"Finland and the World at the Dawn of 2008"

Encouraging The Reflective Citizen

1. We are living in the way that it helps crises to come. In order to get further we need crises. We are little by little becoming more aware what affects our way of living cost. Changes happen throw crises.

2. We still believe that it is possible to influence on saving the globe. The time has come for us to think about the environment. We cannot close our eyes any more. Climate changes have to be taken seriously. We have noticed that the globe can be wounded. Environment and sanitary matters have shown us that we can destroy a lot by being egoistic. We begin gradually understand for example that very little shit can pollute huge amount of clean water. And clear water is a basic thing.

3. Technological systems bring specially young people all over the world together, YouTube, Face Book and so. They are in on-line contact and they can get information very quickly. This makes it possible that radical changes can happen. People understand each other better and that gives hope for the world if this understanding is used for saving the world. Therefore it is possible to find fountains of clean water and hope.

4. Because of many environmental catastrophes and signs that many manmade systems are not sustainable — even if we thought so — there seems to be a breakthrough coming. The individual thinking from the sixties is turning to more interdependency ideas. We have to think more global.

5. The story getting more and more of stuff shows greediness and as a slogan sys has it has a dirty end.

6. Our believing in man made systems is getting weaker: Flight and train schedules do not work, water-pipe systems can break, email blocks up because the spams and the full memory. Our love for numbers and technology has come to its limits. We need to see people's other kind of needs. It is difficult but so important to be heard. We are safe with something else but money. We need time to be human.

7. There is an illusion about justice happening. We have to go somewhere out from our own surroundings in order to see and understand our own system. It is easy to tell idealistic phrases and hard to make them true. What is poverty, and what is courage and do we have backbone? Is it a shame to say that I cannot afford something?

8. Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela had a contact to pain. Is the European welfare justified? We are one mankind and interdependent to each other. Do we need a common outside threat to understand it?

9. There has been a huge economic growth. To what do we use this welfare? Do we ensure that everyone has enough? Can we rich people give up for something? The ways of Consumption are time, money, experience.

10. So fucking what! Cynicism and egoistic thinking are taking too much place. How do we use our own energy to help the mankind? It is only an illusion that we would have a common idea about what is a good life.

(Group 2: Leila Keski-Luopa / Rauno Lehtonen)

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 as citizens, whether as worker, unemployed, or retired, as members of religious, political, neighbourhood or voluntary or leisure organisations, or as members of families and communities.

Part 2. IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES

In Part 2 the aim was to collectively identify the major themes emerging from Part 1. These themes emerged from the material from Part 1 that connect to them.

(a) Exhaustion experiences
The working does not more give enough gratifying experiences.

(b) Systems and structures are breaking down producing frustrating experiences
The dependence on structures and systems of society and organisations brings feelings of madness, when they too often deludes with empty promises.

(c) Insatiable greed and selfishness in surroundings are paralysing
When people meet lot greediness and selfishness, they lose one's sense of life. The desire to work is lost.

Part 3. ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

In this part of the Listening Post the members were working with the information resulting from Parts 1 and 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 occuring 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:
The transformation of the society and the development of the information technology seems to have two kinds of consequences. On the one hand they bring lot of relief to the

life, on the other hand they bring more dependence on that new techology. When the structures of society are set up to that technology, also the people became dependent on the function of that technology. If the systems lose their capability, the people too lose their intellectual powers in guestion of context. Moreover the working and communication are handled lot with machines, not with alive human beeings. In this environment the individuals do not get enough the experiences of companionship and supporting.

Hypotheses:
Because people can't meet authentic with other individuals, they have to think that they must get along without help. They feel themselves insecure and alounly. In these circumstansis the work with one's own identity is difficult. Individuals have low possibilities to know, where their feelings and thoughts are similar or dissimilar with others. The consequence from that is that they lose the contact with themselves. They have difficulties to know, who they are, where they are coming from and where they are going to, what they belong to and who they want to be joined together. Because the work with one's identity becomes impossible, the experiences of life reveals the loss of identity.

The announcement of the death of the grand narratives created a vacuum which has not been filled out with small, local and contextual narratives. Globalisation and the ongoing modernisation process bring people into contact with each other across cultures, and there is a felt need for narratives that can create direction, cohesion and moral in this jumble.

Hypothesis:
A vision for a global life is missing. A vision which can mobilise feelings, create male and female heroes, offer possibilities of investments in the common good and sacrifices for the sake of the whole as well as associations of something good lying ahead of us in the future.

Identification of major themes
In this part Listening Post participants recognized a few major themes. These were:

1. The effects of global interaction between people and systems. In global context many organizations act violently towards individuals.

2. The question of waste management was a dominant part of discussion. Environmental problems challenge whole global community, single organizations and also individuals. Sanitation has both mental and physical dimension. How we handle all the waste we and organizations create?

3. The need of hope was essential part of discussion. Is there any hope in organizations or can only individuals make change by choices?

4. Technology as a source of hope and faith seems to loose its power.

5. Basically there was a lot of discussion of identity. Who are we in changing world?

Hypothesis formation

Because the working life has been changing rapidly people are made mentally to carry a heavier load than they are capable of. Changes in working life are related in changes in global systems.

Somehow working life resembles a *large group phenomenon.* Especially network organizations are often chaotic. Rules and norms are replaced by again and again agreements made by two people. We loose predictability.

Consenting to the load is due to the ethos of old Finnish society. We are extremely dutiful and aspiring and we are looking for being acknowledged. As in old farming society we believe that one must work until he/she is physically tired. In the world of mental work this seems to lead to exhaustion.

Another reason to consenting is the large group phenomenon in organizations. It is hard to disengage mindless working life without radical change of life style. In the Listening Post discussions people seem to be hopeless when looking possibilities to change the way things are happening. As if the power was outside.

It seems that in conflicting situations Finns typically avoid open juxtapositions and remain silent. We have historical reasons to use this kind of defenses. In our national myths escapes, hiding in hidden huts in deep woods and avoiding open conflicts with overwhelming enemy have been ways to survive.

Why are we talking now about our identity? We are unsure who we are, who we wish to be and how we should act to fulfill our identity. We fall into this because of loss of permanence, disintegration, difficulty to stop, difficulty to notice the change.

In personal level our challenges are ignorance and fear. We are about to loose our own authority and self.

Convener: Harri Hyypia