EMBODIMENT IN EDUCATION

THE LANGUAGE OF THE BODY IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE
- Developing somatic awareness, bodily communication and embodied leadership competence though movement, mindfulness and dance.

ETEN Conference
Experiential learning - 16-18 April 2015 - University College UC

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EMBODIMENT IN EDUCATION

Two main research fields

Movement, learning and social change

A focus on how sport/movement, especially joyful elements from dance, play and martial arts, can support the processes of learning, development, togetherness, social change and identity in children, young people and vulnerable target groups.
**EMBODIMENT IN EDUCATION**

**Embodiment and leadership**

A focus on *what* meaning the body has in leadership and professional practise and *how* this can be practiced and implemented in educational contexts.
The language of the body

Embodiment and leadership

How can it be trained?
THE LANGUAGE OF THE BODY IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Trust
Contact
Presence
Empathy
Leadership
Authenticity
&
Crisis
management
in professional practice

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WHERE?

1. **PE education.** University of Copenhagen. Dance teaching and high school teacher training.
2. **University College.** UCC. Teacher education.
3. **The hospital field** Nurse education. "The dancing nurses”,
4. **Professionals:** Teachers, doctors, nurses, physiotherapists,
5. **Leaders.** Copenhagen Business School Financial sector and the international leadership association.

Dancing nurses
Embodied leaders
Moving Teachers
Three communication dimensions

*What?*
The content of words

*HOW?*
The tone of the voice
The language of the body
The body is always speaking

The body is always communicative and multi-sensing.

We express our sensations, emotions & relationships through bodily expressions.

The body is even if it is connected to life experiences and cultural dimensions also always connected to the living moment.

To the now.

(Merleau-Ponty, 2006; Thornquist, 2005; Andersen Kjær, 2011; Winther, 2009).
Embodied meetings
**Body language is our mother tongue**

The language of the body develops in the small child long before spoken language.

In all human relationships, bodily communication is both a personally and culturally toned mother tongue

(Halprin, 2002; Lowen, 2006).
Professionals are their bodies

Thus more focus on the connection between embodiment and professionalism may be of great importance to leadership, empathy and communication in many professional capacities.
The three legs of the teacher.....

(Shultz Jørgensen, 2012)
Tacit Consciousness

The language of the body in professional practice and leadership is thus often lived through a tacit consciousness (Meekums, 2007).

Nevertheless the importance of the bodily is especially visible in the contexts of teaching and leadership, where emphatic bodily communication is of importance for leadership, authority and authenticity.
MAGNIFIED attention

The bodily is especially visible in the contexts of teaching and leadership.

These professionals

...receive a form of magnified attention to their bodily and emotional communication

(Winther, 2012; Andersen Kjær, 2011).
The personal in the professional is an area which in later years has been given more and more attention and relevance (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Ladkin & Taylor, 2009; Nielsen, Marrone & Slay, 2010; Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2010; Plauborg, Andersen, Ingerslev & Fibæk Laursen, 2010).

The importance of soma for this dynamic, paradoxically enough, has been given relatively little attention – also in teacher and leadership studies (Ledkin & Taylor, 2010; Fibæk Laursen, 2010; Meekums, 2007).
Embodied professionalism

Professional communication finds itself, in a constantly present triad which is at once

Bodily, Personal & Professional

One does not exist without the other, ......but may display itself .....with varying strength. (Winther, 2009; 2013).
EMBODIED LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE

1. Self-contact and somatic awareness
2. Communication reading and contact ability.
3. Leadership in groups or situations.

(Winther, 2012; 2013)
LEVEL 1

Self contact and somatic awareness

Contact with one’s own body and personal feelings; the ability to be focused and present; the ability to include one’s heart and still keep a professional focus and a private boundary

(Winther, 2012, 2013)
Bodyawareness

.....the ability to be able to contain one’s own feelings and keep composed in even difficult situations in which pupils or colleagues are upset or emotionally affected.

The better the professional knows him- or herself and their own bodily signals..

The easier it will be to keep or find

SELF CONTACT
LEVEL 2

Communication reading and contact ability

The ability to see, listen, sense and notice;
The ability to read both verbal and bodily communication;

The ability to create trustful and empathic contact with others.
The ability to contain and manage conflicts.
The body is multi-sensing, and often the body expresses something that is not told completely in words (Andersen Kjær, 2011; Fuchs, 2012; Lowen, 2006; Winther, 2009).

