

**"Finland and the World
at the Dawn of 2006"**
Report of a Listening Post
held on 11th January



Encouraging The Reflective Citizen

Summaries of Part 2:

Group 1

- Anxiety
- Responsibility
- Hope
- How do I combine the roles being who I am?

Group 2

1. Insecurity
 - dependency - independency

2. Fear
 - losing control

3. Reflective culture

Group 3

1. Hardness and lightness of working life
 - the "basic task" of being a human being
 - individualisation (forced) elitism
 - close relationships, chain of generations: children, workers, leaders

2. Global problems
 - a new form of slavery > global
 - distribution of work - harnessing one's family

3. Yearning for leadership
 - difficult nature of choices
 - change in leadership

What is the theme of stage 1 all about? We try to understand the problems that it raised: beliefs, hopes, thinking practices.

Our task is to produce hypotheses.

Problem-centred perspective on things, anxiety and anguish are also connected with the formulation of the question on which our discussion is based. If you ask for problems,

you will get them. The perspective of hope to the surrounding and inner worlds is not brought to the discussion.

Is this method leading us? We have, however, given content to the method. How much room do we have for better situation and hope? Perhaps this is linked with age, because I tend to see more worries than hope. The matter was covered in common discussion mainly from the subjective point of view, in which one's own children and grandchildren are the first priority. Age and responsibility for the children were perceived as worries. Unpredictable nature of life and phenomena that cannot be controlled were raised. What does the state of the world mean for two small people?

The idea of polarity was presented: hope of individualisation, which is good on one hand and bad on the other hand. If one goes too deeply into worries, one loses hope, which is important to keep. It is important not to lose hope. Paradox: one must have the courage to look problems in the eye and yet hope.

The manic position of change was also covered. Will a depressive position be reached in which we have the courage to look at problems any time. One feels frustrated: why are we not looking already? It is only when this happens that we can mourn. We live in a world where we make changes in a manic way and do not have the courage to face our problems. Why?

- Structures do not allow stopping. Space is taken from psychological processes.
- One needs time to stop. There is constant haste.
- Our own feeling of insecurity prevents us from talking.
- What will the consequences of a radical change be?
- We lack courage. It is common sense not to talk. If I say what I see and feel is happening, it creates insecurity in other people. The current situation is safer, because it is familiar. Pretended changes are also made.
- Would the reason be guilt? Is this where we have brought our society? We must do something.
- What prevents companies from taking responsibility?
- Competition makes us sick. We play the winning game. When we compete, we cannot listen to others, we cannot be in dialogue.
- I am blind to some things, I cannot see and understand. It is impossible to co-operate in a competition.
- Manic interaction does not permit dialogue.
- If we realise that dealing with something is painful, we avoid it. We want to avoid psychological pain. We have fantasies of pain. We escape to the opposite of pain. We escape the pain we are experiencing now to the past or future.

We have the need to have it all - greed - we have to try to participate in everything. We are afraid that if we do not participate, we may miss something. We are afraid of being on the outside.

We miss leadership. Being manic suits this particular situation. What kind of dreams, promises do we have? Painful dreams and promises are abandoned. We still not want to miss anything. There is a wretched human being underneath the civilised surface. Will we end up in a landmine?

- Are being manic and greedy our landmines?

- Are we passing by the important things in life?
- We can drive onto a landmine when we are participating in manic life, when we lack reflectivity.
- Mines are difficult to perceive, invisible.
- Mine detectors can be used to locate landmines.
- What are we missing, what does the detector not detect?

A landmine does not kill, it injures.

- When disabled, we are dependent on the charity of other people. Disability creates insecurity and uncertainty.
- Will we lose our omnipotence? The idea that human beings can do anything is deep-rooted in our minds.
- Will we end up in "supported jobs"?

There is willingness for reparative activity. We feel responsible for detecting and cleaning the landmines of the family and work.

It is horrifying to step up to the line. Do we feel responsible for something having been done wrong. It is difficult to grasp things. For example, who is responsible for the state of the world economy? War criminals are the downside of the glory of wars. The terrifying explanation is: people did what they were told to do in Nûrnberg, the leader was responsible for thinking, it was not my responsibility.

