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Leonardo da Vinci

Anything more to tell?

Reflections upon the
wisdom dimension of the
Knowledgeing Workshop

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SES

Stories Enhancing Skills



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Any thing more to tell? Reflections upon the wisdom dimension of the Knowledgeing Workshop¹.

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Introduction: “Socratic evaluator”

An evaluation is normally a kind of summing up and closing down of a project, which is now to be evaluated. It asks: “So what was the purpose of this project? What happened? What were the results? and How did we arrive at these results? “

I have – since the project the “Knowledgeing Work-Shop”(KWS) started in 2006² – been following this Leonardo-project as an external evaluator from the Danish School of Education, Aarhus University. But I have done this not as an evaluator in the sense, that I have just described. My task has not – as it has been for my colleague, associated professor Sigrid Nordstoga (Nordstoga, 2008) – to describe the different learning and group dynamic processes in the Knowledgeing Workshop, which has been going on, and to make interviews with the participants to see the effects and benefits of this workshop for the participants. My task has been described as a *Socratic evaluator*, or a critical friend.

A *Socratic evaluator* has a different task than a normal evaluator. He will during the process be working as an irritating gadfly asking - like Socrates did - teasing, critical and sticky questions to the main ideas and assumptions and the results of this project³. He will try to turn things up-side-down and point towards other ways of understanding the key concepts and frame-works used in the project to put those key understandings in play

¹ This paper is a rewrite of a talking manuscript for a speech, which was made at the Conference at Alicante University “Presentation of the results from the Leonardo da Vinci Pilot project ‘Stories Enhancing Skills’, 20. – 21. Oct. 2008. Copyright. Finn Th. Hansen, ft@dpi.dk.

² For a further introduction to the Knowledgeing Workshop, also called Stories Enhancing Skills (SES1), see www.sesproject.eu .

³ For an elaboration of a more Socratic and hermeneutic view on evaluation as such see Thomas A. Schwandt (2005, 2008).

and in perspective and by that helping the participants and the project leader in the project to be even more clear and reflected upon those key concepts and frameworks which are in use. The final evaluation of the Socratic evaluator has not – as it has for the usual evaluator – the purpose of closing up the project by showing its results – but rather to opening it up again asking questions like: “What has been the main assumptions taken for granted in this project – in the process and in the results - which we now could be more critical about?” “Where are the loose ends?” and “What could be interesting to examine and develop further in the future?”

I will try now to live up to this “Socratic task” also today, but I must confess that this has been a difficult task, because all in all I am very impressed with the professionalism of the project manager and researcher Dr. Inger Erstad and the enthusiasm of the project’s participants and indeed also of the results of the project as such.

How do we recognize whether a story is wise or just filled with knowledge?

But let me now take on the role of Socrates and, as he did, only select *one* subject to be investigated. Socrates would probably be very encouraged and amused by this project. Especially when he hear that the overall intention of this project is not only to make the social workers more aware of their practical, personal and tacit *knowledge* – but also to act and make judgments that are *wise*. Socrates would immediately and with a smile, I am sure, ask the question: “How do you make a distinction between practical knowledge and wisdom?” This question will for sure turn on Socrates. And we should as well be turned on by this question.

Dr. Inger Erstad (2008) quotes in her introduction to her final evaluation of the KWS the German novelist Herman Hesse for saying: “*Knowledge can be communicated. But not wisdom.*” Her assumption is nevertheless that wisdom *can* be communicated but not directly. Wisdom can only be communicated indirectly through narratives, stories, poetry, philosophy, art, movies and fairytales. They are the sources to wisdom but of course those stories and metaphors has to be translated and connected to the individual social

worker. KWS is a place where social workers as well as other professionals working with people can learn from the wisdom of their practical life and experiences in the field.

Still, how do we tease out the wisdom of these practical experiences? How must we listen to the voices of life to hear not just our habitual and standard procedures and professional methodological and knowledge-based actions in our professional work - but also the wisdom that in some way was there in the practical situation right in front of our eyes? And in hearing or telling a story from our own professional life, how do we recognize whether a story being told to us is wise or just filled with knowledge?

