

# Challenging Organisations and Society

reflective hybrids®

## Inner Outer Spaces

**Editors: Maria Spindler and Christian Stary**

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*Maria Spindler and Christian Stary*

## **S°S: Anarchy** **Active Inner Spacing for Co-creating** **Future Outer Space**

### **Abstract**

Moving from a current state to a novel social experience, either as individual or as an organisation, is substantially grounded in the perpetual capability of individuals to generate inner space for introspection beyond cogitation. It is a multi-modal procedure involving cognitive and somatic-related elements. Once inner space has been deliberated with respect to individual existence, capabilities and needs, turning to the outer space can lead to anarchic patterns of social interaction for a shared qualitative growth.

Non-conventional triggers, values, and reflective elements can evolve and become relevant when interacting in communities and societies, enabling the co-creation of social systems. Taking a system-of-systems perspective allows description going beyond cognition-driven reflective thinking. It also facilitates designing external experiences in line with inner space developments in a novel, anarchic form. As these external experiences establish systems (outer spaces) where the various inner spaces of participating individuals become an associated or inherent part, a System-of-Systems (S°S) is created. In this paper we introduce a framework for developing inner outer spaces in a S°S-like way. We exemplify the various stages of space elaborations and tunings. Practical case descriptions exemplify the concepts involved and guide implementation starting with inner and proceeding with outer space development.

**Keywords:** inner momentum, contemplation, deliberation, alignment, acceleration, transformation, change, self-management, anarchy, co-creation

## 1 Introduction

This article is dedicated to space and the process of spacing that enable self-awareness, self-management and co-creation for shared qualitative growth. We see it as one answer to the challenge and pleasure of dealing with complexity, wickedness and uncertainty. Our quest is different qualities and quantities of spaces, and their interrelations require inventing, creating ourselves, our organisations and society anew. We explore urgency, conditions, as well as the forms and processes of spaces. By opening up space vistas as inner and outer spaces we engage with space in time, location, social relation, space in and between hearts and minds as well as space in the here and now in past and future space. As a phenomenon, space is in its process character accessed as a qualitative study, and our knowledge generation is phenomenological. The case vignettes derive from our own work as consultants, researchers and authors. Theory and practice inform each other. Our desire is to create a complex approach in order to meet complex challenges as humans, organisations and society.

Writing this article together is a walk on the wild side for us as we follow different disciplines as roots. One author, Maria, is strongly influenced by approaches from analytical philosophy, Christian, however, is interested in engineering, and thus transforming social systems by means of IT concepts and artefacts. Both authors are committed to both the methodology and the results of qualitative research and developments. Moreover, we meet in combining theory and practice as well as in developments that desire to meet complex challenges<sup>1</sup>; and we both have been working as researchers and consultants for businesses for a long time, mainly with different approaches. As Reflective Hybrids we met first when a client asked us to collaborate with each other, referring to our differences and the hope for synergies. Our ten-year journey has included the pleasure of understanding and misunderstanding, different sorts of conflicts, synergies, and ownership. What makes

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<sup>1</sup> See also *Our Complexity*: Spindler (2015), Stary (2016).

it a pleasure is our ability to embrace the each other's otherness. And we hope it is also a pleasure, understanding and misunderstanding for you as reader walking along with us on the wild side.

With the word play 'SOS' (Save Our Souls) we want on the one hand to emphasise the necessity to open relationships and the space for new qualitative solutions to shape our future together as different systems in a human and sense-making way. Changing the perspective and becoming aware of our own thoughts, we take a first step as individuals in order to save our inner spaces and relate them to outer spaces.

The strong word '*Anarchy*' is a call to dare to lose control, to turn loose given and old patterns and make space for something new to come inside us, even when it creates uncertainty and chaos for a certain time period until one gets a new grip.

In this article we use the term 'inner space' for the system of individual systems like mental model, cognition, emotion, social repertoire, etc. and their relations. We use the term 'outer spaces' for all systems in which the inner space is embedded. An individual's S°S (inner space) can be related to or embedded in various other systems (outer spaces) which in turn can be mutually related, e.g., an organisation can be part of an economic system. Inner space is connected to outer spaces.

Do I give myself permission to take the time to look inside myself when I am in a stressful environment with clients or students? If I do, I can become aware of the outer space, enabling myself to connect my inner awareness (body sensations, emotions, cognitions, etc.), consciously triggering outer collective movements, with their given forms and structures, with the given power plays. Thus I as individual can become a self-aware filter for the outer occurrences and can actively and in a highly aware state connect to myself and others. Co-creation with others becomes possible on an equal level.

Our assumptions are that space awareness and creation is more than logical thinking, more than cognition, more than a mind activity. We see thinking as a two-dimensional way of perception, solution-creation and action. Space awareness and action is a three-dimensional approach, urging body recognition and daring to embody. And we see the brain and its activities as part of our body. Body awareness transcends logical, stringent thinking; it provides the next level of complexity and thus the next level of dealing with uncertainty and wickedness. This is a next quality-level of transforming the new quality of complexity we are facing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, driven by our digital and global world and its space and time limitations. Connecting our body-mind-system relations anew allows us to create a new space-time-quality.

In Section 2 we argue the urgency for spacing due to increasing complexity, mainly through digitalisation and the interface with humans and social systems.

In Section 3 we introduce the System-of-Systems concept and the concept of Anarchy. We deepen the understanding and structuring of systems, reproducing tradition or purposefully creating it anew, becoming involved in space exploration and development. For this purpose we introduce the concept of System-of-Systems (S<sup>o</sup>S), which allows us to identify components that can be named or labelled as well as arranged creating a variety of dependencies and opportunities. Thereby we can observe relations more closely and consciously create them in qualitative arrangements. Relations arranged on a higher qualitative level of more awareness for possibilities can flow into mutual co-creation. Anarchy is a condition which can claim space for the design of a shared future. We argue for anarchy that opens and provides opportunities and thus gives positive energy. It can be a short period during a defined time span in which we lose control and gain new approaches, so that we become more tolerant of chaos, a form of anarchy that opens outer and inner spaces. It opens a way to ourselves, to our bodies, to a self-awareness that gives us back our power over our perception and the action of our body and mind.

In Section 4 we describe the process of opening up space between individuals to enable co-creation of outer spaces (different environments, everything that surrounds us). This requires externalising inner space and stepping up for what is important to me. I take the space to empower myself, become aware of my intentions and share it so that it can flow into the collective co-creating process. Shared power opens spaces for individuals and collective, centralised power closes space.

In Section 5, we describe the follow-up of opening up space, namely reflective spaces as openers of minds. Acting in open-mindedness and responsibility are consequences of reflective thinking, which in turn triggers change, in particular in professional settings when looking behind the task surface, such as social conditions. Here power is connected to anarchy and the power over one's own intentions and body, from one's own inner skin, to take the power to liberate the inner space for one's own thoughts, emotions and intuition, and to take the outer space to materialise it together with others.

In Section 6, we detail in which way organisations and social systems can be challenged to connect inner and outer factors. In particular, emotional intelligence features somatic awareness that facilitates renewing relations with outer spaces. Section 7 aims to convey 'letting go' before something can be shared in a novel way. Emerging patterns require anarchy, in particular when futures in outer space should be co-created in an open-hearted way. These co-creations need to be embodied for further developments, as is described in Section 8. It affects inner spaces through embodying a new whole. Finally, Section 9 sets the stage for a new individual self that can grow out of the embodied whole. Section 10 concludes the paper, summarising its objectives and major stages of individual and shared development.

## **2 We Have Complex Challenges to Tackle in Quantity and Quality**

The advent of digital transformation invading all societal and economic systems requires re-consideration of the generative nature of human-socio-technical relations and system designs.

We urge to keep in mind and heart that in the end, behind each computer system we find a human being and an organisation and that behind this 21<sup>st</sup> century of digitalisation we find a society that strives mainly for a better life. Therefore we differentiate between technical systems (relationship quality: linear, logical) and social systems (relationship quality: complex, unpredictable, wicked). Through our daily use in business and private life these qualities commingle. These qualities derive from different value systems. Bounfour (2015) emphasises the urge to deal with how links are continuously explored and accelerated between existing systems and especially new spaces for value awareness. The accelerated production of relations not only substantiates system thinking, a good and important move, (cf. Senge, 1990, Senge et al., 1992), but also characterises the fundamental nature of digital production systems, which are considered the new drivers for creating value in digital spaces (Bounfour, 2015). We need to delineate their nature as being transactional, organic, or semi-organic, since they lead to deep changes in the way we ‘produce’, and finally affect business models and power relations of organisations and societies (ibid.).

As digital changes are complex, some scholars have already called for a system science approach to deal with them (cf. Flood et al., 2013). Thereby, traditional cognitive or top-down approaches to regulate and control dynamic processes are seen as ‘last resort’ (Colander et al., 2014). We will argue in this article that linear cognitive top-down approaches are one step for the solution of dealing with complexity. Linear cognition is one step, one framework, towards active tailor-made spacing in order to co-create and self-manage as a system, as a collective.