What is the real responsibility of a leader? How should one lead oneself?

- It is difficult to think that there is no one that knows better.
- We appoint leaders even though we do not know whether they are capable of the job.
- Container responsibility, escape, fear.
- If someone took care of me, I had the courage to tell.
- Who knows? Everyone knows something, nobody knows everything.
- Information is gained through a common dialogue. It requires us to be heard first. Who are we listening to? Who do we think has information?

How can a reflective leader manage with a manic leader?

- Which one is listened to? Which one will the public grant leadership?
- Can ordinary people trust that their thoughts are taken into account?

A manic leader often wins.

- Theories on how to use things arise from manic need: faith in tables and meters.
- The public wants to identify themselves with manic leaders who they think are winners.
- Mania is something to seek after.
- On the other hand, people do not believe in a manic leader, they become depressive.

When a reflective leader and manic leader are compared, the meters are opinion polls, the Internet, telephone.

It is defensive to always tell the truth. It is also defensive if one never says anything.

A group of manic and depressive: winners / losers > war, which reflectivity will not win.

The fear arising from the basic sense of security drives us.

Reflective leaders wins in the long run in an expert organisation.

- The organisation will slowly start to feel well.
- A reflective leader is willing to hear justifications, he need the ability to stand up for himself.
- Reflectivity is not always included everywhere and it is not always fun.
- Reflectivity appreciates the work done to get to the current position.

Two recent opposite examples:

There was an organisation with rather a reflective leader who was in favour of conversation. A new manic leader was appointed during a change in the organisation. The new leader told people how to work without listening to them. The employees learnt to keep quiet in six months. There was no discussion or conversation on common events. When the old and careful leader was replaced, the new courageous leader took great risks and caused a terrible mess.

In another organisation, an old, bossy leader retired and a new leader favouring discussion was appointed. Little by little, work communities that were not used to talk, started to open up. The new atmosphere was excited, creative and co-operation oriented.

Where get hope? Culture can change fast. It is tragic how important leadership is.

Extended leadership is needed, other people must be engaged

Care and attention of the leader - psychological care.

We must think what the basic task requires from leadership? What is made common?

Where are we, what is the starting point?

Dissatisfaction with the existing situation is prevalent and consuming. What we have now is not enough. The 'when and if only' - life Nothing is enough!

Can a depressive work community create a manic leader?

Are we looking for a manic leader of a depressive work community?

Family - image: sabotaging leadership > a child contests his parents.

Families, in which children are forced to accept some parenthood and get parents back from pubs.

When can you start giving children responsibility and what kind of responsibility? What is too much too soon?

Leading and managing specialists is based on the idea that the specialists know their field but it is difficult for them to take or assume responsibility. What is the responsibility of citizens, what is adulthood?

There are organisations where real work is done "in secret", people do their own work properly.

There are two stages:

- Leadership which results in sandbox games
- Leadership which results in doing the work together

If there is trust, there is no need for much information.

Himanen - Torvalds:

- If the foundation is on trust, the result will be good interaction, which will result in creativity
- If there is no trust, its result will be competition and fear.

How does this situation make you feel?

I am looking at the position of children from the perspective of a grandmother. I wonder why children are always in second place. It does not feel right. There was a story in the Helsingin Sanomat newspaper on an extended family, which is a good growing environment for children. Nowadays many children do not even have two parents, other relatives close by, and sometimes not even friends.

A year has passed since the previous Listening Post seminar. The Seminar focused on only one theme, which irritated me. Today's morning service was about a tsunami, and a fire in a disco in Buenos Aires. My son was there, I was worried about him. The matter did not gain attention, because everyone only talked about the tsunami. Who do we care about? We do not care about the less fortunate. Major events gain major attention - malnutrition and other causes of death do not.

The proportion of children of the population is significantly decreasing and there are more and more elderly people. Geographical distances are shrinking. We understand that people in Thailand are worried and that being worried is not only limited to your own home and surroundings. I grew up in a large, protected family. None of us has grandchildren yet. People get children at an older age.