Well, one way to go could be to follow Herman Hesse and answer: By our silence.

We have probably all had this experience, that when a good and deep story is told it leaves the listeners in silence for a moment. It seems like there is nothing more to tell. All is said in this beautiful spoken and wise story, which seems to capture the essence and indeed those parts of, or great moments in, the existence, which cannot be spoken or communicated directly. These stories are especially rich and life enhancing filled, it seems, with wisdom and life abundance. We know the story of King Salomon and the two mothers wanting their child, or the fairytale of the Little Mermaid by the Danish poet H.C. Andersen – and we sense their wisdom although we will have difficulty explaining why.

It might be easy to *tell* these stories once you have heard them – and they will for sure become a part of you, like a sounding board of the Grand Stories of Humanity and life wisdom that you can listen to and learn from. But quite another thing is to *create* wise stories.

How do you learn to communicate that which cannot be communicated directly *with out* being a blessed poet or novelist? Why is it – and this is a basic assumption in KWS - that telling a story from the lived experience of the social worker might make her a more wise person making wise judgments? Is there a connection between the personal story being told by the social worker and the Grand Stories of Humanity? Or how can one make such a connection to become a wise social worker?

The basic assumption of the Knowledgeing Workshop

These are some of the interesting questions, which this Leonardo project has come up with and which is indeed worthy to pursue for further elaboration⁴. KWS raises those questions mentioned above – or rather, these questions are silently taken for granted in the scope of this project. Its fundamental assumption or hope is that it is possible - maybe not for the participants to create beautiful and wise stories - but to strengthen their ability to make wise judgment in professional situation *through* their struggle of giving voice to some personal lived experiences.

But let us go slowly now to take a closer look upon this basic assumption. Isn't that assumption a very interesting but also strange and amazing assumption? Does this idea not make you wonder: *Why is it that trying to articulate a lived experience from your professional life, which really have made an impression on you, and discovering how difficult it is to catch the essence of this lived experience – why is it that this kind of struggle will enrich your ability or readiness to make wise judgments in the concrete moment?*

I believe that this central question is still to be answered in the future. Yet, the way the project's methodology is developed is leading us in the right direction, I believe.

The three stages of the workshop seems to lead us on the path to wisdom

The method of this project consists (see Erstad, 2005,2008 and www.sesproject.eu) of three stages.

First, there is the stage of developing narratives and transcripts from the lived experience of the social worker. This is, as one will discover reading the essays of the participants and evaluation (Nordstoga, 2008; Erstad, 2008), a very demanding and complicated learning process. To communicate a life impression, which has made an impression on

⁴ We now know that this project will be followed up by a new one called “SES2: Transfer of the Knowledgeing Work-Shop Model” in 2009-2010. It is a transfer of innovation project, where the results and new questions of SES1 will be elaborated further with the purpose of qualifying the Knowledgeing Work-Shop to a master-level and to groups of professionals, which is not only social workers. See www.sesproject.eu

you, in a way that captures the essence both for yourself and your colleagues without losing – what I would call “the phenomenological touch” (see also Van Manen, 1990) – is not an easy task. But although it is demanding, also on a personal level, it is, so we see, also a very illuminating and meaningful process for the participants.

The second stage is called “the concrete reflection” or phenomenological reflection. This can also be a difficult challenge for the participants to do because we either have difficulties in getting in a sufficient distance to the concrete lived experience in order to reflect *from* it – or we jump too quickly into theorizing *about* the experience – trying to find reasons, causes or abstract categories and definitions to get a kind of order in all the observations. But the main purpose of this task on the second stage is to dwell upon your lived experience in a slowly and critical reflecting way that helps you to find your *own personal questions and formulations* of the problem that you want to investigate. To connect to this more personal motivated questioning is important. If this connection is not made, the participants too easily will, so to speak, switch to an already well known theory-channel and just download what others have been thinking, and then they will use these models and theories as “answers” and “solutions” to their questions – instead of getting into a real genuine dialogue *with* the theory and based on the lived experience of the participants. Again, this is for many participants an unfamiliar way of relating to theory, because we are so used to go the other way around. That is, first learning scientific theories and then using these theories *on* practice. But here, in the KWS, we ideally learn to go the other way around and to reflect on, what we might call “*the lived theory-in-practice*”, which comes to surface through a reflection *from* the lived experience.