Figure 1: The focus of our work

*Our focus is revoking the ability to (re)capture relations logically and spatially. Digitalisation carves up space through acceleration; global space becomes more cramped. How we deal with data overload determines whether we can actively shape space or simply download and collect an unquestioned transmission, which gives away power in a subordination to what others produce. In doing so, we lose our ability to shape space actively. Rather, it is formed for us, and thus becomes cramped.*

*We plead for consciously opening space to:*

- *find a conscious acquaintance with the overload and complexity of data, relations, and information;*
- *move forward collectively into a future actively shaping it, in order to reach deliberate, mutual action;*
- *rise upward inwardly, standing up, and taking over power, self-control, and responsibility for oneself;*
- *find one's own intentions, identity, space and power, to deal with this quantitative complexity qualitatively.*

*In this way one can increase one's capacity forever more quantities, and individually active players will enter the environment and thus co-create the future.*

Our concept shows the transformation, namely on qualitative co-creating from unconscious to linear cognition to spacing that includes, body – mind – social awareness: a growth. Thus the quantity data we are facing through digital changes can be transformed into a new quality. Spaces are required for this transformation. Facing this transformation leads us to a complexity in terms of endless potential to create our future. We can choose

and co-create – when we open inner spaces and consequently outer spaces, when we are making space for space.

Providing space that collects and qualitatively processes this complexity is the essence. Through this we can stop the uncertainty, the chaos, without simultaneously restricting the space by allowing others to determine it for us, to exercise power over us, so that we subordinate ourselves.

Here we define transformation for a three-dimensional space endeavour and follow the assumption that this space transformation needs the body in its three-dimensional materialised form. This increases complexity and opportunities drastically. The brain is a three-dimensional body part and the mind (cognition) is a two-dimensional, linear process. Becoming aware of the body (and brain) is a three-dimensional spacing.

Evolving complex systems bear systemic challenges (ibid.), which are wicked (not linear) and unpredictable due to their social or cultural nature and incomplete, contradictory, interconnected, changing requirements that are often difficult to recognise. Bringing together complexity (a vast potential of opportunities) and wickedness (unpredictable) theories to understand how individual organisations and co-creation can better influence large system change (Waddock et al., 2015).

Consequently, we need not only to put forward theoretical understanding of co-creation by positioning the organisation in the context of a broader system, but also to define its role in creating new future based on articulation of individual stakeholders' needs (cf. Senge's perspective on a learning organisation requiring learning members of that organisation). Individuals who interlink their interest and motivation and have a desire to grow with challenges are likely to find together solutions addressing the nature of wicked problems by setting informed relations between each other and the large systems in which they are embedded.

Expanding the awareness of inner space in a new qualitative way is the growing we are facing. That calls for co-leadership. Due to the complexity and wickedness we need complex and reflective answers.

Becoming aware of and accepting the complexity that implicates wickedness, we need to shed light on the relation of individuals their relations to organisations and society in order to self-manage our future. These transformations can be substantial and lead to emerging individual and social behaviours due to that change. The latest research reveals the essential role of individuals, e.g., Kihlstrom (2013), when structuring a situated while cognitive transformation process: ‘Evocation, selection, and manipulation all change the environment through overt behavior – either the behavior of the person him/herself, or that of other people. In each case, someone does something overtly that changes the objective character of the environment – that is, changes the environment for everyone in it, not just for the person itself.’

We cannot foresee how the various systems will act, and deal with traditional mechanisms to organise and control. Hence, we need to assume and make room for anarchic patterns, questioning traditional authority or other controlling systems and different qualities of spaces that allow us to deal with wickedness and complexity. Anarchy can happen through:

- Taking one’s own space, leaving old patterns behind and co-creating new systems next to established ones;
- Destroying the given patterns and reshaping their elements’ new relations to create new systems.

### **3 Space-Relation Conditions: System-of-Systems (S°S) and Anarchy**

In this section we provide some conceptual and methodological background to looking at relations, structures and behaviour from a systemic perspective

before we relate that perspective to space, namely anarchy, questioning given space and fostering self-engagement.

### ***3.1 System-of-Systems Concept as Relation Perspective***

System-of-Systems Thinking (S<sup>o</sup>S) originates from IT research and development, driven by practical needs to handle complex systems. For instance, the S<sup>o</sup>S Analytics provider SOSACORP (in operation since 1999) states on its website, ‘We work problems from all angles – the user side, where we focus on requirements definition, evaluation of potential solutions, and, ultimately, training in selected solution approaches; the systems side, where we formulate solution concepts, architect and engineer our solutions, and fabricate and deploy them; and the HSCB/PMESII side, where we develop and exploit an in-depth understanding of the environments we wish to impact. Not surprisingly, perhaps, our work involves a wide range of disciplines. These include, among others: system-of-system analysis, architecting, and engineering; life sciences and biotechnology; intelligence collection and exploitation; advanced sensing; data mining and knowledge discovery; optical, RF, and esoteric signal processing, analysis, and fusion; communications; physical security; cyber security; user-focused system / concept utility analysis; complex campaign design and conduct; and user/operator training.’ (<https://www.sosacorp.com>, downloaded 18 November 2016).

While being conceptualised from different angles (cf. Jaradat, 2014) S<sup>o</sup>S brings into the foreground both the awareness of one’s own point of view (observation inside, outside) and relations, and leaves the quest for things as such and for the one truth in the background. We consider here a set of interrelated elements to be a system, once they can identify the elements and the relevant relations as a cohesive unit from their perspective. System-of-Systems (S<sup>o</sup>S) thinking focuses on the composition of interrelated entities into larger ones, in order to reduce complexity. Systems are not kept isolated;

S°S are mutually connected with respect to serving a common subject or topic of intention (cf. Jamshidi, 2011).

Although systems are autonomous in terms of their functionality and operation, they relate to collaboration with other systems in order to contribute to the superior system's goals. This property is termed interoperability among those systems. It captures the duality of being considered as a single entity while being related to another system to achieve another purpose. S°S are characterised by operational inter-independence of their elements, managerial inter-independence of elements, co-evolutionary development, emergent behaviour, and geographic distribution. Accordingly, systems are described and represented as being autonomous while being interconnected with each other in order to contribute to a goal at a higher level.

According to Jaradat, et al. (2014) S°S are characterised as:

- '(1) autonomy where constituent systems within S°S can operate and function independently and the capabilities of the S°S depend on this autonomy,
- (2) belonging (integration), which implies that the constituent systems and their parts have the option to integrate to enable S°S capabilities,
- (3) connectivity between components and their environment,
- (4) diversity (different perspectives and functions),
- (5) emergence (foreseen or unexpected).'

This characterisation of S°S is generic and can be applied to either type of system. As we see later in this article, it can be applied to human and social systems. (See Section 8.)

When S°S are connected in an interoperable way (i.e. autonomously operating while being part of another system), novel behaviour can emerge. The relations between elements or systems on one level enable different types of elements on another level. The behaviour of these elements cannot be

captured by a single underlying system; it rather requires novel categories and spaces to describe it. The provided added value, which cannot be attributed to a single system, is given through adjusting system properties for higher-level use. The overall system therefore reveals some behaviour that is something other than the sum of its parts or components/systems (cf. Lewin, 1939). S°S can be related to System Theory (Luhmann, 1997) und System Thinking (Senge, 1990) and these scientific categories can be followed back to Kant, who worked in his theoretical concept in perception of things and relation of things to each other<sup>2</sup>.

### ***3.2 Anarchy as Condition for Space Liberation and Self-Engagement***

Anarchy is the key to gaining ownership and becoming active instead of following. When S°S thinking and acting leads to hierarchical orders falling apart, the one true dimension and orientation breaking down, then anarchy takes its place. Becoming aware and diving into this anarchy is a condition. Closing the window of opportunity with a next concept, truth I can follow instead of taking responsibility, would be the less risky path.

We all see in the news and also in our daily lives the process of freeing humans from different concepts of hierarchical orders. It leaves us with a lack of given structures and orders from which a next step towards a free, human co-evolution can derive. This chaos is the opportunity to invent new tailor-made shared powerful structures. We could for instance co-create orders and spaces serving a meta-system like humanity and life.

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<sup>2</sup> This change of perspective was set forth as a theory by Descartes (1596 – 1650) and Kant (1724 – 1804). Through their scientific insights, the world was divided into the spiritual and the material, and the basis was laid for the circular foundation of the self and reality. The human being was thus born as a ‘citizen of two worlds’ who on the one hand is a creature of nature and of arbitrariness and on the other hand is a free and moral being.

The term hierarchy has its roots in Late Greek and can be translated as the ‘rule or domination in holy things’<sup>3</sup>. ‘Holy things’ are not meant to be questioned but followed. Anarchism is in its core the criticism of the holy, unquestionable rule and domination and, based on liberty, promotes an unrestricted self-made human law. Emma Goldman connected it to human rights as well as to the capacity of humanity for social and human thriving: ‘Anarchism ... stands for the liberation of the human mind from the dominion of religion; the liberation of the human body from the dominion of property; liberation from the shackles and restraint of government. Anarchism stands for a social order based on the free grouping of individuals for the purpose of producing real social wealth; an order that will guarantee to every human being free access to the earth and full enjoyment of the necessities of life, according to individual desires, tastes, and inclinations.’ (Goldman, 1969)

We have to ask ourselves the questions: Who defines our space? Is it predominant and given, or do we as individuals (including our own body and mind to recognise and define) take the space we desire and need for ourselves to serve our own humanity and the greater humanity? Are we allowed and supposed to define together our space and common future? Recognising and self-liberating the space for our human mind and the body is our definition of anarchy. Do we give and have the inner space to follow our thoughts and intuition, or are we time- and space-limited? Do we follow the concepts of others without reflecting on them with our body and mind?

