

## Flow beyond Systems: Development through Somatic Intelligence

**Editors: Maria Spindler and Tonnie van der Zouwen**

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Maria Spindler and Tonnie van der Zouwen

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**Journal “Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids® (COS)”**

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*Maria Spindler and Tonnie van der Zouwen*

## **Editorial**

# **Flow beyond Systems: Development through Somatic Intelligence**

With this COS-Journal issue we address the complex form of body-mind-field intelligence that enables us to flow beyond given systems. Somatic intelligence connects us anew with our human dignity, our individuality, and responsibility for our collectives instead of downloading old shared power patterns. The way we lead and organise ourselves in collectives is reflected by what organisations, larger social structures and ourselves as parts thereof have become. *Flow beyond Systems: Development through Somatic Intelligence* is the creative force of new realities for organisations and society through each of us, through the connections and organisations we create. Growing together in co-evolution, step by step, requires facilitating actively the interplay between individuals and existing organisations and new organisational realities that are waiting to be created. Individual development faces challenges and at the same time poses challenges to organisations and society. The lively nexus between the worlds of organised systems and individual worlds forms the focus of this COS-Journal issue 6.2.

Freedom and structure do not pre-exist in organised communities but are relationally constructed in the common space to which its (more or less) equal members bring their uniqueness and create something of (more or less) lasting value, such as an organisation or larger organised structures. Leadership is momentous for supporting development and meaningful creations beyond known forms.

Reaching beyond is neither a result of will power nor sheer mental excellence, nor can it be made to happen. An attempt to force reaching beyond systems tends to result in forms of mind-body splits. This will lead to a

habitual recourse to “more of the same” in the relation between the body and its organised, interactional environment, so that vicious circles turn into organisational and societal realities and become powerful limiting patterns. Changing these realities largely depends on our ability to intentionally bring somatic intelligence to the creation of new larger structures. These patterns may well be changed in taking *small steps*, through everyday actions, establishing a new bodily awareness.

The authors in this COS issue give insights into the potential of somatic and social intelligence for individuals when challenging organisations and society to dare to flow beyond give patterns of systems. They approach this construct and the role of embodiment and bodily movement for flow beyond systems from a theoretical, discipline-specific, or practical perspective. They share with their contributions insights from somatic intelligence, stemming from either a facilitating, managing, consulting, community building, research or artistic background. The following six contributions show in detail the conditions and insights in qualitative intelligent flows and growth processes.

In ‘**Unravelling Human Situatedness Through Art**’ Michel van Dartel illuminates the relationship between societal development and the human body. He shows that modern technology and globalisation have caused human situatedness to stretch far beyond our direct physical surroundings, a causality that can be attributed neither to a social structure nor to the individuals that act within it. The focus is to understanding the dynamic interaction between individuals and their surroundings and how this interaction is determined and shaped by complex factors such as language, culture and knowledge. He unravels human situatedness to understand how societal change works and, ultimately, to advance. His conclusions are that art can only be productive in its contribution to understanding human situatedness under two conditions: firstly, that artists make effective use of their own situatedness and secondly, that their audiences are also regarded as situated beings.

The Danish Army is the focus of the article '**Practical Leader Development Program Using Emotional Intelligence**' by Jakob Rømer Barfod and Bjarne Bakkegaard. It reflects on more than ten years of experience working with developing emotional intelligence in the Royal Danish Army Officers' Academy. On the basis of field experience, qualitative research and quantitative data the effects of working with emotional intelligence in a structured way are presented and discussed using a social constructionism approach. The authors highlight how emotional intelligence can create meaning at different levels through somatic intelligence. The article demonstrates how this long-term organisational development endeavour has changed a classical bureaucratic organisation and its professional life orders.

Michaela Bristol-Faulhammer shows in her study '**The Efficacy of Different Values Interventions in Transformative Meaning Making and Transition**' the process of values-based meaning making by demonstrating how values coaching reflective writing facilitated the process of meaningful behaviour change. She introduces an educational technology to discover values that are relevant, significant, and important for a person. The study addressed an on-line values ranking, followed by a coaching or writing treatment, and a final efficacy inquiry was conducted to explore how different characteristics in the intervention supported meaning making and the behaviour change process. The results provide evidence that meaning making unfolds in making distinctions and bringing significant experiences to the foreground.

In their article '**Overcoming Impediments to Team Flow**', Jef J.J. van den Hout, Josette M.P. Gevers, Orin C. Davis and Mathieu C. D. P. Weggeman show the results of their research on the conditions for team flow. Their conclusions confirm that knowing what works, knowing procedures, is not enough. A climate that fosters collective awareness of a shared ambition, based on shared values, has to be proactively developed and sustained. Keeping this common purpose front and centre is highly motivating for all

team members and engenders feelings of effortless cooperation, the feeling of being in flow.