Now, the third stage is indeed to move to the theoretical reflection calling in the Grand Stories of Humanity as a sounding board for our further reflection. This is the test whether the participant have been capable of seeing or hearing *the universal* in the concrete and personal experience and reflection. I call it the stage of “hermeneutic awareness”(Hansen, 2008). Here we really try to dig into the hidden assumptions of the story being told and the essay being written. We should ask questions such as: “What is

the ‘lived philosophy’ (our basic assumptions and rationales) of our lived experience? What kind of values or view on reality or the Good Life is being taken for granted in these lived experiences and the reflections the participants have been doing until now? Which common and more universal themes are to be seen in this concrete and particular life experience?”

Where as we on stage two try to awake a greater *curiosity* towards what the participants are doing and saying in their professional practices – we now turn to another and deeper mood or attitude on stage three because we encourage the participants to fundamentally *wonder*⁵ about their own philosophical rationales and life assumptions.

This hermeneutical awareness or reflection might be initiated by what I call the “Socratic dialectical playfulness”(Hansen, 2008). This is dialogue between the participants and/or the Socratic facilitator, where the assumptions of the participants are investigated in a critical, playful (humoristic) and experimental way, and in a Community of Wonder. This dialectical process can also be done alone through a self-critical and wondrous essay writing, but seldom then as deep as in a real dialogue.⁶

If we as social workers or professionals as such are looking for more innovative, knowledge transcending and self-transforming processes in KWS, *then* it seems to be an ideal to reach this state of wonder, because it probably is the most radical form in opening our eyes for the unknown, for that which we do not know about, but which is a fundamental premise for our whole way of being and acting and understanding in the concrete situation.

⁵ One has to make a sharp distinction between expressions and reflections where you say “*I wonder about...*” and then reflections and *ways of being* where you as a person are in a fundamental state of wonder. It is this more existential and fundamental way of asking ultimate questions from your own way of living and experiencing the world, that are in focus here. For a more thorough elaboration of the concept and phenomenon of wonder (Wunder, Undren) please read Verhoven (1972) and Hansen (2008a, 2008b).

⁶ In my evaluation of the project in the very beginning I noticed that the participants and advisors had some difficulties bringing the reflections in the essays and discussions in the groups to a level where they did not just describe and clarify the practical and tacit knowledge which was in play – but also looked at the hidden assumptions in these lived experiences, stories and essays and had a critical and wondrous reflection upon these assumptions. Therefore I made a short instructive article directed to the project suggesting how to bring one self into a state of wonder in the process of writing essays. See Hansen (2007).

The leader of the project Inger Erstad has a great interest in examining the possible invisible and tacit levels of knowledge in the work of the social worker. She is both pointing to 1) what is explicit and visible for the social worker, 2) what is only on a pre-conscious and embodied level and embedded in the very structures of the practice communities and language of the social workers, and 3) what is not captured in these structures or pictures of the world of the social workers. As she writes: “*What is in the foreground, what can be sensed in the background and what can be imagined outside the picture?*” These are, I would say, approaches that has to do with different levels of *knowledge*, that is, we are still on the *epistemological* and methodological level of the investigation. What Aristotle and philosophical hermeneutics would describe as the level of *episteme* and *techne* – although the focus on the practical and tacit knowledge might be best described today as “practice epistemology”(Schön, 1983).

But to reach the level of wisdom (what Aristotle and philosophical hermeneutics would call *phronesis*) and wonder – being in a state of wonder – we also have to work with the *ontological* level of the investigation (Hansen, 2008b, 2009). That is, your whole way of being and view upon what make life worth living has to be in question and in play when you are in a state of wonder. Therefore one might suggest a fourth question by asking: “*What cannot even be imagined by us in our practical and functional mood and attitudes but is the background of the picture we as professionals have of the situation and the life we as persons are embedded in?*”

This fourth question points, as we can see, to a more existential and ontological dimension in the professional work and life. And wonder can in this context be understood as a medium (or an open door) for getting in contact and in a dialogue with our ‘being-in-the-world’ before we reflect and act functional upon the world.