The first towards space liberation step is daring to recognise the outer as a space that makes the establishment of individual space possible. In order for me to be able to destroy pre-defined space or leave it behind me, I need a first, inner seed that dares to be different, nonconforming. If I have been able to anchor this inner seed, new space will be captured with which the individual inner space can be newly connected.

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<sup>3</sup> [wordinfo.info/unit/986](http://wordinfo.info/unit/986), accessed 23 August 2016.

We transform in quality when we move from non-thought (routines and conformity) into our own active thinking. The result of purely linear thinking is two-dimensional order; three-dimensional space requires more than logical thinking. This next step of qualitative transformation is to allow intuition and belief in one's own somatic intelligence to emerge: this perception of the body enables perception of space. Anarchy means spacing to enable one's own and shared ownership of mind and body.

The recapture of the body focuses the multidimensionality of space in connection with time. The body, also a space limited by the skin, which reacts complexly and wickedly, is also the home of the brain, which provides us with linear, cognitive thinking as an approach to the world and perspective as a first step toward active creation.

***Case: From the Rat Race to the Inner Meadow Space***

This case illustrates finding the seed for conquering one's own inner space: A CEO was fired from his position; he was wounded, suffered a lot and did not understand how this could have happened. He was emotionally so deeply shaken that he sought coaching for the first time. After several coaching sessions and looking inward, into his headaches, an inner image became obvious: There was a wheel spinning in his head, a rat race, and he did not know how to stop it or get out. On the one hand it was the source of constant production of great ideas about himself, but on the other hand it led to negative images about his behaviour and negative projections about his co-workers, bosses, employees and environment. This caused time pressure, micromanagement and narcissistic behaviour that, in the long run, his environment did not appreciate.

The coach asked his permission to take a bigger step, not just looking into his head, but also looking into his entire body and following the flow of its



inner nature. He agreed to step into more unknown territory and the coach promised to stay at his side and support the process. The process started with breathing consciously, relaxing, connecting to his body and more, and turning his eyes inward. The wheel's spinning decreased, melted down the neck into his back and chest. It took approximately ten minutes, his brain activities shifted into the background and his attention opened up an inner place inside his body. Something new had the chance to emerge for the first time in his life. A green meadow with good-smelling flowers expanded inside his body, became clearer and bigger, and outgrew his skin. A new positive space was born: a life-expanding place and a slowing-down time quality were brought to the surface and into the light.

The coach saw the face and body relaxing, changing, and the smiling mask dropped into a serious, soft expression. He talked slowly, was able to relax, lying there in the grass among the flowers and smelling them intensely. In an experience he had never had in his life before, he steered himself in a positive way, experiencing his senses and body in a soft and self-loving way. At the same time he was concerned about what would happen to him as he felt the loss of control, something happening that was not steered by his cognition, by his own thinking. The final image was a green meadow with a white fence that was at his disposal as a gift from himself.

Ninety minutes later he left the coach very happy, dancing into his life. The next day he called, slightly shaken, talking about his uncertainties, asking if he was still a normal human being and man. He said that he had looked at old pictures from his childhood and that he had tears in his eyes looking at himself and seeing and feeling this tiny vulnerable boy. He recognised a shift that felt painful and a relief at the same time. The first inner seed was sown and it grew a meadow and a different pace.



Figure 2: Existing patterns provide stability

*Insight: staying with old patterns and logical thinking gives the impression that everything is under control.*

*Opening up new space inside can increase uncertainty. What am I to do with the new experiences? How can I make sure I am still the boss of my own thoughts and actions? A space within a space without a visible beginning or end is experienced as chaos.*

Let us consider the impact of unquestioned orders in our daily management business. It is the emotion of fear. CEO-Disease is described as a vacuum of information around leadership in hierarchical organisations, in particular when in hierarchical structures co-workers withhold important or unpleasant information. This term was used for the first time in 1991 by John Byrne (1991). In case co-workers are afraid of negative consequences, they are likely to deliver positive information, mainly so they will not be thought of as grumblers. As a result of this pattern supervisors are only partially informed of what is going in the organisation or the unit of work. Consequently, decisions are made without taking into account ongoing developments, although these are required for managing the organisation and its relationships (with customers, markets etc.).



Figure 3: Destroying patterns opens up

*Insight: Daring to open ourselves up to anarchy allows unknown complexity and paves the way to free our potentials as individuals and collectives as well. S°S and anarchy as space for questioning given authorities and changing patterns to open new relations and emerging opportunities serve grouping/co-operation and humanity. Anarchy is the basis for co-creation: it provides the space for uncertainty on all sides.*

***Case: Protection and Given Space for Questions and One's Own Perspectives to be Visible in the System***

A successful entrepreneur who has been working in different fields, such as politics, finance and social entrepreneurship requests management consulting. He is looking for answers to why his business at the beginning attracts sponsors, followers, partners, etc., but unfortunately over the years they get more and more frustrated and he feels urged to work harder and harder: a pattern that had defined his leadership actions for more than fifteen years. And somehow – deep inside – he knew the answer for his success and frustration, but at the same time he did not. He loves his success stories and he is desperate to make the effort to do everything right by all stakeholders involved.

The consultant supported him for over ten years. His pattern became clear to her when she was invited the first time to work with him and his management team. As soon as there were different interests he felt the need to answer all questions, to soothe the emotions, to cover up conflicts. He felt uncomfortable leaving space for struggles, fights, and low emotions. With all his good will to help he had a hierarchical pattern to protect. For hours there was no space for questions, no space for breaks and no space for others to talk. Taking on responsibility for the wellbeing of individuals and their emotions was his instinct. He protected them at all costs. They loved and hated him for this. And over the years all sides involved became frustrated and he moved on to next successful ventures. His pattern showed a lot of advantages for inventing enterprises and lost power and social impact when it came to growing together and co-creating a shared future.



*Insight: If not all answers and responsibility are concentrated with one person (or meta-system) there is space in between systems for questions, differences and the unknown and something new: questioning, introspection, questioning oneself. Right and wrong are not guiding the way to the future anymore, rather co-development through action learning, growing together into an unknown future.*

Figure 4: The unknown and new need to emerge

#### **4 Open Up Space Between Individuals – Powerful Potential for Co-creating Future**

Space and power are connected. Individuals gain immense power by claiming their inner space thoughts and body sensations as one truth among perceptions and thoughts of others. To claim one's own space means stepping in an empowering process. Giving space to others for claiming their own individual mind and body space is empowering others.

The space between us as individuals and systems is the spark for co-creating our space and our future space for creating ourselves and our society. Each equal relationship opens complexity and opportunities for shared future creations: Hannah Arendt (2011) defined practical wisdom in her book *Vita activa*<sup>4</sup> as an orientation, a recognition and judgement perspectives in connection with the world<sup>5</sup>. She refers to knowledge about how we are connected to the world, how we interact with it and what our concept of a good life is. The

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4 The title of the English version is *The Human Condition* (1999).

5 Hannah Arendt refers in her work to Aristotle, who describes practice as action that deals with what is changeable in the given world. There is no permanent valid rule for this; there are no conditions existing outside time or rules for what is good, what is virtuous and what is just. Practice in this sense means responsible human action which requires human freedom, since valuable, ethical action for the community is an end in itself. Practice derives from the Greek word *phronesis* and means *practical wisdom* (cf. Spindler, 2013).

highest and most important relation to others is an active life embracing the future potential of true realisation of human freedom. Each mutual action finds its meaning in recognising the action as part of a larger movement. In Arendt's concept, power can be realised when we actively create our reality:

‘While strength is the natural quality of an individual seen in isolation, power springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse. ... Only where men live so close together that the potentialities of action are always present can power remain with them ... Power is always ... a power potential and not an unchangeable, measureable, and reliable entity like force or strength...’ (Arendt 1999, 200).

This approach defines our actions and co-creations as a shared interest for potential that can emerge among us. An active social life (practical wisdom) is a condition of power and vice versa. Through acting together we gain power potential, which corresponds to the condition of plurality in relating to each other. For the same reason, power can be divided without decreasing; in fact the opposite occurs – it increases. We can share power, responsibility and leadership. And living this creating interaction is a condition for and result of individual freedom and dignity within organisations and thus also in society. Arendt argues that freedom does not pre-exist in the organised community but is constructed there, as the common space to which its equal members bring their own uniqueness and create something of lasting value such as an organisation or a state.

‘Power is actualized only where word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds are not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities.’ (Arendt 1999, 200)

Our capacity to analyse ideas, wrestle with them, engage in active shared practice and learn from our actions is what makes us uniquely human, socially alive and powerful together. In fact, she sees this power as the element

that gives us a reason to create our future potential together; it is the reason why we build organisations.

‘What keeps people together after all fleeting moment of action has passed (what we call today ‘organization’) and what, at the same time, they keep alive through remaining together is power. And whoever, for whatever reason, isolates himself and does not partake in such being together, forfeits power and becomes impotent, no matter how great his strength and how valid his reasons.’ (Arendt 1999, 201)

We interpret her definition as connecting us anew with our human dignity, our individuality, and responsibility for our collectives beyond downloading old shared power patterns<sup>6</sup>. The term ‘power for our shared future’ is here understood to mean creating new realities, as a lively nexus between the world and energy for life creation. This gives leadership systems and organisations a different sense in our complex society. For organisations, current terms for this include CSR and sustainability as well as sense-making and transformation<sup>7</sup>. The way we lead ourselves and organise ourselves together is what our organisations have become socially in relation to the world and also in relation to us as individuals in this society. ‘Power for our shared future’ focuses on reflective cooperation, responsibility and emancipation, mutual actions that expand the freedom and activity of others in any form of collective social construction, e.g. team, department, corporation, network, state or society. The possibility for ‘power for our shared future’ has to be given and taken and if necessary defended; the space for it has to be guaranteed

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6 In her book *On Violence* Arendt uses the term ‘harmony’ to refer to totalitarianism. Arendt does not see this as a mystical, ego-centred wholeness and defines a boundary between it and the totalitarianism which seeks harmony. It is not praise of harmony but power relations that create the opportunity for civilisation to flourish and differentiate (Compare Arendt 1969).

7 With focus on organisations we can find case studies that deal for instance with ‘Building a Collaboration Capability for Sustainability: How Gap Inc. is Creating and Leveraging a Strategic Asset’. (Worley, C.G. & Feyerherm, A. E. & Knudsen, D. 2010) We also find companies like that of Eileen Fisher, which produces and sells and provides awards for sustainable businesses.

and fostered. Arendt (1969) goes so far as to say that at certain moments this type of power needs violence to create and maintain itself.



*Insight: Shared power is a step into uncertainty. What will happen when I share my power? Creative power between humans and between systems needs shared space that has to be freed and kept free from overpowering and limiting.*

*Shared power enables shared responsibility and a shared future.*

*Leadership for a shared future requires and supports self-management.*

*Self-management does not mean less leadership or less power for the future. It enables shared leadership, provides and fosters responsibility for the bigger whole, for the organisation and for society through all. It is co-leadership.*

*Figure 5: Power uncertainty does not mean loss of control*

### **Case: Leveraging Stakeholder Knowledge for Co-Creating Planning Processes**

This case is about giving power for a shared future by co-creating new realities through organisational learning innovating work processes in a health-care clinic, involving stakeholders that have decided re-design their work processes. In this process the acquisition of work-relevant knowledge is likely to include leveraging tacit or implicit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is already documented information whereas tacit knowledge is not available in documented form in organisations (cf. Nonaka et al., 2009). Individual articulation of knowledge is the starting point of organisational development, before elicited knowledge is disseminated in an informed way, since each

stakeholder has developed and thus needs to document her/his own perspective on work processes (cf. Boland et al., 1995). Handling various perspectives and consequently different work models is part of process exploration and collective reflection, i.e. co-creation.

In the case considered, workforce planning for operating a health care clinic was to be re-organised. Besides in-patient treatment, an out-patient department, stationary treatment, surgery, and academic education activities needed to be coordinated and scheduled for daily operation. The existing planning procedure had become a central bottleneck within the daily routine of the clinic. Stakeholders (i.e. persons involved in the clinic's work processes) had perceived a lack of transparency in communication, and redundant steps in scheduling processes. In an opening workshop the project team, including representatives from all clinical stakeholder groups (management, doctors, patient care, administrators) agreed on the project's objectives, namely to provide transparency in scheduling clinic doctors, in order to increase planning quality and thus patient orientation. As a result, planning should become more effective and resources should be scheduled more efficiently. The project was designed along three steps:

1. Analysis of existing scheduling procedure and underlying regulations/forms
2. Informed process (re-)design and prototypical implementation
3. Evaluation of (re-)designed approach

Based on existing data with regard to satisfaction with planning, descriptions of scheduling operations, the articulation and elicitation of scheduling knowledge started. In contrast to traditional procedures in organisational development and business process management, the stakeholders were challenged to express scheduling knowledge according to their individual perception (their inner space representation of planning processes). Representatives of each involved stakeholder group were asked to create individual



concept maps (cf. Novak, 1998). These were further developed to diagrammatic story maps (cf. McCartney et al., 2011) focusing on the interaction with other stakeholders. As interaction matters, stakeholders and the flow of information between them needs to be captured from both tangible and intangible perspectives.

The participants were asked to elaborate the interaction relationships they had with other stakeholders in terms of a Value Network Analysis (Allee, 2008), since the initial analysis of data had indicated the lack of accurate communication among stakeholders. This phase was a structured reflection unleashing the potential of change. In this way, the stakeholders created domain-specific content that later on became part of the design repository and was refined to stakeholder-specific process models (cf. Stary, 2014).

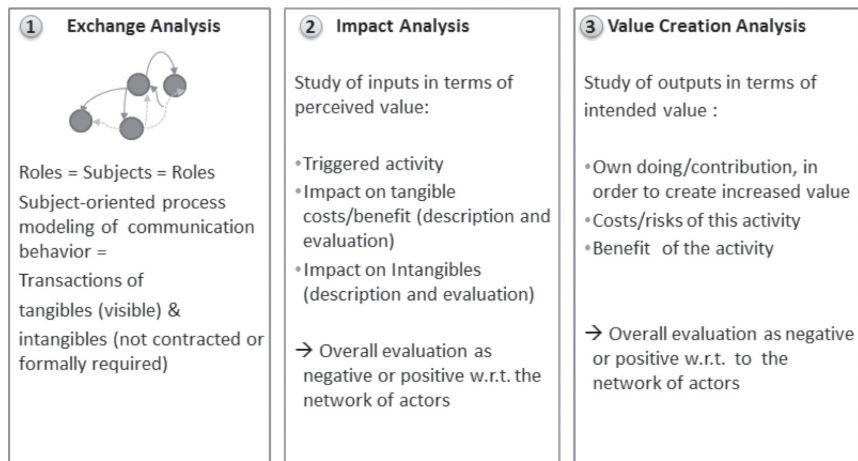


Figure 6: Value Network Analysis

The exchange analysis captures formal or contracted as well as informal or socially considered valuable deliverables between stakeholders (also termed transactions between stakeholders). It reveals implicit relationships denoted as intangibles that are considered relevant by stakeholders and may be highly

relevant for successful task completion on the organisational level. The exchange analysis captures both parties involved in exchanges (sender and receiver), both types of transactions or exchanged deliverables (tangibles and intangibles), and the interpretation of the relationships captured, subsumed as findings and lead time (before tasks can be accomplished) in this case. Significant findings requiring further discussions and analysis were several informal exchanges facilitating the scheduling procedure and inefficiencies in terms of communication flow.

While both the exchange and the subsequent impact analysis refer to the planning procedure as-it-is, it is the value creation analysis that allows re-designed interaction patterns and thus the organisation of work. Each participant was therefore asked to offer (additional) deliverables to other stakeholders in the network he/she thought to be of added value for others, offering the inner space as a design option for other stakeholders.

In our case, in the course of the value creation analysis, many informal communication contacts were offered to become formal ones. For instance, the schedule of academic teaching was offered to become public for all other stakeholders. Such a move corresponds to qualify intangible deliverables (there was no contracted obligation to make an individual schedule public) as tangible.

By giving a commitment to the offer, the individual stakeholder is willing to change her/his interaction behaviour, anticipating an inner space need of another stakeholder, and offering it in the outer space. In this case, additional value was generated when extending the planning period with the academic year. Multiple offers for change were collected, which finally increased the transparency of the planning process itself.

However, not all of the involved stakeholders were willing to share what they were actually doing in the course of planning. One of the clinic heads who was responsible for assigning qualified personnel to daily operation insisted in continuing his individual spreadsheet planning tool, even after

recognising the increased quality of the data once the other medical experts had provided their offers to share individual schedules. He took the offer but did not make one, although several stakeholders had complained about exhaustive wait time, until a decision on change requests for scheduling was communicated by the head. Such behaviour exemplifies the limitation of design resources, i.e. a particular stakeholder does not share a work procedure.

In the case study, the story maps were easy to refine to work process models using the Subject-oriented Business Process Management (S-BPM) notation (cf. Fleischmann et al., 2012). The nodes from the maps, e.g., clinic back office, managing director, lead doctor, integrative planner, were transformed to subjects in straightforward way. Their explicit interaction relations became messages exchanged between subjects, since the core elements of a subject-oriented process model are those of communication.

When adopting work practices the major principles of conversational knowledge creation were implemented, as proposed by Wagner (2004, p. 270):

- Open: If information is found to be incomplete or poorly organised, any stakeholder can edit it as he/she sees fit.
- Incremental: Information can be linked to other content, enforcing system thinking
- Organic: The structure and content of a development repository is open to editing and evolution.
- Mundane: A certain number of conventions and features need to be agreed for shared access to information
- Universal: The mechanisms of editing and organising are the same as creating, so that any stakeholder generating information is both an organiser and an editor.
- Overt: The formatted output suggests the input required to reproduce information.

- Unified: Labels are drawn from a flat space so that no additional context is required to interpret them.
- Precise: Information items are titled with sufficient precision to avoid most label or name clashes.
- Tolerant: Interpretable behaviour is preferred to error messages.
- Observable: Activities involving information or structure, such as value networks, can be watched and reviewed by other stakeholders, both on the cognitive and the social level.
- Convergent: Duplication can be discouraged or removed by identifying and linking similar or related information.

Finally, due to the embodiment of social interaction while keeping individual perspectives, changes were discussed and practically executed as interactive workflow before becoming effective as work practice, i.e. as common outer space – in this case visible to patients who had only been involved indirectly.



*Insight: Power to free one's own mind and body and the power to create shared space for creating future interactions with the outer space re-occur with other qualities after being reflected in the inner space. Power through the stakeholder approach for co-creating future requires openness; open interpretation is the ability to see something with new eyes. If we suspend our initial voice of judgment, embracing the habit of judgment based on past experience by opening up a new, shared powerful space of inquiry and wonder, we realise the potential much more together.*

*Figure 7: Openness and shared power co-evolve*

## 5 Reflective Space – Open the Minds

According to Dewey's distinction between impulsive, routine, and reflective action (cf. Dewey 1910, 1933) any professional behaviour can have three flavours. Impulsive action is based on trial and error; routine action is based largely on authority and tradition; reflective action is based on 'the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it' (Dewey, 1933, 9). He explains reflective thinking as a 'chain' not only involving 'a sequence of ideas but a *con*-sequence' of thoughts (Dewey, 1933, 4). In his understanding, acting in open-mindedness and responsibility are consequences of reflective thinking.

Schön's Reflective Practitioner approach aims at professional capabilities to handle complex and unpredictable problems of actual practice with confidence, skill, and care (Schön, 1983). A professional practitioner 'can think while acting and thus respond to the uncertainty, uniqueness, and conflict involved in the situations in which professionals practice' (Adler, 1990). As such, propositional knowledge is tightly coupled with know-how when instantiated in solving knowledge-intensive tasks. Hence, it is the knowledge by acquaintance enabling confidence and care tackling even complex problems, which in turn requires know-how and propositional knowledge to perform tasks in a skilled way in those situations. Unique or surprising situations are handled through reframing and finding new solutions ('reflection-in-action'). This process is (i) a conscious one, though not necessarily articulated in words; (ii) a critiquing one, as it leads to questions and re-structuring; (iii) immediately significant for action (most important) (cf. Schön, 1987, 29).

When reviewing actions in the past rather than in-situ 'reflection-on-action' (Schön, 1987) leads to evaluating situations already experienced. If it has consequences for future action (as understood by Dewey), this reflection is transformative. Methodologically, personal narratives and autobiographies have turned out to facilitate self-exploration, in particular looking beyond or behind professional activities to areas such as social conditions. They allow

a more comprehensive personal picture, consequently unwrapping existing Gestalts and reframing.



*Insight: Space in head for awareness of differences is essential. The mind re-works the self, creating new futures when open for other minds/ideas/concepts. Transformation starts in the inner space. Inner space reflects and refracts outer space experience for transformative action in the outer space.*

*Figure 8: Connected differences establish new qualities*

### **Case: Executive Manager's Choice**

In a regular coordination meeting with its clients, a regional provider of financial services recognised certain limits in further optimising the business. When the executive manager of the regional service provider brought up that insight in the meeting, the representatives of the client companies (financial institutions) agreed to set up a task force in order to investigate further business optimisation potential, expecting ideas and implementation strategies to further increase the profit of their companies.

The task force was set up. Its work was guided and coordinated by the executive manager of the service provider. A series of workshops was designed traditionally, to start with brainstorming and elaborate upcoming ideas in a reflected and structured way. The executive manager was an experienced project manager who knew how to link idea processing with product development.

In the first workshop, many ideas to improve profitability popped up. However, when reflecting on the various proposals the participants were not satisfied with the quality of the results. They had the 'gut feeling' that detailing

or implementing the ideas would bring ‘more of the same’, and asked the executive manager to support innovation and product development in a different way.

When returning from that workshop the executive manager went through his palette of instruments to facilitate product renewal and organisational development. He was not able to identify an instrument that would lead to sustainable change or innovation. He recognised it was time to look for his underlying values driving the business (recognising the need for change).

He started looking to his own ‘guts’ using an individual Repertory Grid (Fransella et al., 2004) on the value drivers of his own (coherence checking – embodiment) and the client’s business. It turned out that the original business idea, and thus the driver of the involved companies, namely the cooperative (an association for mutual benefit of its partners), had neither been encoded in current products, nor in their development, nor in customer relationships. The major idea of a cooperative is sharing ownership and thus responsibility for product development. It should be tangible or visible to product owners and customers (outer space reflection).

Consequently, the manager had to review the current mapping of original business drivers in today’s products and customer relations. In the next workshop of the task force, the executive manager shared his findings with the participants. As a result, they reflected on the embodiment of business drivers and thus values in each of the current products and organisational developments (reflecting inner outer space).

Finally, the task force reworked the products and their development processes to convey the cooperative idea. One of the results was individual product design facilities, enabling co-design of products according to the needs of customers (opening for co-creation), loosening central control on product development while featuring adaptation of products in customisation workshops.



*Insight: Exploration of underlying capabilities based on one's own value system. Recognition of getting stuck with 'more of the same' is inner space activity when reflecting on one's own value system by revealing one's individual core value system. Becoming*

*aware of original drivers of outer space activities allows identification of direction for (co-)creating the next future. Sharing of inner experience when deploying action based on an elicited value system.*

*Figure 9: Inducing awareness*

## **6 Connections of Intelligence and Awareness – Inner Space for Open Heart – Open Mind – Connect to Outer Space Renew Relations**

Our assumption is that intelligence that supports qualitative growth is more than thinking and mind activity. Goldman describes emotional intelligence (EQ) as a basic phenomenon that has to do with the plasticity necessary for participation in changing relations. (Goldman, 1995). Salovey and Mayer (1997) worked further on emotional intelligence and defined it as 'the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions, to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.'

This ability-based model views emotions as useful sources of information that help one to make sense of and navigate the social environment and their relations. They developed the process of perceiving, using, understanding and managing emotions. The mind works when open. The same applies to



the intelligence of the heart. It only becomes available to us when we cultivate our capacity to appreciate, embrace and feel for ourselves and others.

Love is the emotion that enhances our intelligence. To live in love is to accept the other and the conditions of his existence as a source of richness, not as opposition, restriction or limitation. Thus we access our sources of emotional-social space, the importance of relationships and how strongly we affect one another in the environments we create. We describe 'opening the intelligent heart' as the ability to consciously direct attention to different feelings, to know that we are not the feelings but rather have the feelings. Thus we can focus on our heart as an organ and see with it, being open to our own emotions, to the emotions of others and connections with them.

### ***Case Dolce – Awareness While Writing This Article: Intelligence of Hearts Enhances Collaboration and Minds***

This case is about a cat named Dolce as a medium for emotions and awareness inside and between two authors. We want to show that what we are writing about is actually happening in our daily lives in small things that may appear too simple to recognise. The qualitative difference for transforming our inner space and outer space is awareness: Are we aware of those different potentials for spaces that are right in front of us? Do we give them the time to materialise in a relationship? Do we connect within this certain space with other people in order to transform how we create the future – in this case how we write an article together? Others would say: Do we have fun? Do we allow humour to bring in new relations – also related to Systems of Systems? How many perspectives and systems can we open? From what system perspective are we observing and acting and connecting at the moment?

As authors we can say that writing an article can be a long and lonely time in front of the computer, books, etc. At first glance one might assume that it is a cognitive space one has to open for new ideas. At second glance we experience that it is about our own values, intentions, quests and development and

how to bring our inner selves into the world and impact on ourselves and on relations.

We both authors have cats, love cats and know from each other that cats can touch our hearts. While working on the article, Author A left the laptop on the sofa for a few minutes, and her cat moved in front of the laptop. When she came back it looked from a certain angle as if the cat was actually working on the laptop. It touched the author and opened something within her so that she experienced a warm flow. One can say it was her heart that was opened. This inner warm, open place then filled her whole body like waves and became fun, increasing her energy and moving to her head as light energy.



As she was connected through the process of article writing with Author B she wanted to share this fun lightness by showing him a picture of the cat in front of the screen. So she took a picture and attached it to an SMS to Author B with the comment: 'Our article is now in professional paws'.

Figure 10: Cat as opener

She saw in the outer space took her inner space and place, gave it a medium – the cat picture – and offered it to the connection for a shared outer space. The next day Author B answered with deadpan humour: 'looks promising'. And so the cat was included in following e-mails with comments like: 'Okay then, Dolce and I are working further on this part' or 'Dolce can take her time editing the article until ...'

... and the conversation and collaboration became light and fun ... and a third party (the cat) was involved ...

...and in the continuing work on this topic, the relationship developing cat humour and emotion opened this section and served above as content in an empirical case and as theoretical material.



*Insight: Being open to what touches you from the outer space in the here and now opens inner and outer spaces. Be aware of these inner sparks and give them a window to the outer world to become part of the conversation and materialisation.*

*Become aware of space and connections inside you, and connect with your social abilities in different forms. Thus you give your mind and intelligence the chance to enhance. Step up, take your inner life seriously to bring it into the shared outer world and give the other people and systems the chance to connect to you anew. This is a shared opportunity to shape the future anew.*

*Figure 11: Connecting to the here and now*

## **7 Provide Power Vacuum Space for Letting Shared Leadership and Future Emerge**

To combine power requires shared leadership, which means co-creation for the future on an equal level. We see not absence of leadership but the requirement of more leadership from everybody involved.