Michael Sonntag gives an example of what team flow can look like in his article '**Flow with Purpose: The Foundation and Principles of a New Evolutionary Paradigm**'. He tells the story of an intensive care team that started 25 years ago in a private hospital in Switzerland. A group of nurses and anaesthetists negotiated with the clinic conditions for their next level in patient relationship. This seed became a successful collectively organised team of medical professionals. They agreed with the owners of the clinic to run the operating rooms and the intensive care unit as a self-organised and self-owned group. The revenues would be shared equally between the medical doctors once costs were paid, including the nurses' salaries. Michael finds with the case missing links as a foundation for how to make theoretical management principles work and how to use uncertain situation for shared growth of awareness.

The triologue '**Move the Future**' with Andrea Schüller, Maria Spindler and Eva Wiprecht highlights dance as intervention and means to create fresh, generative relationships and systems. The conversation is based on the COS Workshop 'Somatic Intelligence for High Performance Teams'. The insights integrate inner movements, interactions and how these different threads accumulate to growth of the whole system. It shows the dramaturgy balancing the free flow and the framework providing different spaces and fostering manifold impacts on various levels. They highlight how the emerging future is captured, crystallised and embodied through dance on the open floor, experienced and manifested through the vessel of the interactive body and wisdom and intelligence of the body: a holistic entity in a constant process of being and becoming.

Flow with us into this COS issue and beyond – into our holistic intelligence.

## About the Authors

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GOs and larger systems, she bridges individual and collective conscious(ness) development for reaching meaningful, novel results. She is the heart and head of COS Creations, Co-Founder of COS-Collective and chairs the Austrian Association of Group Dynamics and Organizational Consulting.

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**Michael Sonntag** is a medical doctor, psychiatrist, body-orientated psychotherapist (Bioenergetic Analysis) and management consultant. He is strongly convinced that deep transformation through changing the operating system is only possible when we have a profound and coherent understanding of the operational and governing principles of healthy, living systems. This is true on individual, organizational, economic and even more on strategic decision-making levels. He has published on these issues in several journals.

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**Next New Action**  
(3d)

*Assess your creative potential for leadership and consulting*

**COS Curriculum**  
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25 days & 1d/8h coaching for master's piece

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**Creating my Master's piece**  
Writers space \*  
Photography & Film \*  
Freestyle \*

\* choose one – or more (optional)

*Craft your ideas and developments and bring them into the world. Act!*

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**Group in collective flow**  
(5d)

*Deep dive generative group dynamics*

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**Flow peer group**  
(3 x 1d)

*Your homebase for orientation, integration & individual learning*

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**Whole System:  
Co-Creating new structures for collaboration**  
(2,5d)

*Futuring, working with large groups and networks for transformational change*

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**COS Conference active participation**  
(2,5d)

*Engage on stage, show your intention and action for organisations & society*

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**Integrating somatic intelligence in high performance teams**  
(4d)

*Awaken somatic intelligence for generative change*

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- Direct intention and generative power towards shared development.
- Enter uncharted territory.

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**Craft and manifest:** During your learning journey you are continuously crafting your own masters' piece. This artistic, scientific or freestyle „piece of work“ is your gift and your challenge to yourself and to Organisations & Society: The one you work or live in or the one you are intending to create. A project development, a new business idea, a book, a new way of working and living.

**Your calling** triggers and shapes your learning journey throughout all modules. We support you in making a pearl-chain, your intentional learning process is the pearl string. – Beautiful!

## **COS Certified Curriculum: Creators for Organisation & Society**

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Join the COS movement and become a Friend&Member of COS! COS is a home for reflective hybrids and a growing platform for co-creation of meaningful, innovative forms of working & living in and for organizations and society, between and beyond theory and practice. We invite you to become an active member of COS.

Being a part of COS you have access to our products and happenings. As a Friend&Member, you carry forward the COS intention of co-creating generative systems through mindful, fresh mind-body action. Let's connect in and for novel ways around the globe!

Access points for your participation & future contribution are:

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- Development & transformation at COS-Creations Seminars
- Creative scientific publishing & reading between and beyond theory and practice
- COS LinkedIn Virtual Community
- And more ...

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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)
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- 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)

**SAVE THE DATE**  
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**19. – 21. September 2019**  
**in Venice, Italy**



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## **The Journal with Impact**

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