When we are in a fundamental state of wonder we are touched by a *not-knowing*, that is, we are touch by something which we do not know, that we do not know about, but we nevertheless are indeed embedded in. This is the ontological level of knowledge, what the Danish philosopher K.E. Løgstrup (1997) calls “the pre-cultural”(“det før-kulturelle”) and the German existence philosopher Martin Heidegger calls our “Being-in-the-world”

(Heidegger, 1927). And it is this level or dimension of not-knowing or “ontological familiarity” (*ontologisk fortrolighed*, Kari Martinsen (2001), which is connected to wisdom⁷.

Four + one levels of knowledge

To understand the different levels of understanding and reflections in KWS, I will suggest that we operate with four + one levels:

- 1. The knowledge that we know, that we know** and store as qualification and information (*“I know that I have these qualifications as a social worker!”*)
- 2. The knowledge that we know, that we do not know, but that we would like to know** and start to search for (*“I know that I do not yet have enough knowledge and qualifications on this field but I am willing to learn it”*).
- 3. The knowledge that we do not know, that we know, but nevertheless do** and therefore also in practice can communicate and act upon and develop (*“I can show you how I do it, but I have difficulties telling you in words what I do”*)
- 4. Knowledge that we do not know, that we do not know but are** (*“This is a surprise to me. I am touched by it and I feel it is important, but I am not sure at all what it is or where we are going. I feel quiet confused...”*)

The first level is the trained and competent professional who knows that he knows (what the Norwegian philosopher Jakob Meløe (1979) calls the trained or “knowledgeable eye” (“det kyndige blik”), see below).

The second level is the person, the novice, who knows that he do not know and therefore is open to learn. What Jakob Meløe calls the untrained or “not-knowledgeable

⁷ In the speech professor Jens-Ivar Nergård from Tromsø University held at the conference in Alicante 20. October 2008 “The story and storytelling – the spine of practical knowledge” he talked about what he described as the “cosmological dimension of the professional.” This might indeed be corresponding to Heidegger’s notion of “being-in-the-world” and Løgstrup’s notion of “the pre-cultural”.

eye” (“det ukyndige blik”).

On the third level we see a professional who knows what he is doing but he does not have this knowledge as an explicit propositional knowledge, which can be articulated directly, but only indirectly through doing it in practice, as we know Schön (1983) describes as “knowledge-in-practice”.

The fourth level is the level of the person who is in a fundamental state of wonder. He do not know, that he do not know – or more precisely he is very confused and sense that his whole way of understanding the world and himself as a professional as well as a person has come into a movement, has changed and put into question, but he does not know in what direction and why. This person cannot be described as just being ‘curious’ or ‘examining’ in his way of being – but rather like ‘standing in the openness’ putting his knowledge in play or forced to put his secure knowledge in play and in question. As we have already seen this situation is best described as an existential situation for and self-transformation of the professional.

Beside the category of the “knowledgeable eye” and the “not-knowledgeable eye” Jakob Meløe has a third category for the practitioner and professional, that is called “the dead eye” (“det døde blik”).

The professional with “the dead eye” is *so* sure about himself as a professional as well as a person, and the knowledge and method he is using as a professional in his field. But being so sure can, Meløe tells us, make us too arrogant and close our eyes for the newness and uniqueness of the situation and the person we are trying to help or relate to. And this attitude of “me-knowing-better” indeed can make the person not hearing the specific *call* of the situation or relation. And in this way the professional will in fact not be able to make a wise judgment because he is in fact not in contact and dialogue with reality, with his lived and felt presence. This blindness we could call the fifth level of knowing (four + one level) where the person says: “I do understand”, but really he does not understand.

Later I shall come back to the difference between these different eyes of the professional and why there in my opinion is a need to work also with a fourth category, which I call

‘*the living eye*’ and which is not to be identified with the exploring and knowledgeable eye or the curious but not-knowledging eye.