The T-group scope as unstructured structure (space for the whole to emerge) provides the opportunity for self-creation, self-questioning, tailor-made action learning and co-evolution. The members can experience from scratch how to become a more and more interwoven, stable and creative collective

and even more, how they can integrate and embody the whole in themselves and be integrated in the whole at the same time.

To pursue this process the trainer performs a certain function that is described by Wheelan as a leadership vacuum: 'The t-group trainer creates a leadership vacuum from the outset of the group. He or she does not assume the traditional, directive leadership role. Instead, she states the purpose of the group – to study its own behavior – and then remains silent. The perceived ambiguity of the stated purpose instantly creates anxiety in members and leads them to seek further clarification from the trainer. He resists their efforts to entice him to lead.' (Wheelan 1990, 29).

To provide and hold this setting is a main responsibility of the trainer, especially at the beginning. The leader/trainer in a T-group forgoes social, cognitive, emotional and normative power and invites the individuals to use the power for themselves to create a shared system, of which the trainer is one part. She/he offers co-leadership and gives away power in order to allow co-creation. She/he is successful when the space is carried and enlarged bit by bit from a concentrated collective to shared responsibility. Participants (as well as the trainer) become space-providers and space-invaders and co-create a learning field in which the group creates and investigates its own experiences in order to learn about its own dynamics as a group as well as how the individual moves within this dynamic and impacts it.

Providing space and invading and thus co-expanding space are two sides of the same coin. It is leadership that empowers and encourages deviance. The deviant T-group trainer amplifies the invisible, the uncertainty and the unspoken. She/he encourages others to become deviant too, to take detours and meander in the social system. She/he bewilders others, throwing them out of their conventional patterns of awareness, reflection and action. Attraction through deviation and refusing to comply with standards becomes acceptable. The deviant leader reinforces the invisible – in the case of the group as whole, whenever she/he is 'there', answers, comments, intervenes, etc., she/

he makes the whole visible and perceptible for others as well. She/he acts in a positive developmental way as a role model for deviance: the encouragement of deviant perspectives and actions amplifies potentials and opportunities for individuals and their connections with each other and the system. Everybody is invited to empower her/himself, take leadership responsibility and become aware of and create the system-of-systems space for co-evolution.

Leaders are relationship models for leadership support and co-leadership. Schüller and Zvacek (2013) examine the unknown and in the process maintain as many differences as possible. Individual autonomy is necessary for this, so that the trainer duo doesn't end up in wishy-washy harmony. The self cannot open itself for the whole until she/he has self-awareness and identity, is able to remain an individual and be aware of the ambiguity – in relation to the co-trainer and the participants and at the group level. Jain & Anantharaman (2015) emphasise this requirement for trainers as three forms of self-awareness: 'Who I am' focuses primarily on preparation of the self, relating to understanding oneself; this category consists of competencies, primarily

those of others and interpersonal relationships. 'What I know' focuses on conceptual knowledge and includes using self and comprehending group-level phenomena. 'What I do' focuses on the interventions at intrapersonal, interpersonal and group levels.

T-group trainers can provide for participants a learning field for losing and renewing themselves in the collective when they have self-awareness and an identity that can be lost and renew itself.



Figure 12: Future emerges in the here and now

## **8 Embody the New Whole in the Here and Now**

The form in the here and now becomes the content: current observations, perceptions, feelings and actions can bring their paths into the foreground and overwrite old well-known patterns and downloads (Scharmer & Kaufer 2013). The leadership vacuum has the potential to provide space for ‘emptiness’ (not ‘nothingness’). It is informed emptiness, uncultivated potential, abundance of opportunities for mutual creation and generation – a creation that comes from the full and simultaneously empty whole for the future whole in the current whole. The emptiness brings with it limitless opportunities for connections; the potential is embodied in shared acting in the here and now. (See further Spindler 2015).

How much we can let go of old patterns, lose ourselves in the emptiness and become aware of potentials relates to how far we can expand the shared space in the here and now. The more space we provide and invade by action, reflection, co-creation and co-leadership, the more complexity and uncertainty can make their way into our awareness, opening us to the future whole and its opportunities to grow in co-evolution.

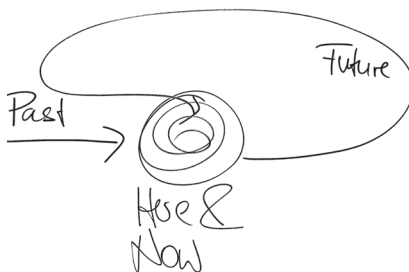
We enrich here our theoretical exploration of the ‘here and now’ with the theory U and ‘presencing’ concept of Scharmer (2009) and Scharmer & Kaufer (2013). It is an action learning concept that brings the future whole into the here and now. ‘When the future cannot be predicted by the trends and trajectories of the past, we must deal with the situations as they evolve.’ (Scharmer 2009, 61) The ‘is state and desired state’ meet through ‘presencing’. Two selves, our ‘current self’ and our ‘best future self’, begin to listen to and resonate with each other – in the here and now. Scharmer & Kaufer (2013) identify the following process stages to act from the whole:

1. Co-initiating: uncover common intent. Stop and listen to others and to what life calls you to do.
2. Co-sensing: observe, observe, observe. Connect with people and places to sense the system from the whole.

3. Co-presencing: connect together to the source of inspiration and will. Go to the place of silence and allow the inner knowledge to emerge.
4. Co-creating: prototype the new in living examples to explore the shared future by joint doing.
5. Co-evolving: embody the new in ecosystems that facilitate acting from the whole.

According to Scharmer (2009) and Scharmer & Kaufer (2013), downloading of old patterns does not long stand a chance, as the shared patterns of the past are in the 'here and now' content of the reflection and give way to the new intentions, observations and listening. For this initial stage the following are essential: awareness of intentions, pausing in the here and now and listening, harkening to what is becoming evident through me and the others.

Once a system crosses this threshold of presencing (two selves, our 'current self' and our 'best future self', meet in the here and now and begin to listen to and resonate with each other), the group becomes space and vehicle for an emerging future and can serve as a midwife for the whole self and individual selves to bring forth new vivid relationships and forms.



*Insight: Here we are the complex essence of the system-of-systems perspective as we deal with past systems, here and now systems and future systems. We use the free anarchistic here-and-now space to amplify our shared power for our shared potentials.*

Figure 13: Here and now connects for co-creation

We develop co-leadership and utilize leadership vacuum to lead from the future. Generate inner-outer space today for tomorrow. Give the future the chance to land in the here and now. Provide a landing pad that gives the past and the future the chance to meet and resonate, and to feel, hear, taste, smell the best future potentials and opportunities.

***Case International Bank: Framing and Co-Creating Space for Co-creating to the Future System***

The topic addressed in this case is how to create architecture and unstructured space to enable integrative and expanding self-management in which different organisations of the bank meet in the here-and-now-workshop space: the different past selves and the shared best future self have a space to meet and begin to listen and resonate with each other and give form to a shared future in the here and now.

The board of the bank opened a second line of business in addition to the line organisation of the bank in Austria. This second business was an innovation centre that developed new technology. It integrated social entrepreneurship, innovative virtual products and sales. New people were brought into this centre and 30% of the expertise was done by contractors. The product was launched successfully in Austria.

After three years the board decided to renew comprehensively and expand the new innovative business into six other countries where they had taken over other banks.

They gave responsibility, leadership, space and time for co-creation, inventing the future, bringing the future to the second level of management and experts. With external consulting the board and management opened space for:

- A two-month interview sequence to raise awareness and gather information for the co-evolutionary steps ahead (interviews with line management, innovation centre management and experts);



- A two-day workshop with board, line management and innovation management and internal and external experts;
- A preparation team of four people (member of innovation, line, board, external consultant) that worked for four months prior to, during and after the accompanied process.

For the external consultant one incident was incredible and showed how semi-structured space in a workshop can enable future emerging. The result was a co-created third system with new collaboration structures as a result.

The line and innovation systems had different leadership cultures and power relations, so the space opened at the workshop had to be wide enough that none of the patterns was served and a new one could arise.

For the external consultant, letting go of the expected leadership pattern – that the external consultant will lead each step neatly through the process so that everything will be fine and normal in the end – was interpreted as risk and necessity. After setting the stage, creating the framework with the board and the preparation group and all participants, the board member left, indicating ‘the floor is yours’ and the external called for ‘shared handicraft work’, inviting playfulness, trial and error, involving the body and shaping future together, shaping their structure, their culture and their leadership in order to meet the intention to integrate and renew themselves.

The first reaction was everyone holding their breath; irritation was evident in their eyes and bodies. The consultant saw that this type of anarchy and chaos was not really welcome.

After a long, silent minute, the head of IT reluctantly picked up one of the papers from the floor in the middle of the circle. After a few minutes, two large groups began working on two pin-boards in two corners of the large room. At first they worked like scientists trying to keep their secrets. After half an hour they started looking at each other as if to ask what was going on in the other sandbox; they started talking shyly about the different toys and

tools. It was emotional, touching, fun, and tense at the same time. One could feel the touching and meeting each other anew.

This first sequence of the handicraft process took approximately two hours. When the energy in the room slowed down and the final lines of the masterpieces had been drawn, we opened the space to present two solutions.

