



## Encouraging The Reflective Citizen

### Part 1. THE SHARING OF PREOCCUPATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

In this part of the Listening Post we were invited to identify, contribute, and explore our experience in our various social roles. This part of the evening was largely concerned with what might be called, 'the stuff of people's everyday lives', that relating to our social context.

### Part 2. IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES

In Part 2 the aim was for us to collectively identify the major themes emerging from Part 1. The following represents some of these themes:

1. A grand system forcing the person to change, adapt, learn to use technology and make new choices
2. Living in a situation with incoherence in values

### Part 3. ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

In this part of the Listening Post the members were working with the information resulting from Parts One and Two, 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.

#### Analysis and Hypothesis 1

*A grand system forcing the person to change, adapt, learn to use technology and make new choices*

**Analysis (i):** On January 1st 2013 the regime for selling electricity was nationally reset in Estonia. Earlier there was only a single company running the industry. After the new regime, starting from January 1 together close to a hundred different companies started to sell/forward electricity. The people have had difficulties in making decisions about and understanding the complex sales contracts and terms of sales. Electricity is vital and not understanding the system is scary. The electricity companies are all-new, quite alike, unknown/strange and they have complicated ways for pricing their electricity. These bring up the hardness of making choices (as to which company to choose), as well as the worry of managing yourself with all the options to choose from. Running errands electrically on the Internet has also brought difficulties as not everyone can or knows how to use a computer and the Internet – so that the help of someone other is needed. From that, friction from the difference in power and authority starts to give effect between the individuals. For example, the customer's options for paying for electricity are either to pay the bill every month using the Internet, or alternatively, give the permission to the electricity company for charging the money straight from the customer's bank account. Thus, the individual feels that their control over their own assets decreases (negative).

**Analysis (ii):** A grand system, the city, enables the citizens of Tallinn to use the public transport (buses, trams, electric buses) completely free of charge. The city donates the people a way to

gratuitously move from place to another. This has been a delight, a blessing, not needing to pay for moving from place to place in the city (positive).

**Hypothesis:** The relationship of an individual in regards to the surrounding world is changing from both ends. The grand system affects the individual considerably and creates new options for the individual, albeit forcefully. That makes the individual start to develop a new relationship to the grand system – the change is to more obey and live by the system, adapting to it instead of fighting against.

## Analysis and Hypothesis 2

*Living in a situation with incoherence in values*

**Analysis (i):** Young Estonians often seek to study abroad and find jobs from outside Estonia. There are not enough jobs for everyone in Estonia. The young adults experience incoherence in their feelings. Their parents are aging and to be taken care for, but at the same time to get along by themselves, find a job elsewhere (Australia, America, Finland, etc.). All at the same time, one must live independently and be near – and that isn't possible.

**Analysis (ii):** At the same time one must appreciate that what has been done in the past and still break away from it. The young adults feel guilty about wanting to leave the past behind, for example the old traditions in working and doing things. Aged people then feel that their work is not appreciated and are irritated by it. There is a gap seen between these two generations.

**Hypothesis:** The societal life or the global life forces an individual to widen their operative domain and at the same time make choices on their values. The people begin to understand that the choices and decisions must be done more bravely, because it helps to get a better hold on life. One has to find new ways of living in the present complex world. One way is to live beyond national borders. Then, with the access on Skype and other equipment, a connection to home can be maintained. One learns to live in a diverse world, surrounded by all of its differing values. Unfortunately it brings along the fact that contact between people can decrease.

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