Different scientific ways of describing the four levels of knowing

We can also describe the four levels of knowing in a more scientific way by saying that Level 1 and 2 is the *epistemological and methodological* level of knowledge – what we normally call the technical rationality or the tradition of empirical and analytical science. Here we ask questions such as “Can you observe it?” and truth is understood as “faktum/evidence”. This is the place where theoretical knowledge and qualifications are developed and stored, and theory is used *on practice*. (**The Map-reader or Modus-1-thinking**)

Level 3 then is connected to our practical and tacit knowledge and problem solving *in situ*. Here we talk about a *practice epistemology* and social constructivisme and about “knowledge and reflection-in-action”(Schön, 1983; Dreyfus, 1988; Lave & Wenger, 1991). And we ask questions such as “Can you produce it and in what contexts is this knowledge constructed?” Truth seen as “social construction” (**The Map-maker or Modus-2-thinking**⁸)

Level 4 is connected to the *existential and ontological* level of our actions and thinking. It has to do with our “being-in-the-world” before we reflect upon it or have a practical grip on it. Here you may ask questions such as: “Can you presence it? Where are *you* in all what you are saying and doing? What is the deeper meaning with the actions and thinking you are doing?” This is the place for what the American researcher in innovation, C. O. Scharmer from M.I.T. in Boston calls “not-yet-embodied knowledge” and “self-transcending knowledge”(Scharmer, 2007) and truth is seen as an “ontological event”. This ontological dimension of knowledge in higher education is also described as the

⁸ For an elaboration of the differences between Modus 1, 2 and 3 and the uses of the metaphors of the The Map reader, the Map maker and Jazz musician see my book *At stå I det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær* (Hans Reitzel, 2008).

Jazz-musician or Modus-3-thinking⁹.

When I read the many essays from KWS I first of all find three forms of reflection connecting to three forms of knowledge:

1. What kind of **theoretical knowledge** have I as a social worker been influenced by?
(*“This I learned from Michael White. This I learned from Insoo Kim Berg”, etc.*)
2. What kind of **practical knowledge** is embodied and embedded in my way of practicing childcare and in our practical and professional communities as social workers? (*“I now understand better the many different discourses and demands and needs that are more or less silently in play in our meeting with the parents and child and institutions.”*)
3. What kind of **personal knowledge** do I get in reflecting on my practical experiences as a social worker? (*“I now suddenly realize that using my own person and own personal experiences in my professional work make me become a better social worker. This knowledge has been an eye-opener for me.”*)

My point and question would now be: Will this theoretical, practical and personal knowledge make the social worker more wise – or just more knowledgeable?

My tentative answer would be that if this theoretical, practical and personal knowledge is not questioned on a fundamental level, then the participant will not be sufficient open for the voices of life or the specific call in the situation – and therefore not able to make a wise judgment.

Philosophical hermeneutics tell us that only by being in a fundamental wonder about our own basic assumptions can, so the philosopher Hannah Arendt (1978) argue, keep us from closing up and only see what we expects to see. Being in a state of ‘touch not-

⁹ The research approaches, which are called upon in this field, is called philosophical hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1960, Arendt, 1978) and existential phenomenology (Heidegger, Van Manen, Løgstrup) and is also described by educational researchers nowadays as “the ontological turn in higher education”(Barnett, 2004).

knowing' (wonder) therefore can help us to really see and sense the unique and particular person in front of us, or the situation we are embedded in. Which again, following Arendt and the philosophical hermeneutics, is understood as a pre-condition for making a wise judgment or acting with 'tactfulness' (Van Manen, 1990).

If for example the participants in KWS are only using ethical theory such as Løgstrup or Meløe as a kind of theoretical confirmation of some practical and personal insights (which some of them in fact did) – then they will not be able to get in touch with the ontological not-knowing and hear the unique voices of their lived experiences. They would in other words not have a sufficient phenomenological sensitivity and hermeneutical awareness of what was really going on *in* the concrete situation or relation – to hear what the situation or relation *calls* them to do.