And as a positive surprise they worked out on two different levels:

- a) Management responsibilities with a meeting structure with and synergies between line organisation and innovation centre; and
- b) Expanding structure, bringing in countries on different levels of collaboration, bringing in experts and creating synergies among the internal/external experts from all countries.

The scope of a shared leadership process for three to five years was developed. After the presentation we reflected on impacts, synergies, prototyping, evaluating, etc.



*Insight: Take the risk to open space as leader or consultant, even when it seems that nobody takes responsibility or action, when nobody jumps into the space right now. Keep it; hold it open for a little longer to give people time and opportunity to connect to their inner places, as it takes time to tune in together.*

*S°S perspective: Through different systems, different paces, different sense-making, different future spaces, a S°S was created by opening a framework to such an extent that all involved systems were required and encouraged to leave their old patterns behind and invent together a new one.*

*Figure 14: Systems connect in System*

Another case showed that giving outer space does not always work. A coaching client, president of a worldwide NGO, invited the next level of leaders to develop together the worldwide strategy. They responded to the invitation: ‘You are the one getting paid for developing the strategy, don’t count on us.’ It took him more than two years to find a way within the organisation to find the right people to join the strategy development.

### **9 Growth of Individual Self: Acting in an Agogic and Situation-aware Style**

The andragogic premise of our approach to self-managed co-creation assumes a nature and characteristics of actors as maturing persons moving their self-concepts from dependencies from outer space (systems) to self-directedness and autonomy due to aligning the inner space in an evolving world. While experience forms the richest resource for development, readiness to act in accordance with an aligned inner space is a prerequisite for co-creation, thus, linking task accomplishment to social behaviour and endeavour (cf. Böhm, 1997).

An agogic and situation-aware mindset asserts that an actor’s time perspective changes from postponed application of experiences and knowledge to immediacy of application and accordingly, orientation to acting shifts from subject-centred activities to focused interaction in co-creative settings (cf. Bronfenbrenner, 1981). In social settings of this kind, several agogic principles apply:

- Activities are set in accordance with the needs of participating actors under the given conditions and capabilities to act.
- Each actor has certain resources that are not only the starting point, but rather design entities. They are accepted as limited.
- Actors determine their way and pace of developments, as development needs to be balanced with the current conditions. Both active participation and retreat are part of development processes.

It is the latter principle that is of crucial importance for triggering individual development and bringing it to life in a co-creative setting. Agogic actors need to embody (cf. Rogers, 2003, Pörtner, 1998), and thus self-manage:

- Empathy as sensitive understanding of others,
- Appreciation of another personality without preconditioning acceptance and respect, and
- Congruence meaning the authenticity and coherence of one's person and behaviour.

The first two behaviours are based on the flow from outer systems to the inner one(s), whereas congruence is decisive in making visible inner system values and their attributes to others, and thus part of the outer space. Authenticity refers to meeting a person 'as a person', as one's equal, experiencing a situation with the entire spectrum of channels (perceived impulses, feelings, impression etc.). Coherence includes judging how far or at what point in time the inner space can be shared with others, i.e. becoming visible in an outer space. An essential part of congruence is that all participating actors have the same, transparent understanding of the co-creative system, including pre-set conditions and irreversible process design, e.g., normative or role-specific behaviour.

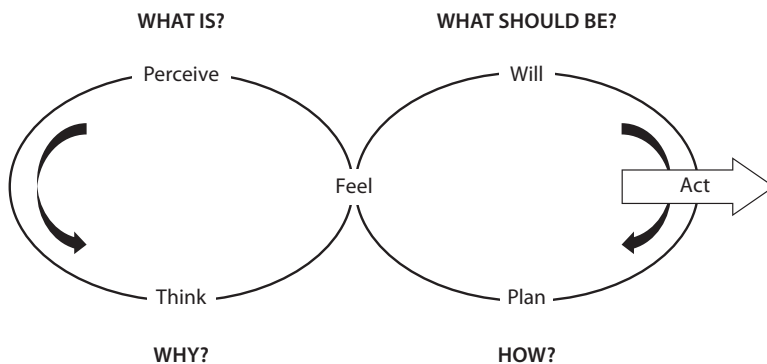


Figure 15: Work agogy (according to Arbeitsagogik.ch)

WHAT IS? What did you see, hear, smell, taste and feel? What happened, when and how? Can you describe it in detail?

WHAT SHOULD BE? Which perspective, which sense do you see? What needs to be achieved? Which priorities do you want to set? What do you want exactly, and why? Which state satisfies you?

WHY? Which meaning do the observations have for you? Which relations do you recognise? What do you reckon? How can you explain that? What are your conclusions?

HOW? How should we proceed? Which means should be used? Which tactics should we chose? What is to be done? Who does what, with what, whom, when and how?

Motschnig et al. (2001) argue ‘that problem solving within an individual’s context is particularly effective, since it most closely matches the living, sensing, and experience of this individual and has the highest potential for disposition and reuse of the individual’s experience’ (p. 275). Agogic at the workplace (see Figure Work agogy) indicates sensing crucial to cognitive intentional acts. As indicated in the figure, it captures the rationale of doing in terms of perceiving a situation and cognitive reflection of perceived information, as some pre-processor to doing guided by intention and planned action. According to that model, various subsystems are involved in preparing actions through reflecting outer space information, and bringing action from inner space processing to become visible for others in the outer space.

According to Rogers (1961), a facilitating social atmosphere is required for understanding and acceptance of the individual to develop (‘grow’). It then ‘will become more similar to the person he would like to be; will be more self-directing and self-confident; will become more of a person, more unique and more self-expressive; will be more understanding, more acceptant of others; will be able to cope with the problems of life more adequately and

more comfortably' (Rogers, 1961, 37–38). In this way, the inner space of a person can become part of the outer inner space, as required for co-creation.

### 10 Model of the Process of Spacing

In this section, we give an overview of the process framing individual inner spacing aligned with co-creating outer spaces. Discovering and exploring inner outer spaces is based on reflecting and body awareness and occurs in several phases (see also figure):

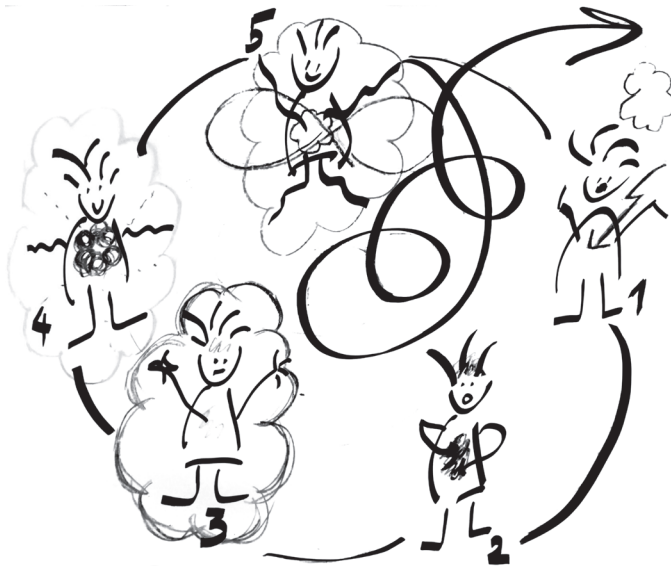


Figure 16: Process of inner-outer spacing

#### *Phase 1 – Triggering and Intentioning for Renewal*

Individuals act in embodied environments. At a certain point, an individual initiates the process of renewing, willingly even exposing him/herself to

risks never experienced before. This inner or outer trigger corresponds to becoming aware of the readiness for qualitative growth. It often happens when the individual decides to stop saying, 'I am too busy right now, but I need to keep the need of renewing xyz in my mind' and the like, thus switching to a reflected mode of consciousness, and finally, being. Thereby, a wide range of contextual factors related to the person and the social-physical-political 'environment' needs to be adjusted, depending on the analysis of how a given situation is perceived. As perceptions are traditionally pre-shaped prior to the actual experience, each individual needs to identify her/his 'borders', i.e. sensors, boundary objects, and interfaces with her/his environment.

### ***Phase 2 – Inner Preparing and Exploring for Renewal***

This phase involves the concept of self-managed 'reflective practice' that has received considerable attention so far. Becoming aware of structures embodied in our own perception is a complex endeavour, as findings from beginning self-reflection indicate. It could be termed 'first person perception' as an individual has to expose him/herself to separating cognitive concerns from deep-rooted socio-emotional beliefs and desires. In this phase, individuals even need to lose their structures and start accepting chaos. This is anarchy, in the sense of non-hierarchical, inner and outer structures, processes and potential benefits of relating to bodily-grounded processes. The latter constitute cognitive, emotional and somatic intelligence.

### ***Phase 3 – Exploring and Self-managing Outer Space***

Once an individual is able to get along with the coalition of cognitive and bodily-routed processes including emotional and social intelligence, she/he is ready to explore her/his environment utilising this connection of entities. In this phase the existence of a gap between inner and outer space becomes evident, in particular as self-awareness has a non-linear function, accounting for evaluation, comparison, and description.

