What to think about an assessment review between a 12 year old child and his teacher with the presence of the parents?

Short of breath, speed - giving of definitions

- Can space be occupied by someone, can you offer space to someone else?
- Sense of communality has been surpassed with competition "time of games"
- Is the form (speed, wit) or content of expression underlined?
- Are the fast and witty more profound as people as the slow and thoughtful?
- What is the competition?
- Is the male/female setting the right interpretation and justified definition
- Who do we represent? How competent are we to give definitions?
- Definitions are created with feelings

With and lost, the difficulty of the "everything goes" orientation

- What is the fixed point?
- The LLLR model: limits, limited, limitless and role
- The missing letter is S: solution
- Dichotomy can be a partial solution, intent to find clarity.

Convener: Harri Hyypä

Secretaries: Ms. Arja Ketonen and Ms. Terttu Niemelä