



## Finland at the dawn of 2020

Conveners: Marianne Tensing and Timo Tatro (The Metanoia Institute)

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### **PART 1: THE SHARING OF PREOCCUPATIONS AND EXPERIENCES**

There were a total of 16 participants. We did Part 1 and Part 3 sitting together in a circle. Part 2 was first implemented in three small groups (40 min) and then we combined the small group themes together into common themes (30min).

The majority of participants were aged 55-68 years, with a few participants 41-45 years old. They were of various professional backgrounds: psychologists, occupational health psychologists, consultants, HR professionals, retired consultants-supervisors, leaders, church workers. One participant has been present at each Listening Post for about 20 consecutive years.

Unlike previous Listening Post seminars, all experiences were very personal. Major global themes were not touched at all this year. The atmosphere in the Part 1 section was confident, empathetic, thoughtful, and slow in tempo. There was a pause, a silence, between stories. People shared very personal stories when they were going through heavy processes (e.g., serious illness of a loved one, self-illness). A few were in a new situation and wondered about this.

The whole seminar left people with good experience. When we asked for feedback at the end, it said it was extraordinary, profound, encouraging, and reassuring.

## **PART 2: IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES**

### **PART 3: ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION**

#### Theme 1

- One person told about her daughter (15years) ... about her daughter's behaviour that surprised her mother. Until the last minute, the daughter leaves open plans for what she plans to do next and where to go. She has several options as different plans are happening with different friends and it is only at the last minute that she changes plans and heads to a different person because it is better and more fun there. The daughter always has several options open. She makes decisions at the last minute. Communication between her daughter and her friends takes place in real-time, in social media. When a mother asks where her daughter is going, she replies, I don't know yet.

- A retired man told that he invited the children and grandchildren to eat at Christmas. As he researched in advance what each person eats and what they do not eat, the number of dishes surprised him. He was not prepared to cook so many dishes. Previously, traditional Finnish Christmas dishes had been eaten at Christmas, but not now.

- A person in the working world told me about the team's competitive spirit. On the one hand, they do things together, and on the other hand, they value the individuals who bring visibility to the team and invent new things. The ever-present competitive situation was sometimes stressful.

## Theme 2: Aging - Letting go.

- I retired and I have learned how to fall out of the conclusion of the work. When life brings new twists and turns, you have to give up and mourn something and there are gaps. In many ways, last year has been a time of renunciation, letting go. There is an empty space underneath and it is unknown to one's self. I'm no longer part of this community. Relationships remain that have come through the workplace. One should go forward from this feeling of confusion and become familiar with it. I have opened my eyes to this theme of ageing.

- One participant said about the pain of letting go. He told me .. "This building is very familiar to me, I was working here as a professional musician. My career was interrupted by a hand injury. Recently, I have dreams about being part of it again; I am back playing in the orchestra. I feel like the body remembers and misses the movements of the musicians - where have they gone? The body does not realize that the lack of movement of my arm is an obstacle. The body communicates and desires through sleep instead because the way the body was involved in playing music brought joy and pleasure. Can sleep create pleasure in the body? How are the rational and irrational connected here? I am going through mourning and abandonment of this past, even if externally seems that I have built a new life - but at night in my dream, I play in the orchestra. In all my dreams I have this same hand injury, but it doesn't seem to stop me from going to a gig or work. That playing experience is fantastic. I also miss it the most. I feel most sad for a lack of involvement as I am no longer involved in music-making and that vibration. On stage, it thickens - and your body vibrates, it's such a great feeling."

## Theme 3: Experiential knowledge helps you survive better than objective knowledge.

- The participant reported that he had cancer, had undergone heavy treatment and had survived. He said that he has learned a lot from this

difficult process. Now life seems to him to be more precious and he has learned to express love.

#### 4. Theme: Listening to your body increases your understanding.

- one participant told about the experience at the Art Museum. The show featured a music/performance video piece that everyone was able to participate in. At first, he didn't know how to be in that situation, he didn't know what to do or what not to do, but then he started to swing and move, dance and "blend in" with the room where the art was. He just let his body take him away and at the end he felt a strong, wonderful feeling that he was part of that performance, part of that art.

- One participant told about the experience of playing in the orchestra. For him, it was always a bodily experience. He had become familiar with the orchestral playing in his body and that "bodily knowledge" had guided his music. It was a great feeling when the whole orchestra was "breathing" at the same pace.