



COVID-19 Online LISTENING POST

Part 1: THE SHARING OF PREOCCUPATIONS & EXPERIENCES, PART 2: IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES, PART 3: ANALYSIS & HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

Germany, Berlin, 20th May 2020

Participants:

19 participants from: Germany, UK, Austria, Sweden, South Africa, Poland, USA, Ireland, Lithuania, Czech Republic

Topics:

defensive projection: saturation of information, isolation, disconnections, feeling abandoned, feeling dependent, loss, wanting to be in the playground, melancholy, blame on old people - then they die and we look worse, being unwanted, anxiety, fear, joy being out there and in the past or future

projections onto others: envy, admiration of success in doing better, claws, demons, anger at jogger and youngsters who rebel, blame on others who bring the virus, being angry, feeling guilty, fear for prosecution and policing, labeling the old, feeling prematurely and vulnerable, being in need to stay home

fight for resources: nationalists rising, fear of no jobs, fear what is brewing below, fear what is outside the window, fear that Phoenix has died - will it rise?, seeing civil rights being crushed, envying regimes crushing the virus, hoping the regime can save us

being in freeze: feeling stuck, feeling immobilized.

being in transition: being on hold, running to/running away, importance of professional roles, shrinkage of other roles, new roles one does not like, pressed to take on another identity, female presidents do better, grateful that others are safe, new connections, what are we embedding in the next generations? What are we going to be left with - both positive and negative?

Group processes:

Harmony, respect, listening – are there good connections in order not to see the claws? Is there a fear of not looking behind the surface? Is it risky to see the individual differences, which we cannot bear, a defence against what is happening behind and inside? Is there some envy in that?

In the last part the resource of time has been depleted. Is there is no longer time to gradually mourn and grieve over the passing of time (towards death)?

Hypotheses:Fear and Freeze:

The need to look after the elderly seems satisfied by looking after people, who need it, so there is some goodness coming out of people. But because we feel a loss of relatives, we cannot connect with, the loss of motherland, the home, the good and caring mother, dependency needs are not met.

Because we are constrained, anxious and crazy we push all our possible joy to outside; outside our countries, outside of time and are unable to experience joy in the present.

Because of our grief of the losses to the economy and society, we are having to find new ways of thinking and feeling, and new roles. BUT we don't know which or how to take it up. This can be paralysing, and we feel a loss of our own agency. Nevertheless, we feel a strong desire to be connected, hence the relative ease with which we have adapted to the Zoomisphere. There, we recognise that our experience has much in common with others all over the world- even though in the real world our localities are becoming increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural.

Being in freeze: Responding to the helplessness engendered by the pandemic, we feel stuck and immobilized to take action.

Fight and flight:

Awakened by the crisis, we are running in a fight for resources. It is a forced competition. We fear this fight, we are taking part in. We project our own wish for resources in others. We fear our greediness and our claws as well as the ones from the others.

We feel uncertainty and frustration, because we can never go back to ordinary life as we know it, because of the fear of recession and because we cannot even blame. So we blame the runners in the parks - shifting the blame.

It is easy to talk about similar experiences but hard to talk about differences. There is a disconnection between the individual and countries: We ask which countries are doing the best as if there are league tables. We support the favourite football team which is made of international players - so who's our team in all of this? Only kin will really look after you? There will be no one to help.

We are in a guilty and envious competition about the pride/prize of who gets to survive.

Hoping for Leaders:

Because the threat of the virus makes us so afraid we rely on leadership even if it is not what we want, and it disappoints. In our dependency of that leadership we lose our autonomy and cannot escape. Trapped in dependency and fear of rebelling. Trapped on a roundabout in a horrific playground.

We feel a propensity toward trust of authority, of those who we cast as our leaders - even though we may doubt their trustworthiness. We are also mistrustful of our own compliance. However, authority as such may be regarded as quasi-parental figures, who may be authoritarian / toxic / abusive or strong. And yet, because we confuse authority figures as our parents, we feel compelled to rebel. Indeed, having strong parents who provide necessary structure for our lives means that it is safe to rebel ... which we need to do to develop our own sense of agency, to go forward because we cannot go back and, in turn, become parents ourselves.

Because of the crisis, we know we have no choice but to transform. Old ways are gone. Those who make the transformation effectively will win. We see that good leaders are female, creating equal opportunities, leaving a man-driven world behind. If a country is on the right path the fight for resources ceases.

Pictures:

Trapped on a roundabout in a horrific playground
wonderful connections but then the claws come out
new demons rise
who's our team in all of this

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