To get into this sensibility and tactful judgment from listening to their own lived and practical experience as social workers they have to be in a *critical reflection* as well as in a *state of wonder* to really have the possibility to see themselves, the concrete world and child in front of them with an open and living eye.

The above was a reflection on the way the participants in KWS related to theoretical knowledge in their profession. But nearly the same can be said when looking at the participants way of dealing with their practical and personal knowledge as professionals. If the participants only *describe* and *clarify* what kind of practical and personal knowledge they are now conscious about and have acquired through KSW, then they have only stopped on the halfway to the path of wisdom. Finding psychological or sociological or ethnographic or other scientific reason and causes for the way we have been acting and thinking is only keeping us on the *epistemological* level of knowledge.

If we want to get in the neighbourhood of wisdom we must learn and have the courage to “stand in the openness” in a state of wonder. Again: it is only when we put ourselves and our fundamental assumptions and pre-understandings into play – as indeed Socrates help his interlocutor to do – that we will be able to stand in a radical openness – and really see the concrete and unique child and hear what we are called to do in this specific situation or relation.

Three important levels of reflection in KWS

The German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1981: 47-48) said, with a reference to the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, that *phronesis*, practical wisdom, must be understood as a kind of *existential reflection*.

So let me sum up by suggesting that KSW might work with three forms of reflection, if the purpose is to gain not only more knowledge but also wisdom.

These three levels of reflection in KWS are:

1. **Descriptive-analytical reflection:** Describing and clarifying the many practical and tacit knowledge forms (*What do I do? How does it show? Which kind of knowledge is in play in my lived experience and story?*)
2. **Critical-dialectical reflection:** creative, critical and dialectical “out-of-the-box”-movements (*Could it be otherwise? What are the ethical aspects of what I think and do and my way of using these forms of knowledge?*)
3. **Existential-ontological reflection:** being in wonder and acting from presence. (*What are really the fundamental assumptions of my view on and approach to knowledge? Where and who am I in all my thinking and acting?*)

The knowledgeable eye, the dead eye and the living eye

I have noticed that especially the Nordic group of the participants in KWS has been inspired by the Norwegian philosopher Jacob Meløe and his concept of the “not-yet-knowledgeable eye”, “the knowledgeable eye” and “the dead eye”. As I said before, from Meløe we learn that too much knowledge and secure attitudes in our methodological approaches in professional work and relation to other people can give us professionals “the dead eye”. We are then in the actual case so sure about our knowledge that we close our possibilities for seeing the unique situation and person we have in front of us. The not-yet-knowledgeable novice might indeed see things and the situation with much more fresh eyes. So, Meløe ask us to consider, how can we as experienced experts

and professionals avoid getting “the dead eye”.

I like this metaphor a lot. And I think that the Norwegian researcher Merete Saus (2006) has been doing a good job in expanding the understanding of this metaphor to childcare. Saying for example that the professional caretaker should try to look at every child with the not-knowledgeable eye with the purpose of remaining open and sensitive towards the uniqueness of the child and the situation. She describes this way of seeing with not-knowledge as a kind of *curiosity* and *exploring* interest in the child.

I agree in her attempt to do this, but I would like to suggest, that we make a distinction between being in a not-knowledgeable approach where you, so to speak, only show up with your curiosity and living interest – and then being a knowledgeable person that are able to put this knowledge in question and in play through a genuine wondrous and engaged attitude.

As we know, to be a knowledgeable person is not necessary to be seeing the world through “the dead eye”. On the contrary, knowledge can, as we are constantly witnessing, open up for insights and observations that the novice is not able to see.

We could therefore ask the question: Which of these two persons has the greatest possibility to be radical open in the situation and see the newness and uniqueness of the child and the special situation she is engaged in? The not-knowledgeable novice, who is driven by a curiosity, or the knowledgeable person, who is driven by a fundamental wonder?

Well, it really depends on what we are looking for. Are we in a situation where we as social workers are to solve a problem as quick and optimal as possible? Then a balance between the knowledgeable approach and the not-knowledgeable but curious approach would probably be what we should strive for. Then we are dealing with the world in a problem solving and *functional* way as Donald Schön’s reflective practitioner or as Dreyfus’ Intuitive expert does. They work on the level of what I call *1.order familiarity* (“fortrolighedskundskab 1”), which is connected to our embodied and practical grip on the world in our intent to master and control it. That is, the world as we, so to speak, have

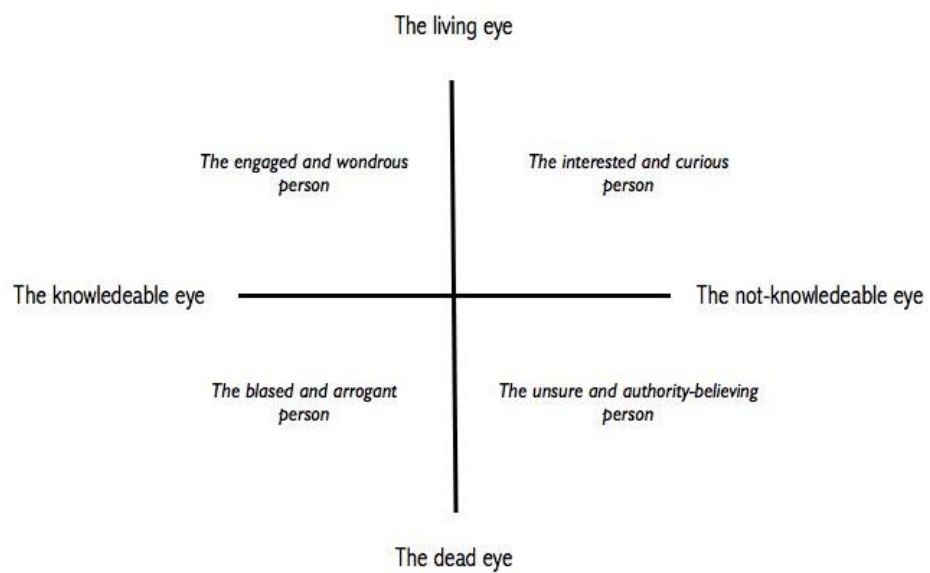
named it. Here we are working on what Heidegger describe as the ontic level.

But if we are trying to be open for the calling, the ontological event, in the situation or relation - listening to, what the Danish philosopher Løgstrup called the pre-cultural dimension of the ethical demand, then we must leave the knowledge-based and functional oriented approach to childcare and listening to the being-dimension and engage in an existential and wondrous reflection. This is the level Heidegger calls the ontological level and I call *2.order familiarity* (“fortrolighedskundskab 2”). See the two figures below. Wisdom in this sense is the ability or readiness to reflect and act from this being-dimension and call in the situation.(Hansen, 2008b)

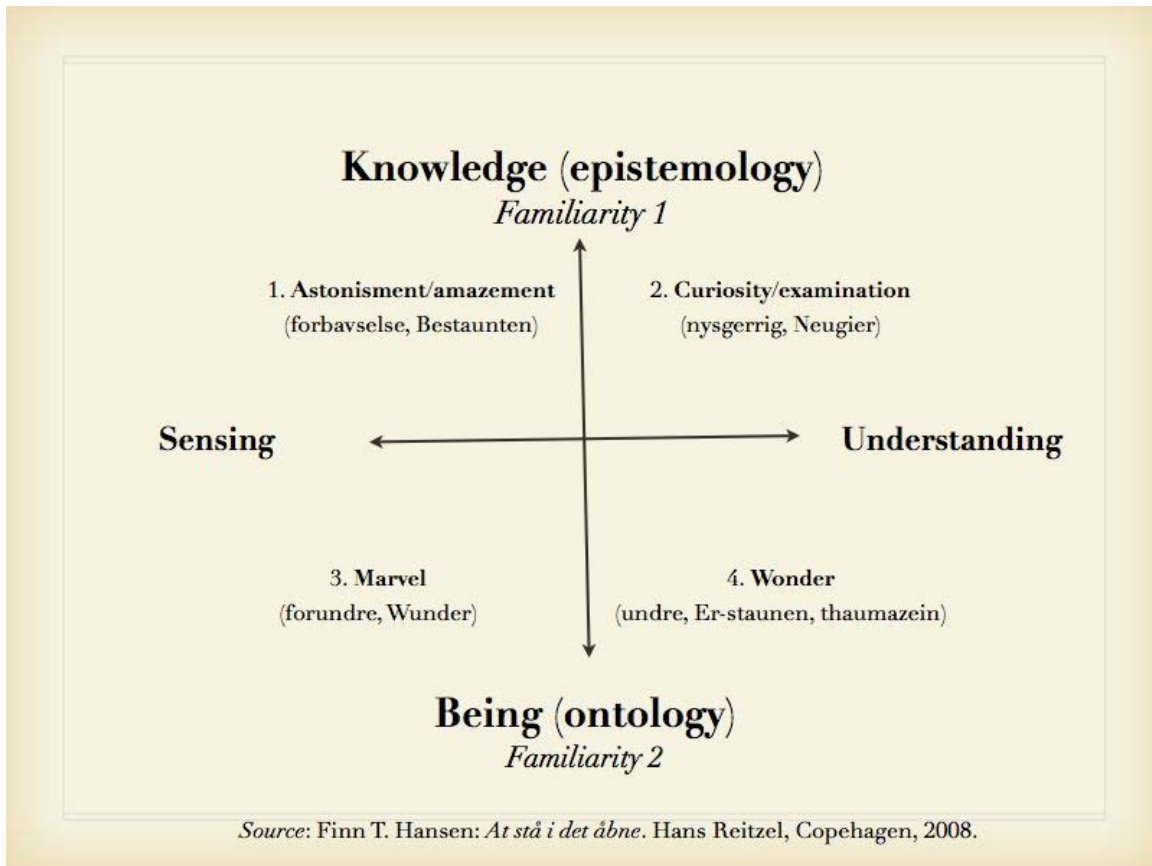
At least, this is how I understand Løgstrup and existence philosophers like Heidegger and Gadamer, who also focus on *phronesis and Bildung*(*liberal education, dannelsen*) as something opposed to (or more than) the epistemological and technological approaches towards life and *competence* development (*kompetenceudvikling*).

And this is in fact what I am trying to help professionals to focus on, when I train master students and professional consultants, nurses and social workers at my university in philosophical counseling and being in a Community of Wonder through Socratic Dialogue Groups¹⁰. Here I also points to the distinction between wonder and curiosity and between the “living eye”, which is an eye the professional gets if he or she on an existential level have the courage to risk themselves and their knowledge in the specific moment being in a state of wonder rather than curiosity. The differences can be shown in these two figures:

¹⁰ For more information of this philosophical counselling practices, see Hansen (2000, 2008a) and www.dpu.dk and www.dpu.dk/om/fth .



Source: Finn Th. Hansen: *At stå i det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær*, Hans Reitzel forlag, 2008.



Conclusion: In the future we need more research, based on a phenomenological and hermeneutic approach

Is there any thing more to tell? Yes. There is a lot more to tell. This well-organized and inspiring project is only at the doorstep in understanding what wisdom enhancing attitudes and practices could be, and how (if at all) we can encourage professional to work with these more ontological and existential dimensions of practical and personal knowledge in the professional work.

In the future – especially when KWS is thought to be part of master courses at the university – we must, it seems to me, have much more research based on a more *phenomenological and hermeneutical* approach to better understand and develop new ways of working with story telling and communities of wonder to strengthen the participants ability to *make* wise judgments. And indeed philosophical counseling and

Socratic Dialogue Groups could be an important supplement in KWS to get the participants into communities of wonder and deeper reflections on their philosophical and ethical assumptions in their lived experiences, stories and essays.

But the steps, that this project have been taken, is important – and the quality and the enthusiasm of the participants and the leader of this project – has been very impressing and inspiring.

I want to congratulate you all for having been traveling on this *Bildung*-process, and I will of course especially congratulate the leader of the project, Inger Erstad, for her tremendous effort and excellent job as a researcher and as a project manager. But again, if we want to develop a workshop for professional where *wisdom* is put in the centre, and not just practical knowledge, then we are only at the beginning.

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