The question is, to whom am I linked with and how. You can connect yourself through a network: my son is indirectly connected through a network about 80%. Text from the book.

In the extended family in question, the man had three wives.
An extended family cannot travel, it is physically impossible.

Iraq. The tsunami. Why did we not talk about Iraq last year? Iraq was a manmade catastrophe, whereas the tsunami was a natural catastrophe. Iraq is a wider problem, why is the situation not discussed at the international level. International issues are not discussed even in the presidential election campaigns even though the president is responsible for foreign policy.

The tsunami aroused a wave of solidarity. The timing of the Listening Post seminar influences the themes of discussion. Hypocrisy! The thing that upsets you is human.

The tsunami was not as strongly highlighted in Listening Post seminars in other countries. In Sweden, the discussion emphasised the old - young juxtaposition. The seminar in London also discussed why most participants were over 50 years of age. The number of Finns who died in Thailand was particularly high.

The debates of presidential election campaigns are paradoxical: the main task is hidden. People get upset even by talking about it. The presidential elections wake up the voters. The position is easy for the voters. Voting rate is lower in municipal elections even though issues related to our society are solved in municipal elections. It is hard to express an opinion on something.

Would we really need the second round in the presidential elections? The debates resemble tests, which the candidates must pass. Discourse is destroyed, the candidates do not let the others speak without interrupting.

Small people shrink, great people become greater > coldness and hardness in working life we have not learned from the tsunami. People who have resources are heard. This kind of development is disturbing.

A fraction has occurred: deep suspicion has been considered negative and optimism as a positive trait. As a father, I think that one must prepare for negative development of ecological circumstances. The need is becoming more prominent. There was a natural catastrophe in the USA, and the armed forces were asked for help. What would the situation have been in here? One should acquire survival skills to protect one's family.

Family, children, individual, community - risk society. Giddens: fragmentation. There are many roads, no signposts, and it is hard to predict. The situation is difficult when an individual has to recompose himself. If the current structure is eliminated, where will we get a new one?

Politicians presented their views on the EU on television. The fear was that Finland would need to pay more than it would gain and that larger countries can invest massively in Finland? The challenge of leadership is: what do we need leaders who make decisions for, because everyone can predict the future just as well/badly as the decision-makers.

Making visions should be left to virtual culture. More organisational levels are not needed.

We cannot plan the future in Finland.

Visions are not discussed in the presidential election - NATO is.

Virtual connections. Connecting with the neighbours is not easy. Family relations hold - not easy.

Is it possible to move to a virtual society?

I would like to tell you a personal story. I cried a lot. This has not happened to me. I read old stories. During the war, my father drove a car onto a mine. My mother wrote the story that was dictated to her. My father was taken to the hospital, unconscious. When he recovered consciousness for a while, he asked: where is Harri? I started to cry from the bottom of my heart when I once again read the story. I was surprised by my own reaction. I was important to my father. Something happened in me, something that I could not handle in any other way but by crying. What are we to each other? What question?

I was in the theatre watching East of Eden with my wife and daughter. The complex nature of relationships with people close to you. Cain and Abel - fratricide. At home we

tried to discuss all relationships inside the family. It was difficult, almost impossible. The play had gotten too close to use.

I have also been thinking about relationships with people close to me, the people who I live with. I read a book of Eugen Drewermann called "Ich lasse dich nicht, du segnest mich denn: Predigten zum 1. Buch Moses." Children are for other people who do not have an independent position. Relationship with Joseph's mother. Uncertainty of society, weird, does not make sense.

Forgotten family relations: grandpa is not the real grandpa, the father found it out quite recently too. Course in family history. Siblings do not want to remember, they want to leave things as they are. Fortunately, one has friends to talk to. About 10% of children are the offspring of some other man than the father of the family - what does the uncertainty of one's father mean?

What does it mean to drive onto a mine? I had to change jobs, which was, surprisingly, like driving onto a mine. The things I considered confidential are gone, there is no security. Nothing is clear anymore. The former supervisor is carrying out a vendetta. Have I been naïve? It is up to the solicitors now. Boundaries are impossible. I need to reconstruct everything. The situation is difficult. It is my year of tsunami: I turned 50, my son moved out.

What do you dare to say? One feels cornered. Madness of working life, pathology. It has been easy to say what you see. Now I'm scared, I cannot even write. If I say something, I drive onto a mine > hardness.

Where is space for sorrow? Disappointment? Hardness, haste. Constant flow of work, there are no places to stop.

To hear, to face the sorrow and disappointment in your life. As a professional, I am worried about supervisors who are blocked inside. Where can they find space to stop? My own situation, discussion with my father on a DVD: from father to son, four generations - I did not identify with the dad by a sixty years old man, who could not handle the things he was made to face, but who nevertheless loved his son. My generation is looking for sorrows that have not been mourned out loud.

A year ago, I left my position as a supervisor and changed into a consulting career. It was a relief. I have had time for myself; this is what I have gained. Work role keeps changing. Where can I find the space to think? Now I have only one year before retirement. I'm relieved. Children: 2 grandchildren. What kind of a world am I building for them? There are threats present. What can I do?

Threats are global, although Finland has been safe for now. I read a book written by a Finnish woman on her life in Iraq. If we did not have water and electricity in Finland, how would we survive? We are fortunate for not having to experience or genuine shortage of necessities.

The working life is deteriorating: we eagerly point out negative things. Individualisation has taken place; the supervisors dictate less. Statistics show, however, that people are becoming less equal. There are positive things too > we are now more individual.

I have interviewed my relatives about working life in the 1970's and 1980's. Complaints, job-related emotional indisposition: how in the world? The chain of generations: what kind of a story will I be telling to children about the current working life? There was no room for individuality in working life in the 1970's and 1980's, people were wheels in machinery, and the rules of the community defined their actions. Now you can think who you are even in working life. Individualism gives opportunities but it also creates insecurity. Greed and promoting one's own agendas are dominant. Individualism is a double-edged sword.

On the global level: there are other lives than working life. Children, families, in mines in China, this is work at the global level. Framework, perspective. We have it easy.

Hard work also used to be a pleasure. People wanted and were able to finish the work properly and carefully. Now, we are not allowed to talk about hard work. The results are a lie; there is nothing that anybody would need. We calculate visits, not results. It is disgusting to set a high price for consulting work. My mother worked in a laundry and father was a handyman.

The feeling of inadequacy when you are not allowed to work properly. You make mistakes, the emotional indisposition of children. You carry it with you, you have to learn more and more all the time, you must be interested in interior decoration, and travelling, overweight is a threat. Nothing is enough.

I am not sure if there is room for individualisation. Is there room only for the elite? Market economy: children always want a new mobile phone: daddy, I want this, I must have I must have Massesan individual.

Work is seen as a waiting mode, temporary workers are a resource. Everything is tuned in such a way that we are ready to go as soon as we are summoned. Competition, opportunism. Some can choose.

A great change is the mainstreaming of the idea of profitability. We are not even talking about social influence.

Roles create prejudices. I was two weeks in Cuba with a group. A heated debate was started on what do we connect to when travelling. I am from North Karelia and I have been in many all-inclusive holidays. Some were idealising the system during the trip - some objected it. Why was the theme debated for the first time in such a heated manner in Cuba, of all places? What kind of a role is that of a good tourist? Healthcare and education are good in Cuba BUT there is no basic infrastructure: you cannot move around. How do you see yourself?

Do we have the tendency to create problems for ourselves? A good tourist? A good employee?

There were Che Guevara t-shirts in Cuba, not Fidel t-shirts. What would be my logo?

People do not really want to think about things. One must try to change. A halted status.

Everyday life: we just hang around. It is important to be idle.

What is the necessary task of a supervisor: ungrateful job of load carrier, steersman with a paddle. As a consultant, you have the power to give time to think. The formal task of a supervisor is a necessary evil. Flag carrier is a recessive task, that of binbag carrier is dominant. People carry flags, not just the supervisor.

Operations are seen from the point of view of a supervisor, but a first-impression supervisor.

Customer-orientedness is nonsense - we all work as a part of the system.

Convener & Organiser: Harri Hyppia