In order to reduce complexity, a System-of-Systems (S°S) awareness can help to identify entities of concern and their links to other entities establishing their environment. When one locates oneself space is opened up: a self-contained, self-responsive, self-responsible entity in the environment, we could say the first step to S°S perception has occurred, as the individual is considered as a system, interconnected to her/his environment. The individual is self-empowered in relation to the outer space. The second step in self-awareness can be achieved by establishing the internal space in its coalition with the socio-emotional, bodily encoded processes ('guts'), as this alignment constitutes a relation between two entities of the (already identified) system 'individual'.

#### ***Phase 4 – Spacing for Space Opening and Connecting Anew***

Once the outer space has been explored, the relationships between how events from the outer space should be perceived and processed need to be sharpened. Conversely, the individual needs to clarify how these conscious cognitive and socio-emotional processes can be introduced.

The dynamics between inner and outer space need to be adjusted to co-create coherent patterns for a shared future.

In terms of anarchy, patterns are allowed to break down. The individual is in principle open to chaos or other structures, to any type of input, and to inner processes becoming tangible for the outer space. In this way, the individual has accepted continuous co-creation of all systems involved and is ready to be an active part of that process for the shared future.

#### ***Phase 5 – Living Your Co-creating from the Inside Out***

This phase forms the basis for finalising the process and is the beginning of the next inner outer spacing. Let it grow. It allows an individual to be fully active and empowered in co-creating. In this shared state everything is



possible. Complexity as potential can be fully brought to life. The individual processes creation along her/his system relations and provides growth to other systems along these relations. In this phase the individual can connect fully in order to be part of the whole (outer space).

## 11 Conclusions

What we showed in this article is that co-creation requires third-dimension awareness materialised within the own human body in order to gain the strength to empower oneself to take part in a process of co-creation. This needs social space and thus involves the individual socio-emotional processes. Acting from the inner space out requires social context, establishing co-creation spacing.

As individual practice, co-creation and development of civil society are inseparable; new types of societal systems can emerge through this process of spacing.

Since the previously explored inner space has embodied the experienced outer space, the borders of the originally separately explored spaces' terrains are interlinked. As active nodes in a complex outer space, system borders can be renewed tailor-made, transforming the nature of inner and outer spaces. Thus a new outer space can emerge to be explored for cohesive embodiment. However, the challenge we introduce at the beginning feeds back to the inner space and enables us to co-create the outer space including digital systems.

S°S Anarchy causes loss of old orientation. It represents concepts and practice for spacing for self-management that allows an opening for new complex solutions for a tailor-made future with a framework provided inside oneself and from one's leadership (governance). According to our theory, model and empirical cases, the following are crucial:

- The letting go of downloading patterns we know (leadership structures and emotions that give us well-known comfort or discomfort) gives space,

place and time for new creations. A space is required where past and future have the chance to resonate with each other.

- The relation between inner and outer spaces. Too much outer space (chaos and opportunities) can cause demotivation and lack of appreciation of others due to lack of orientation for the individual contribution to shared sensemaking. Too little outer space can cause the feeling of not being needed or of not having enough space for creations and co-creations.
- The governance of the process of spacing needs to be tailor-made in order to strengthen the relation between inner and outer spaces. The anarchy space is the framework leadership has to hold and can be seen as a garden we want to prepare, grow and harvest.
- The bewildered creation of inner and co-creation of outer spaces is substantial and requires embracing the walk on the wild side, even if it seems not to fit the norms of science or leadership, as it may lead to chaos and anarchy.
- The process of spacing is based on system awareness: the understanding-feeling-relation of the inner space. It requires letting go of traditional externalisations patterns in order to co-create and manifest outer space. The power for creation emerges from the ownership of the inner space and pace as well as the outer free space that is provided and taken in form of place and time.
- The process of spacing requires the individual to step up and to start with inner spacing before outer space can be re-designed.

Keep in your mind and body: No New Future without S°S and Anarchy ;-)

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## Join COS, a Home for Reflective Hybrids

The future is an unknown garment that invites us to weave our lives into it. How these garments will fit, cover, colour, connect and suit us lies in our (collective) hands. Many garments from the past have become too tight, too grey, too something...and the call for new shapes and textures is acknowledged by many. Yet changing clothes leaves one naked, half dressed in between. Let's connect in this creative, vulnerable space and cut, weave and stitch together.

Our target group is reflective hybrids – leaders, scientists, consultants, and researchers from all over the world who dare to be and act complex. Multi-layered topics require multidimensional approaches that are, on the one hand, interdisciplinary and, on the other hand, linked to theory and practice, making the various truths and perspectives mutually useful.

If you feel you are a reflective hybrid you are very welcome to join our COS movement, for instance by:

- Visiting our website: [www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)
- Getting in touch with COS-Creations. A space for personal & collective development, transformation and learning. Visit our website: [www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)
- Following our COS-Conference online: [www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)
- Subscribing to our newsletter: see [www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)
- Subscribing to the COS Journal: see [www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)
- Ordering single articles from the COS Journal: [www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)
- Becoming a member of our LinkedIn group: go to [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) and type in "Challenging Organisations and Society.reflective hybrids" or contact Tonnie van der Zouwen: [office@cos-collective.com](mailto:office@cos-collective.com)

# COS Conference 2017

## Making a life for one and for all-in an uncertain world

We are living in rapidly and radically changing times, in many places for the world.

Times that are hard to make sense of, to figure out what to do?

## What do we do when we do not know what to do?

How do we feel? Think?

Each one of us has some valid experience and we, as humans, created some relevant knowledge.

We invite you to join a 4–5 day learning expedition to explore, create and share guidelines, repertoire and directions to unmapped territories of the uncertain and emergent futures.

If you are:

- *Curious and passionate* about the topic and want to meet other wonderful people
- If you are *worried about your future*, your childrens' and grandchildren's future...
- If you are *preoccupied* with your employability, the global warming or our ability to stay democratic in the Western world
- If your heart is aching for the refugees and *confused people who are looking for ways to partake in this radically and rapidly changing times*
- This gathering is for you!
- Where? In Noordwijk on Sea, Netherlands

- When? In October 18 – 21 October, 2017 (22 is optional for producing a shared product)
- With whom? People from different countries, professions, cultures, life experience
- What? First two days: Ted talk, sharing lived experience and exploratory workshops

Next two days: exploring our shared reality and co creating guidelines for making life and meaningful living for one and all.

Optional extra day: sharing with the world the knowledge we created through writing, video, messages etc.

For more information and registration:  
[www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)



## Order COS Journals and COS Articles

Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids®

### **Mental Leaps into Challenging Organisations and Society**

Volume 1, Issue 1, October 2012

Editor: Maria Spindler (A)

### **Reflective Hybrids in Management and Consulting**

Volume 2, Issue 1, May 2013

Editors: Maria Spindler (A),

Gary Wagenheim (CA)

### **Involving Stakeholders to Develop Change Capacity for More Effective Collaboration and Continuous Change**

Volume 2, Issue 2, October 2013

Editor: Tonnie van der Zouwen (NL)

### **Different Culture, Different Rhythms**

Volume 3, Issue 1, May 2014

Editor: Karin Lackner (DE)

### **On the Move: Patterns, Power, Politics**

Volume 3, Issue 2, October 2014

Editors: Maria Spindler (A) and

Tonnie van der Zouwen (NL)

### **Positive Deviance Dynamics in Social Systems**

Volume 4, Issue 1, May 2015

Editors: Maria Spindler (A) and

Gary Wagenheim (CA)

### **Elaborating the Theory – Practice Space: Professional Competence in Science, Therapy, Consulting and Education**

Volume 4, Issue 2, October 2015

Editors: Ilse Schrittmesser (A) and

Maria Spindler (A)

### **Change in Flow: How Critical Incidents Transform Organisations**

Volume 5, Issue 1, May 2016

Editors: Nancy Wallis (US) & Maria Spindler (A)

### **Leadership That Counts**

Volume 5, Issue 2, October 2016

Editors: Tom Brown (CA), Gary Wagenheim (CA)

### **Inner Outer Spaces**

Volume 6, Issue 1, May 2017

Editors: Maria Spindler and Christian Stary

each €28,- plus shipping costs

## Subscription of the COS Journal

The journal is published semi-annually (May and October). The price of an annual subscription is €50.- plus shipping costs (two issues each year).

The subscription can be terminated until 31.12. for the next year.

## Order the COS Journal

at [www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)

## Download single articles of the COS Journal

at [www.cos-collective.com](http://www.cos-collective.com)

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Photo: Liselotte Zvacek-Schrefel  
Cai Xiaosong: Planet. 2011  
Installation, Ink on Paper, Acryl  
54. Biennale Venedig 2011

*Liselotte Zvacek-Schrefel  
Consultant & Photographer  
Design of experimental, experience  
based contexts for social learning  
and inspiration, focusing of the  
present moment in interpersonal  
dialog, social patterns & patterns  
of human life.  
contemplative photography*

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Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids®

Volume 6, Issue 2

Title: Flow beyond Systems: Development through Somatic  
Intelligence

Editors: Tonnie van der Zouwen (NL) and Maria Spindler (A)

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## The Journal with Impact

The Journal "Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids® (COS)" is the first journal to be dedicated to the rapidly growing requirements of reflective hybrids in our complex 21st-century organisations and society. Its international and multidisciplinary approaches balance theory and practice and show a wide range of perspectives in and between organisations and society. Being global and diverse in thinking and acting outside the box are the targets for its authors and readers in management, consulting and science.