Finding the tone between two or more people is described in various contexts by concepts related to *resonance*. (Løgstrup, 1983, Sabetti and Freligh, 2001).
The body as sounding board

It is the professional,
There with his or her body
Who must create a **sounding board** for the other

... *not the opposite.*

The professional who can *see, read, listen and be in movement* may react with competence, presence and efficacy to both verbal and non-verbal processes.

............because this person also senses what is *not* said in the tone of voice, and when to catch the body’s *duets* and stories.
**RESONANCE** & **DISSONANS**

the sensual & energetic dimension

Eyecontact

... is one of the individuals most meaningfull tools for contact.

The eyes can lit up with love, but they can also express distance, power or lack of empathy.

To pupils, the energy in the teacher’s gaze can be what decides whether the feel,

seen, respected, watched or overlooked.

(Winther, 2013)
THE ART OF TOUCHING

In all societies, *touch* is connected to closeness, intimacy and care, and body contact is one of humanity’s most basic forms of communication.

The professional therefore must know the art of touching both as a source of care, security, setting limits, and respect.

(Argyle, 2006; Moberg, 2006; Andersen Kjær, 2012; Winther, 2009)
MOVEMENT READING

& MICRO-MOVEMENTS

& MICRO-MOVEMENTS
No leadership without followership

“... there is no leadership without followership, no leader without a follower”

(Burge, Batchelor, & Cox, 2013, p. 3).
LEVEL 3
Leadership in groups or situations

Professional overview, radiation, centering, clear leadership of the group or situation; the ability to enter or hold a space with a trustworthy and body-based authority and humility (Winther, 2012; 2013)
Being able to take a space

*The space is never empty, but charged with atmosphere, energy, meaning, possibilities and disturbances.*

*People communicate also bodily through micro-movements in space*

*The way we enter, take create and hold the professional space is important for credibility, authority and creating relationships.*

To dare to be “on.”
To be personal, powerful, bodily and professionally present.

*It is through the body that authority in the room is negotiated* (Thornquist, 2005).
This entails both professional humility and an ability to remain in oneself, so that another person can notice that there is room to be there too, with them.

In these contexts, the professional should primarily take the lead in the situation and go into the possibly fragile room with great respect.

(Winther, 2012)
POWERPOSITIONS

Status ...high, low or ...
The body as sounding board and teacher

Embodied leadership competence is a personal competence which may be developed, made more aware, and matured.

It can be trained.

From the first day as a student & for the rest of one’s professional life. ... with the body as teacher
Movement with inspiration from dance and martial arts

Grounding and centering

Body awareness
Awareness of own breath and voice
Territorial zones

Noticing and centering

Touch and body contact

Movement reading

Courage to be on

Filling and holding a space

Awareness of micromovements

Tuning Silence

Training of both flexible and powerfull movement

Conciousness of narrative stories, interviews, video

How?

17. april 2015
Dias 33
EMBODIMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

Training of the embodied leadership competence

1. PEER TRAINING Movement. Embodied learning and theoretical reflections with peers.

2. PRACTISE IN SCHOOLS with pupils.

3. PRACTITIONER RESEARCH Reflections, writings, experience descriptions – feedback.
THE LARGE AND THE TINY DANCE

Movement with inspiration from movement, dance, mindfulness, and martial arts

Grounding and centering
- Body awareness
- Sensuality
- Awareness of own breath and voice
- Territorial zones
- Awareness of micromovements
- Tuning in
- Silence
- Touch and body contact
- Movement reading

Courage to be on
- Taking, creating and holding a space
- Status training/power position

Training of both flexible and powerful body movements/energy.

Consciousness, feedback, embodied stories,
A journey

- not a guided tour

A journey not a guided tour
This presentation illustrates central aspects of the importance of embodiment for leadership, professional practice and education, also as related to PE education.

References for inspiration

Relevante publikationer om kroppens fortællinger

Other inspirations
Relevante Links:

Info om bevægelsespsykologi:
www.ifi.ku.dk/forskning/projekter/hum_samf/phd_projekter/kroppens/

Artikler til download: