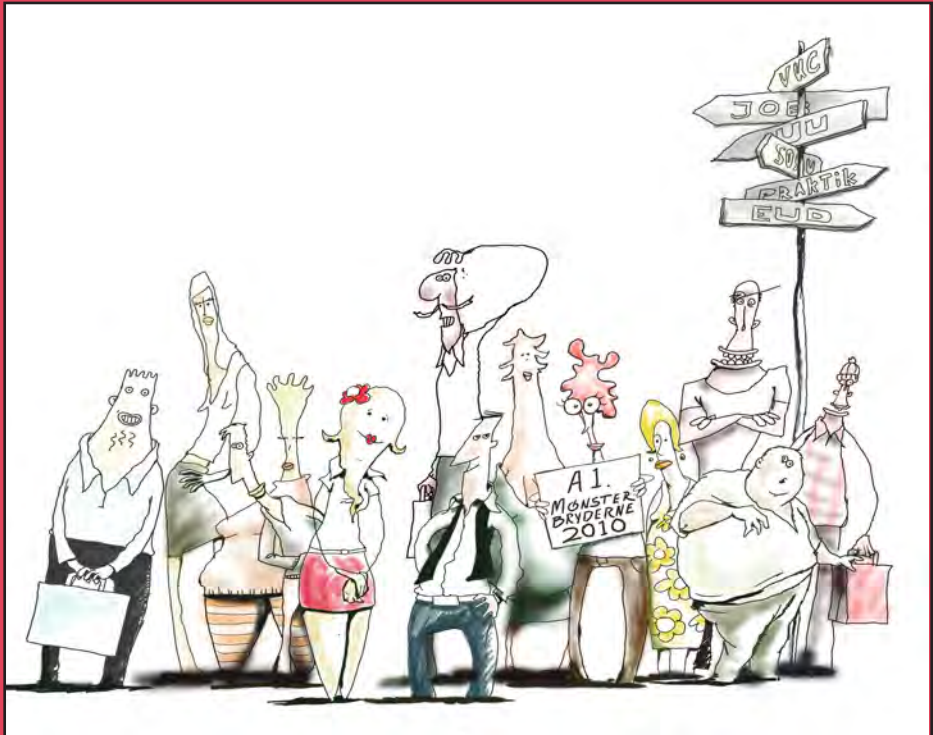


# Breaking social patterns through the learning environments of the non-formal adult education



A learning theoretical view on the motivating qualities in the non-formal adult education

by Steen Elsborg and Steen Høyrup Pedersen, 2009



**Breaking social patterns through the learning environments of  
the non-formal adult education**

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# Introduction

Which qualities are unique for the pedagogy in the non-formal adult education in relation to creating motivation for learning – especially for those who as a starting point are less motivated.

This report focuses on these questions. The report is based on researchbased analysis made by academic assistant Steen Elsborg and associate professor Steen Høyrup from the Danish School of Education, University of Aarhus (DPU).

The purpose of the study has been to identify a learning theoretical view on the pedagogy in the non-formal adult education and within this frame to describe how the non-formal adult education works in relation to creating motivation for learning and competence assessment for the group of people who are alienated to formal education. The specific focus is on the group of participants, who not beforehand are motivated for learning. The results are considered to be of broad relevance for the non-formal adult education.

The initiative for this research based study was taken by a working group in Danish Adult Education Association with the participation of Adult Education Associations and the Association for Day Folk High Schools, who jointly were developing and describing a special pedagogical concept for the non-formal adult education, Tailor made Individual Preparatory Education (TIPE).

The initiative is financed with subsidies from the Danish Adult Education Association. The project is a pilot project starting in the summer of 2008 and ending in the summer of 2009. The project includes dissemination activities; an integrated research and developing seminar in the spring of 2009 and this report. The seminar was held in cooperation with Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL).

The study is primarily based on interviews with teachers, guidance counselors, managers and participants from five selected courses from the autumn of 2008 and the spring of 2009 and supported with observations. Furthermore the study is based on a data generating research and developing seminar attended by 70 teachers, guidance counselors and managers from the whole country, who debated and in different ways qualified the researchers' impressions and preliminary results. The input from the participants from the seminar is a part of the empirical data and has explicitly been used in this report. The seminar took place in March 2009. The study is neither representative nor generally valid for all learning environments in non-formal adult education.

It is a case study of the significant elements in the learning environments in the non-formal adult education when succeeding in creating motivation among participants who are not motivated.

The five cases, that have been studied, are two WEA/AOF (In Denmark there are five adult education associations, and AOF is one of the five) courses and three courses in day folk high schools. The participants in the observed courses were compulsory assigned young people and adults, who hence were not participating on own request, and the data is based on interviews with teachers/ guidance counselors, participants and managers (separate interviews with the groups in the courses; 3 managers, 8 teachers/ guidance counselors and 15 participants in all.) Furthermore data has been used from the research and development seminar, which took place in March 2009 and in which 70 teachers, guidance counselors and managers from the whole country participated. The courses in WEA/AOF were EGU (Basic vocational education) Gladsaxe/København and 'Jobviften' in Asnæs and the courses in the day folk high schools took place at IDA, Idrætsdaghøjskolen in Århus, a sport day folk high school in Aarhus, and Kompetencehuset in Århus – 'House of competencies in Aarhus' and at Daghøjskolen Fokus/Kaffé Fair in Aalborg – a learning program in a café. The observations and the interviews took their point of departure in previous evaluations and in data from a questionnaire concerning content and efficiency answered by managers from institutions in the non-formal adult education sector in the summer of 2008.

The study points out that the non-formal adult education is at its best, when the learning environment is characterized by qualities breaking social patterns, qualities which develop motivation for learning in the situation. The perspective could be up – and - coming to use the content constructively to accomplish the task of creating attractive learning environments for non-motivated young people and adults - in the non-formal adult education as well as in the formal educational sector.

First the report gives a theoretical understanding of the learning environment breaking patterns, and afterwards the content is concretized via a description of five observed elements, which overall seem to characterize the non-formal adult education learning environment, and that is:

- insistence on meeting and relating to the participant as a resourceful person
- social environments that gives the individual strength and energy for action
- flexible, targeted organization of the education program
- teaching and guidance are interrelated
- focus on the processes of education

# Main results – conclusive analysis

## Learning environments breaking social patterns

Parts of the non-formal adult education successfully works with people on the edge of society.

People who have difficulties handling their own life and who more or less have lost their believe in that things could be different. Motivation for learning and for new challenges in life has disappeared, but through the non-formal adult education programs the motivation returns/comes back.



*Honestly, I'd no education and I'd been involved in troubles and I was fired. Things looked bad for me and I started to lose my hopes.. We didn't learn much, I thought, but we talked about everything, and that was just what I needed. (participant)*

*I've just one positive thing to say: It's the best take-off for the next step – up, for an education! (participant)*

*For the last 2 years I didn't bother to open a book, but now I feel like reading and doing my homework. Now I'm not fed up with school. (participant)*

Through the development of significant relations and successful actions the non-formal learning becomes a valuable occurrence in the lives of the participants supporting development of identity, self-esteem and awareness of new possibilities

in life. Robustness is developed, and when succeeding the result is independent citizens who are in control of their own lives.

*I've met others at the same level and now I see myself with new eyes: "you're not the only one". I'm not so shy anymore. Now I dare to speak up. It's so nice. (participant)*

*I've learnt something about myself and I've learnt to kick myself in the rear end. (participant)*

*I now dare to speak in big crowds, and I e.g. dare to eat together with other people. I couldn't have done that a year ago. (participant)*

*It has also helped me a lot to start a football club. I now dare to write emails and everything. I spend three hours a day on that club. (participant)*

The observations and interviews show that the working method in the non-formal education is based on the understanding of the individual being in possession of prior experience and potentials. The learning theoretical view on the qualities of breaking social patterns in the non-formal education points out that the significant effects from the programs potentially are:

- 1 Increased self-esteem, self-knowledge and self-confidence
- 2 Motivation for creating new substance in life
- 3 Readiness for new challenges
- 4 Wish to develop new competences

*There was room for differences. If you were quiet or whatever, it was just okay. There was also room for making mistakes etc. It has been crucial for my life. I've moved on. And I believe I'll succeed... (participant)*

*Here you can be whoever you are. And find out who you are. To me it has been so crazy. You can rediscover yourself. (participant)*

*My problem was that I couldn't set boundaries for anyone. It's so different today.. (participant)*

*I was enlisted because I had a depression. I never really fitted in anywhere. Actually, most of the time I just stayed in bed and did nothing. Then I heard of this place and thought, okay if it's not all about reading, it may be all right. And for the first time I have had an experience of being understood and accepted as I'm. There was a fantastic atmosphere. Now I'm moving on. Actually, I'm graduating from upper secondary school this summer. (participant)*

*I've learnt so much. And it was at a human level. When a new person started I used to think: "oh no, look at him". But after a week I discovered what a fantastic person he was inside..I tried that one time after another. Not to label people – myself included. (participant)*

## **The motivating learning environments in non-formal adult education**

The quotes above support the learning theoretical knowledge that a participant in a learning program always will be present emotionally, socially and cognitively. It is a general knowledge which, however, in general is not taken into account in planning and providing educational activities. When planning and providing education this comprehensive understanding of individual learning is often overruled by a more traditional cognitive approach. This study of the motivating non-formal learning environment has as a key result that it does happen in the non-formal sector. The observed programs, the interviews and the discussions with participants, teachers, guidance counselors and managers make it clear, that among the actors in the non-formal sector this comprehensive understanding of learning exists – and is the basis for the daily pedagogics in the motivating learning environment.

In leading learning theories we find both the perspective that learning is acquisition and that learning is transformative. Acquisition - to integrate, that is internalizing something already known in the culture and transformative learning is to develop something new: new knowledge, skills, competencies as something new, something innovative. The two perspectives are not contradictive, but supplement each other. When planning education learning is often viewed as acquisition and the meaning of and the possibilities for learning as transformative learning can hence be missed. In the observed non-formal programs both perspectives are included and learning as transformative learning is decisive in the pedagogical focus to provide personally barrier-breaking contents.

Another significant distinction in the thinking of learning is the difference between formal and non-formal learning. During the last decades a growing consciousness of and understanding of learning not just seen as a result of formal education has arisen. Learning takes place everywhere and every day and a lot of learning is not intentional, but takes place while we are busy doing other things. Once again these understandings supplement each other and it is exactly in the interaction between the formal and the non-formal learning that types of learning and learning outcomes – which otherwise wouldn't have been achieved, can be created. However this understanding is very often not used when educational programs are planned and provided. The interaction is on the other hand very obvious in the observed



non-formal courses, where there is a continually shift between situations of non-formal and formal learning.

Concerning the learning theoretical view on the qualities in the motivating learning environments in the non-formal adult education it is hence clear that it is the culture and the competences existing in the non-formal sector for creating an active interaction between the different forms of learning, that gives the foundation for succeeding with the intentions of this sector. In the motivating learning environments they are able to implement the learning theoretical knowledge in the concrete pedagogical practice.

## **Motivation for learning is created in the context**

In the analysis of the observed programs it becomes evident that working with motivation in the non-formal sector is based on an understanding of motivation for education as changeable and based on the interaction between the individual and the educational system. Succeeding with creating motivation for learning in the non-formal pedagogics thus challenges the commonly accepted approach, that emphasizes motivation as an inner inherent trait.

The theories concerning motivation for learning are mainly based on humanistic psychology/existentialistic philosophy, in which motivation is assumed 'to be there'. The reasoning behind it is that the fundamental motivation for learning is self-actualization. To learn is an integral part of being human. Within this paradigm research has mainly been concerned with identifying the blocking elements for adults to engage in education. Cognitive theories for motivation have been leading. In the understanding of motivation for learning the cognitive theories focus on the following key points as pivotal to motivation:

- Challenge is the essential incentive for learning
- The need for comprehensive understanding and mastery of the world
- The need for stability, for not getting ones view of the world disturbed
- Problem solving  
To work with the issues, acting, creates understanding, knowledge, experience
- Meaningfulness

Challenges, meaningfulness and creating experiences through acting and problem solving are pivotal elements. To this is added balancing between the seemingly opposed positions: The need for stability and the need for expanding the horizon of the individual.

Emotional and social theories have been developed as well. These theoretical perspectives emphasize the following elements as essential to learning:

- Disharmony is the fundamental motivation for learning (between biography and challenges). Learning changes disharmony into harmony
- Ambivalence towards new learning
- Need for safety
- Need for recognition
- Social needs: togetherness, belongingness - in opposition to being “excluded”, being accepted. Working together
- Experiences – primarily and linguistically communicated – is the basis for learning

Motivation can be seen as a personal quality or as something dynamic emerging in relations. Motivation is not something ‘out there’ which just can be uncovered, but is created in the context.

The point of departure for creating motivating learning environments in the non-formal adult education is not viewing the participant as motivated. From day one for a mainly or narrowly cognitive learning this must be seen as one of the unique characteristics in the successful non-formal approach to learning. And it is an approach corresponding very well with the current tendencies in the development of the theoretical understanding of motivation.

## **The motivating approach in the non-formal adult education – a model**

Our analysis of the data from the participants, the teachers, the counselors, and the managers lead us to the following model of how motivation for learning is created in the non-formal sector:

1) The learning process comprises individual emotional processes, in which the participant feels seen and understood. Recognition and resource thinking are crucial principals. The methods of working in the non-formal sector is bases on that...

2) The learning process comprises social processes: The individual participant has his/her own view of the social reality he/she is living in. Through the social processes, social acceptance and the sense of community are experienced and an understanding of sharing problems and challenges with others are created. At the same time a common framework is created through the social processes in which

the participants can act and think. A common future vision emerges - a vision in which the learning realistically is to be applied. Hence the social element is both context, relations and content for the learning. The working methods in the non-formal sector motivate for learning by actively including the social elements and by doing so among other things motivates for accepting new inputs...

3) The learning process is also formed by the individual cognitive processes. The prior context/situation/ specific knowledge of the participants, is de-contextualized. Knowledge and experiences are de-contextualized and re-contextualized to allow new knowledge to be related to a future and changed life situation. The working methods of the non-formal adult education motivate to learning by using this teaching method when the participant is ready for it. The prior experience and potentials of the participant forms the basis for planning the program.

4) Finally it's important that the process of learning takes place in a societal context, which partly frames the understanding of the participants and partly frames the output of the learning. The learning processes must of course be seen in this light. The methods of working in the non-formal sector motivates to learning by supporting the participants' wish to understand and to handle their own societal situation. The experience of the social system as a co-player and the experience of being in a natural and legitimate relation to the labour market is a key to success.

To sum up: In the part of non-formal adult education working with motivation, motivation is not viewed as an inherent trait, but as an interaction/relation created in the context. It is commonly accepted that creating motivation in an ongoing process.

# Specific elements in the motivating non-formal learning environment

The following is a description of the content that has led to the above analysis of the learning environments and the pedagogics for creating motivation in the non-formal sector. The data collection from the observations, the interviews and the research and developing seminar shows that when the non-formal adult education is at its best, it can be captured into five overall elements:



- insistence on meeting and relating to the participant as a resourceful person
- social environments that gives the individual strength and energy for action
- flexible, targeted organization of the education program
- teaching and guidance are interrelated
- focus on processes of formative education

## ***A. The participant is a resourceful individual***

It is a general and fundamental theme for guidance counselors and teachers in the observed non-formal programs to focus on the individual participant in a holistic way - to see the individual as a resourceful person and approaching him/her with respect and understanding.

### **1. The participant's perspective as the point of departure**

It is important to the counselors and teachers to convince the participants that they now are in a place completely different from what they might have experienced previously within the formal educational system:

*I focus on it in that way that to some degree I'm the opposite of what they've experienced earlier. This is a place where we meet people with respect, we listen to them, and we take them seriously no matter what kind of baggage they bring along and no matter what they might have done before. (guidance counselor)*

*To have a guidance counselor and not feel like a number. That's pretty special for this place. (participant)*

The participants are to be met with trust– and an expectation to them of living up to this trust.

*I don't have any prior knowledge about them, so I'm not biased or anything... I meet them with an open mind, an empty screen and this point of view: I believe in you. And I expect you to live up to that responsibility. And if you do that, you'll have all the possibilities to get all the counseling, help and guidance possible. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

It is a characteristic of the teachers and the guidance counselors to involve the participants' emotions as a dynamo for learning and development. Often the participants wear their emotions on the outside:

*Sometimes they take responsibility for their own situation and sometimes they blame the authorities or anyone else. It differs very much. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

Based on experience the teachers and guidance counselors succeed in making a positive climate for cooperation/interaction - a guidance counselor expresses it this way:

*At any rate it's my experience that it's difficult to work against a person, who meets you with respect and recognition. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

... and another guidance counselor says:

*To a great extent I've heard that they feel welcome, they feel taken care of and that they can be who they are. We do also aim at being curious about who they are. Who are they as individuals? How are they put together? What they say and how they act? We try to be very sensitive to how they see the world. We would like to understand what they understand, contrary to being experts on what we believe and tell it to them and then blame them, when they haven't done it our way. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

And the participants emphasize the fact that they are being seen and understood as very vital. In connection to that it is pivotal that everyone is looked upon as having an equal voice:

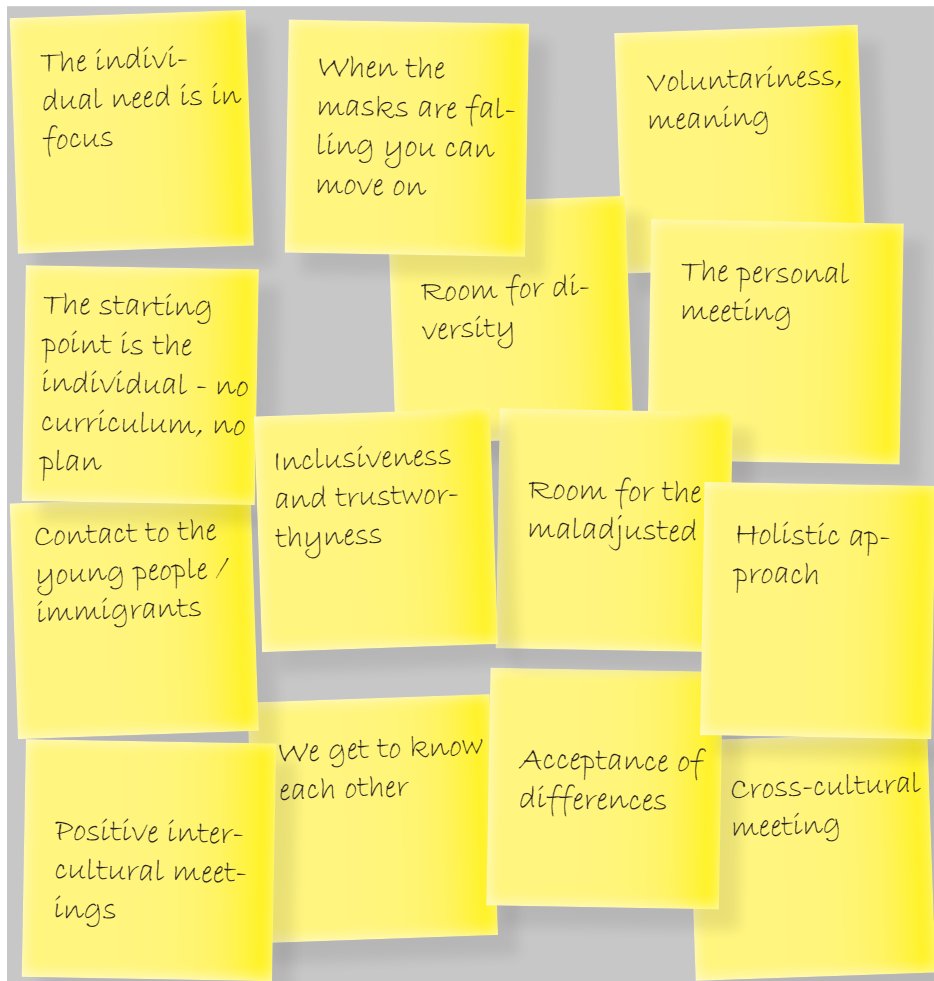
*It's human beings working here! It not somebody just coming for the pay check. You get a hug. And that's the way it is for everybody. We talk to each other at same level. (participant)*

For guidance counselors and teachers the challenge is to focus on resources and potentials:

*I think a lot about what their forces are, what's their dream, and what do they want to do in the future; what do they burn for? One thing is to talk about what is reasonable; another one is when you feel "this is great, it tickles in me when I think about it". A talk about that, to make sure that it will be long-lasting.  
(guidance counselor and teacher)*

*... to help in the process of becoming aware of what kind of resources do I have and what kind of limitations do I have. And how can I use them in the best way?  
(guidance counselor and teacher)*

**At the research and developing seminar teachers, guidance counselors and managers saw these strong points in the non-formal adult education:**



## 2. An atmosphere based on confidence and joy

Besides showing the participants trust, the guidance counselors and the teachers focus on creating an environment characterized by joy – also concerning the everyday experiences. A guidance counselor tells that he asked the participants to help with some practical work - and then he as a surprise bought pizza for everyone:

*Then you make something different from what you're used to. Then they feel respected and appreciated etc. That you bother to do something. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

As another way to foster an environment characterized by joy, a guidance counselor points out the importance of positive expectations among the participants – and a little bit of excitement:

*Then rather bring rolls for breakfast a day they least expect it. "Why are we having rolls today?" – it's because it's Wednesday. Then it becomes much on the expectations. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

Guidance counselors and teachers in the non-formal sector are maybe also supposed to be of a special making – they are challenged by the participants at all levels. A teacher says:

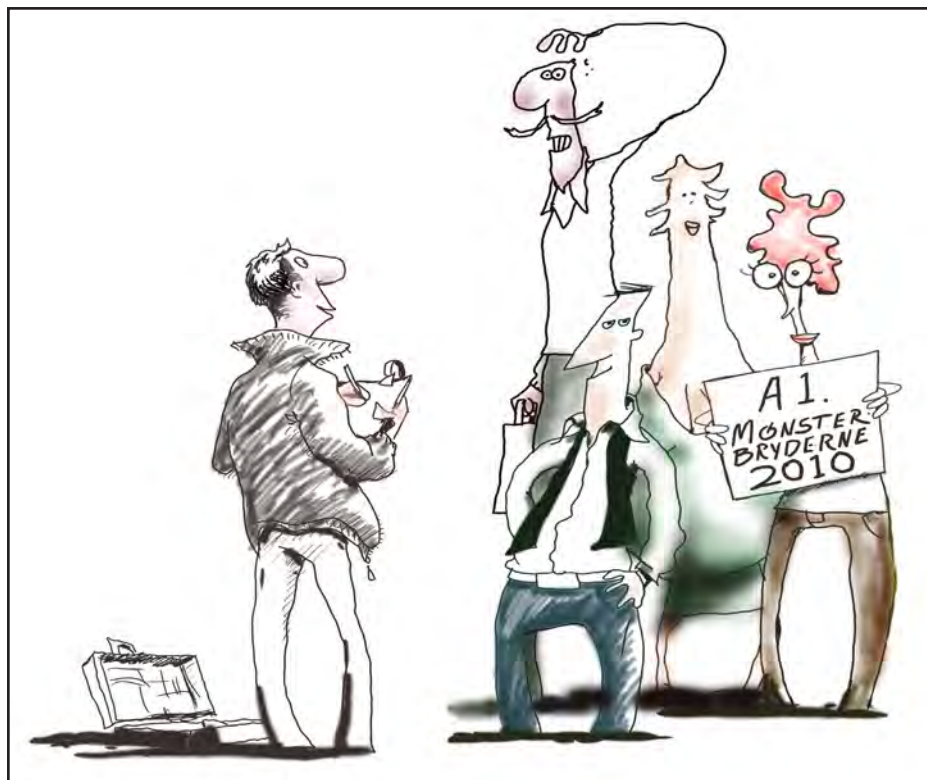
*You have to take a critical look at yourself from time to time. It's a balance all the time. You have to balance at all times between signaling hope and expectations concerning the individual participant. These people don't have much hope, because they've had so many knock outs. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

And the multi-faceted problems of the participants have different implications - they e.g. have to cope with a relatively rough tone of language. A participant expresses it this way:

*Sometimes I might be a little loud and a little rude and not speak very nicely. That's the jargon you kind of follow. We are a motley crowd, but I guess we're all from places, where that's the way you are. (participant)*

A significant focus area for the teachers and the guidance counselors is therefore to create the right atmosphere among the participants:

*I have to meet the participants, be very social and create the right kind of atmosphere and still draw lines for the behavior I will not accept. (teacher and guidance counselor)*



Mostly also the other employees working with the participants are taking part in building up an atmosphere supporting community and equality:

*I believe it's important that you have a physical frame, which is a comfortable place to come to, and at the same time is a place where you are active and do stuff. The mixture of a school and a house where you can be - I guess that's creating an atmosphere. And it is everyone who..The lady in the office says "good morning" and the lady making coffee and the caretaker who makes funny things. It's that feeling that they are not different. You come to a place, where we can be together. Not that it's just la-la and you can walk right out again, there is a.. It's hard to describe, but actually I believe that the physical frame has significance. Any way that's what the participants tell us afterwards. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

Both the participants and the staff see the school as "their place" – and a positive added bonus of creating such an environment is that the participants experience that it can be nice to be at a working place:

*I do think it matters that they can see that we're fine and I think that they mirror*



*the possibility of feeling good at a work place. Many of our participants in our programs they think; ohh no, do not put me in a job. Here they can see that you can build up a network in a working place, that you have a cosy tone while working. (teacher and guidance counseling)*

*It might as well be the principal as the school caretaker you talk to. There's no hierarchy. The lady in the office has just as much influence. That's very important for the environment. They show us what they say – that we're all worth something. (participant)*

**At the research and developing seminar teachers, guidance counselors and managers saw these strong points in the non-formal adult education:**



### 3. Acceptance of resistance to participating

For a fruitful contact to the participants it is pointed out as vital that the teachers and the guidance counselors show acceptance of the fact that the participants not always are ready for the teaching and guidance.

*Many of them say that I'm not into teaching at all, I can't stand it and I can't concentrate. So that's the way it is right now. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

A guidance counselor and teacher describes the process of creating the type of relation necessary for motivating the participants:

*Then you can start working by planting little seeds of ideas and by the individual chats we have. Then little by little it starts moving ahead. Sometimes I experience with participants, that in the beginning, the first week, they need space. I'm not being pushy. It's just chit chatting, a pat on the back and a bit of laughing. Just chit chatting. It's to establish an atmosphere of "you're okay and I care for you". (guidance counselor and teacher)*

That it is a process taking time becomes obvious in the following statement from a participant:

*Things couldn't continue the way they were, and I was presented for this project as mandatory, which in the beginning I didn't like at all. But when I began and was OK welcomed, I thought: "okay", it might not be that bad to get out and be around other people anyway. And now I've become very happy to be here. It really gave me a lot. (participant)*

The guidance counselors and the teachers are in a constructively way working very consciously with handling the participants' resistance – no matter how long it might last:

*As long as they don't obstruct the things going on, they can be here. You just have a feeling of 'if I push him further, I'll get more resistance than we can deal with. Then rather follow the resistance than working against it. Instead of making the confrontation, you can be curious on why it's there – what is it all about? (guidance counselor and teacher)*

...and there is no doubt that it's important for the actual presence of the participants:



*When you get the chance to be who you are, then you suddenly want to do something. When you don't get that chance, if you all the time have to fight for being who you are, then that is where the energy is going. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

A part of the resistance, which the guidance counselors and teachers meet, is rooted in the fact that the participation not is seen as a matter of choice by the participant:

*I very much felt that my boundaries were crossed and that I lost control over something, that I somehow felt I had the right to decide. But when you are in the social system, you just don't have the right to decide over your own life. You can say something to the extent they think its okay. I could see there was no way around it, either the course or I would not get any money. (participant)*

At the developing- and research seminar it was emphasized that regarding

acceptance of resistance it is a strength of the non-formal adult education that the sector is allowed to act in a way that is fundamentally different from the rest of the educational system - due to the fact that the sector does not have any formal standard for examination. Because of that the teachers to a great extent have the possibility to work with the resistance and focus upon breaking down barriers and creating motivation for participation and development.

## 4. Recognition with focus on interests and resources

The guidance counselors and the teachers focus upon inclusion, social acceptance, tolerance and broadness both as a precondition for and as a consequence of their work. A guidance counselor expresses the broadness in the following way:

*Right now I can't remember that we've experienced something tending to be seriously problematic in relation to being together in the room. To a great extent there is an acceptance of the differences. Of course there are some participants about whom you can say, they were not the first in line to learn how to do it – because of many reasons. But somehow it's working. (guidance counselor and teacher).*

The guidance counselors and the teachers are specifically looking for the resources of the participants. They constantly focus on seeing resources – at an individual as well as at a collective level. The following quote illustrates that:

*If we for instance, around the table, today are looking, there are many individual resources and when they are activated around the table and in the room, I actually think we are doing pretty well. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

...and a manager says:

*If you focus too much on what is wrong with them, make it too much the main story, you do something to their identity as well. You reinforce an identity, that's tied to a sense of being sick. And we don't wanna do that. (manager)*

The perspective of appreciation is the basis of the dialogue with the participants – to look for and articulate the resources and the successes. It's the point of departure for the guidance counselors and the teachers – to activate as much self-esteem and self-confidence as possible in the participants.

*They can enter a room almost without any self-confidence and then the job is to make them grow. Talking about self-esteem and self-confidence, and finding and enhancing the things that went well and the things they are good at. Sometimes it's close to – and that's the individuality again – personal development and some of the tools used for that. (guidance counselor and teacher)*



The holistic view on the individual is in the centre:

*The way we meet them, the way we aim to meet them, is basically to see the whole person. Not to put the things they are fighting with in the centre, but make it part of the clarification and a thing we have to relate to, but in an appreciative way. We use recognition as a way to talk about it. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

A manager enhances the importance of focusing on the participant's strength and successes in order to create development:

*If we are to create change, it's our job to stage the conditions for this change – and that's what we can do; creating a space of feeling capable and ability of seeing potentials. Then it's possible, step by step, to find out what kind of limitations the participants have. We can use that for finding out in which direction he/she should be going - turning left or right? If you are to help people to become the best version of themselves, you basically have to be aware of finding some levers. We have to find some areas where we have ability and where we succeed, and we need those areas as sources for doing more of it. (manager)*  
(leder)

And it is emphasized as vital for the participants' progress, that they take ownership. The role of the guidance counselors and the teachers is therefore to a great extend to act as coaches:

*I'm not a service mom; I'm a resource mom or a resource person, who can be supportive. So I try to give them so much responsibility that it can continue to grow inside them. They need the feeling of having an essential part in the development*

*of themselves. I've made the plan for my future myself. And that's important. If it's not an integrated part of themselves, we risk that they might think: It was just something I came up with, and now I really don't want to continue. I'll just quit. (guidance counselor)*

In other words the aim is the proactive status of the participant:

*....to experience the feeling of coherence, to feel that life is manageable and predictable and that you have the ownership. It's part of the process concerning the fact that many of the participant is a case, a diagnosis or a product of a system thinking in mistakes and lacks. Often it has the consequence that they focus upon this themselves and are very reactive in their understanding of themselves. Then we have to start a change into coming proactive – or at least less reactive and turning towards the pole of being proactive. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

In this change it is also important to set the right demands, and let the participant experience the guidance counselors' intentions and hopes to process and output:

*To be seen, heard and understood is in my world to be recognized. Besides from that, it's a long discussion and you have to balance just right between demands and challenges. To make it possible for them to work with it. And it's our job, in all our understanding, to remind ourselves about, that the understanding does not become an empediment for further development. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

A guidance counselor emphasizes the formative/educational aspect of making demands:

*I believe that everything we say and do are signals. So when I say: now we have an agreement which you sign – and that matters. It includes some signals and an element of upbringing. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

**Teachers, guidance counselors and managers at the research and developing seminar saw these strong points in the non-formal adult education:**



## **B. The social environment gives energy for action**

### **5. Connection to a new community**

By participating in the learning program many of the participants bond, and through the bonding they are connected to a new community:

*I usually describe it as having a short period of time where you have just entered the room. Where you try to find out what kind of place this is, and who am I compared to the others, what can I do together with the others and how do I fit in? They experience an atmosphere of being recognized whoever they are, no matter what. Everyone doesn't know everyone's story, but everyone knows that being here means that you are struggling with something. It creates space for developing and you can relax. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

For the guidance counselors as well as for the teachers it's important that the participant establish networks and friendships:

*Some of them become very, very good friends. To meet each other here, to have a friendship and to continue being friends after the program, to have a network and to enlarge the number of acquaintances - that's just very, very good. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

*We bonded. I talked to all the different people. It gave me a lot. (participant)*

The participants' new network is supportive in a social as well as in an educational way:

*They use each other in many different ways. For the development of skills and for the social aspect. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

*I know other people now and we support each other. We pull each other up. Sometimes it's me and sometimes it's one of the others who needs it. (participant)*

A teacher points out the importance of the participants' network as part of building up an improved self-esteem:

*.. "Wow, there are other people just like me. It's not only me that's strange, weird or different. This is what participants often realize". It creates a sense of normality, security and trust, and that's what it's all about.. (teacher and guidance counselor)*





In building up the social community the focus is also on establishing conditions for fruitful guidance in groups, and to make the participants grow by using each other's resources:

*It's very, very giving to be with people, with whom you feel comfortable and who knows you from this context. They might help and support you, and give you ideas on what to do. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

For succeeding with this approach it seems vital to build up binding social communities.

*It's about creating a social community and to make them feel responsible. To make them feel important to the community and to make the community important to you. (manager)*

**At the research and development seminar the teachers, guidance counselors and managers exemplified the qualities in the non-formal adult education with these words:**



## 6. Emancipating learning through action in a social context

The teachers and the guidance counselors have an intentional strategy for creating a positive social environment, which hence can be a social learning environment for the participants – a guidance counselor expresses it this way:

*The first day there might be someone who's a bit: "Hmm, now I have to be here". But slowly they'll find out that it might not be the way they expected. It can actually be okay, maybe even tending to be more than okay, and maybe they even could learn something. Things might go in the direction they want. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

And exactly by actively using the qualities of the emancipating social room for action more initiatives are designed with the body as the point of departure.

*We do a lot to maintain our room for action – it's in the sports. Sports is the platform for what we're doing together. That's what is taking the time and we use sports as safety valve for the other things, all the things filling up in our heads. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

Because it becomes obvious that you can regain the power of your own life through action it can be the start of an individual developing process emphasizing resources and creating motivation.

*When you're dealing with people living on the edge, something happens to them when they through sports and exercise experience that they first of all... Well, it becomes easier for them to do something. They can walk up the stairs faster, they don't get that exhausted when they are carrying their children, they can do something physically, but first of all they experience themselves as someone who can make a difference. (manager)*



**At the research and development seminar the teachers, guidance counselors and managers exemplified the qualities in the non-formal adult education with these words:**



## **C. Flexible, targeted organization of the educational program**

The planning of the activities are aiming at being targeted as well as flexible and that is one of the main qualities in focusing on creating motivating learning environments in the non-formal adult education. The teachers and the guidance counselors are ready to deal with the possibilities and the situations right when they arise. The activities are provided with a targeted approach and flexibility depending on the situation. It's also characteristic that the teachers and the guidance counselors seek to do their job with a very high quality – also intending in that way to motivate participants.

## **7. To teach when the participant is motivated for input**

It is a key issue for the work in the non-formal sector that one tries to establish the basis/foundation for the teaching and counseling and then – when the conditions are in place – to act. It is a general understanding that it only can be provided in a flexible way on the basis of a thorough understanding of the individual and of the social dynamics:

*At the moment it's done very individually, because I think that's what is needed the most. It differs from group to group..I don't believe, that if I said: Now I'll teach you for an hour in a subject. But it is a schism in relation to doing it individually, because they have too much energy, and they'll end up having some time waiting on their own. But I have the feeling that they also need the sense of being heard, that something happens, that we examine stuff, and that things are moving ahead. And it's my estimation, that it will slip a bit, if I did it in a more collective way. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

Hence the teaching and the counseling is done with a great level of differentiation:

*It's our goal that the participants find the way to the best version of him or herself. That means that we have to work very differentiated and to focus on the individual needs. The crossbar must be set in relation to the individual zone of proximal development – to use that kind of language. It's such a good image, for that's exactly where the crossbar should be. It has to be set just a tiny bit higher than where you are now. (manager)*

*She is very good at pushing me a little – without me noticing it. And in that way I get the chance to try a lot of things I otherwise wouldn't dare to do. It's really*

good. (participant)

*Looking back on the program, some of the really good things they did were slipping in challenges to us all the time. (participant)*

In this relation it is central for the observed programs that they constantly are trying to create a fruitful interaction between guidance counseling and teaching:

*I do very much believe that a lot of it is learning processes as well as counseling. That the two things are interrelated. Because they are shown how they can do and they are guided in doing it. The two things are just simply so connected. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

*Talking about teaching the way we're doing it here – it means you get to know each other's stories, and at the same time you get aware of the danger signals in your own story. You develop a common understanding of what's bad and that we have to help each other not to let the danger take too much space. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

**Teachers, guidance counselors and managers at the research and developing seminar exemplified the qualities in the non-formal adult education with these words:**



## 8. Teaching with a high level of skills

Parts of the activities in the non-formal sector are characterized by having learning objectives not only closely connected to the curriculum, but also to the “derived” competences related to the participation itself. However the observations and the interviews do not indicate any compromising in regard to a high level of professional skills in the education as well.

*Our staff is very skilled. They work in a very advanced way and are in practice using advanced methods and are well educated. (manager)*

You could ask the question if the participants really have to learn gymnastics, when that is on the agenda or if the objective in fact is to make the participant socially competent. The idea is here, that one cannot understand the elements independently of each other, but it is pivotal for succeeding with the derived competences that the teaching has a professionally high quality and that teachers want to create a good learning environment:

*Well, sport isn't something we just do for fun, something between talking. Please don't understand it that way. We'll keep the flag flying high. The sport we do has a high level and it has to have that, otherwise the whole concept will fall to the ground. (manager)*

In relation to this the teachers, the guidance counselors and the managers pointed out the community among all the groups of employees at the schools as important for the high level. A often very strong community among the guidance counselors, teachers and managers is based on exactly the professional contents.

## 9. Guidance focusing on self insight and new options

The guidance is also organized in a flexible way:

*Another part of our job is the individual guidance. The close contact we have to the little group. We don't have any scheduled time; you just have to be there when it happens. Sometimes it can be 5 minutes and other times you just change the plan. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

The guidance counselors in the non-formal adult education have to be ready to take part in very different processes depending on the participants.

*When we were talking about individual guidance, I was thinking that my practice differs very much depending on the individual participant. Talking to one participant I focus on the difficulties of job interviews, and how it can be done in an easier way. Talking to others it's more about finding a work placement and afterwards establishing a job with wage subsidy. So it's many different things.. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

In the non-formal sector it is important to explain the larger context through everyday life. With point of departure in the personal experiences the programs helps the participants to see own and others' situation in a larger perspective:

*It's also about giving them input at a more general level. The personal stories are becoming general knowledge about personal development and social competences. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

The self-understanding and the self-insight are central to the guidance:

*We have to talk about it, what was it.. what happened in your head, what went wrong? We have to go into the deeper layers. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

*I think that one of the most important perspectives of the guidance in this place is not so much the vocational guidance, it's the life guidance. To clean up in the things in life that stresses, to find some sort of inner peace and to find a path. The whole thing with vocational guidance and education and job, it's all pretty much way ahead in the future. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

The content and the pedagogical process support the development of self-management:





*Then we find the number to the educational counselor and then the deal is, that YOU call tomorrow morning and arrange a meeting. They do it and come back telling; I have a meeting with the educational counselor Monday at 10 o'clock. Fine, then they can go to see the educational counselor, often alone, but sometimes I go along to be supportive. Sometimes it's necessary ... (teacher and guidance counselor)*

Guidance counselors and teachers emphasize, that this is one of the things the participants need support to do:

*At the same time they learn what to do in situations when you need to find out of something and you don't really know where to start... They might be very good with computers and stuff, but searching for exact knowledge isn't always easy. (guidance counselor and teacher)*

In this process the aspect of acting is pivotal:

*I'm being very supportive in relation to what it is we're going to do, in which direction would you like to go. I know web pages, where they can go and start reading about what they want. It's about getting information and when you have that: What's next? I would like to do this and this, and then it might be a new direction we're going: try to go this way to get information. Little by little they can get more and more information about it. We make some agreements during the process, now it's this way we're heading, and the next time we meet, or right away, he or she will have to prepare this and this. They do it and come back to me, and we make a new agreement. In this way we slowly but surely get to talk about the contents. (guidance and counselor)*

The guidance counselors and the teacher are intentionally working with giving the participants a firm ground to rest on – and a feeling of having a safe base to rely on:

*I use to describe it as going from reactive to proactive, then you're moving into a gray zone, which you really don't know. I'll just try, but I don't try until I drown. If it's not as dangerous as I imagined it to be, then I'll try a little more. All of a sudden it might be too dangerous, and then I go back again. We see that process over and over again... It's very important that we are here to say: "let's talk about what's going on". Remember that we are here for you and that you can come back. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

**Teachers, guidance counselors and managers at the research and developing seminar exemplified the qualities in the non-formal adult education with these words:**



## ***D. Teaching and guidance are interrelated***

A characteristic of the motivating learning environment is the special relations created between the participants and the teachers/guidance counselors – and the qualities required of the teachers and the guidance counselors. Among other elements it is based on the dynamic coherence between guidance and teaching, which is characterizing the non-formal adult education.

### **10. Relation of cooperation between participant and the personal teacher**

It is a characteristic to spend a lot of time and resources on building up the personal relations between guidance counselors/teacher and the participant. It often happens over a long period of time:

*Then I have to tell them, that I'm in a position where I'm allowed to ask all the questions I want to. And they know that I call a spade a spade. We'll talk about it and often when we are sitting, just the two of us in a room, then it's easier to talk about the stuff that bothers them, the stuff that might be the trouble or something (guidance counselor and teacher)*

The teachers and the counselors are very much aware of the fact that the participants might have negative experiences with the educational and counseling system in which they fell through. Being attentive and showing that you care is a strategy for responding to the negative expectations – a guidance counselor/teacher expresses it this way:

*It cannot be avoided, and I don't think you have to avoid it, being a caring and active person. Otherwise I'll just be like all the others they've met. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

... and a typically comment from a participant:

*She has been there for me all the time. And she has opened up new possibilities for me. Now I can see a good future in front of me. (participant)*

For the teachers and the guidance counselors this means special demands on their own behavior – to a great extent they work as role models.

*It's also because, when we are arguing for: try it out, it'll work just fine, then we also have to do it ourselves. To try it out. (teacher and guidance counselor)*



There is a common awareness among the teachers and the guidance counselors that it's important to be able to distinguish between profession, personality and privacy:

*It's necessary being able to distinguish between what's private, what's personal and what's professional. To have the feeling of being personal and professional, but not private – to avoid abusing or going into therapy. To do this you have to lead the way. To be exemplary in relation to the messages you are using in the program. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

A teacher enhances the meaning of drawing lines:

*I think that I use myself a lot as a person in the guidance of groups, but I'm very much aware of how I'm doing it.. You have to be aware of when to draw the line and how you will use yourself. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

It is also important to draw the line between being personal and private in relation to maintain the authority and credibility:

*... if they think as you as someone... "She probably just says that because of this and this" instead of focus being on the professional matter. To talk to each other in a professional tone – that's not related to personality. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

**Teachers, guidance counselors and managers at the research and developing seminar exemplified the qualities in the non-formal adult education with these words:**

Inclusiveness  
and trustworthiness

The role  
of the teachers  
is "in eye level"

The academic  
and the personal  
go together

Time for  
establishing  
relations

The point is  
to make it  
personal, not  
private

Community

Presence,  
one - to - one

Joie de vivre

## 11. Teachers driven by the wish of making a difference to others

*The teachers in the non-formal adult education are people who wanna do this. (quote from a conference participant)*

When observing the teachers and the guidance counselors it's significant that many of the teachers have been working in the field for many years. At the same time it is also significant that new comers relatively fast find out whether or not it is a place for them to be. It's the so called "fiery souls" who stay – and it might sound as a cliché, but they are "fiery souls" in the sense that they find it pivotal to have a society, in which every individual is welcome – and is important. The teachers and the guidance counselors are driven by a wish to make a difference to others. It is also characteristic that they are paying attention to the importance of the individual – for a long period of time they can talk lively about a single participant's life and progress.

*All in all I've been in non-formal adult education for 12 years and during those years I think I've had so many experiences with people, who thinks life sucks, and who has so little self-confidence and confidence in the world. I'm very honored to be part of it. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

Teachers and guidance counselors are constantly looking for openings in relation to make the participants responsible for their own lives:

*Is there anything we can do to make the responsibility for own life more easy to handle? (teacher and guidance counselor)*

Intentionally they are focusing on how the individual can be supportive for his or her own personal development:

*I've spend a lot of time trying to figure out my role as an expert, as teacher and as guidance counselor. I'm an expert in starting up processes, but I'm not an expert in their life. I have to be there to help and support, to give the participants a feeling of coherence in which they can act. All the time to I have to think process, process, process. In which way can I support this best? (teacher and guidance counselor.)*

The fact that the teachers and the guidance counselors are demanding something from the participants is seen as very important by all:



*"Ohh, you are always watching over me, Kirsten [a Danish name]". Yes, that's right, she is supposed to. She is watching over you in a good way, 'cause it does matter whether or not you are here. (manager)*

One of the participants describes her experiences with the teacher in these words:

*She wants us all the best. Sometimes one of us goes off deep end. Then she gets angry and hard. We have disappointed her or made her sad. That shows that she wants us all the best. (participant)*

The participants experience that the demands concerning skills are based on the teachers' personal commitment. The observations and the interviews show that the personal commitment is a characteristic for the employees in the non-formal adult education:

*We want to give the participants the believe that something good will happen if they're looking for it. We have different ways to do it, but we all believe in getting something out of challenging the world - even if you've been beaten up. Approaching it by looking at it, relating to it before saying no. I believe we all have this approach in common. Most of them are getting back on track by using it. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

*Our parties and our cafés mean something as well. I love the goodbye party. There's always someone telling me that I've meant a lot to them. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

**Teachers, guidance counselors and managers at the research and developing seminar exemplified the qualities in the non-formal adult education with these words:**

Supporting  
a challenged  
self-esteem and  
self-confidence

Focus on the  
human side

Teachers in the  
non-formal  
sector are so-  
something special

Support  
to move on

Being  
passionate

Daring  
to believe in  
success

Transverse  
cooperation.  
Committed  
teachers

"Appetizer"

Inclusiveness -  
room for being  
different



## 12. Teachers with pedagogical reflexivity in relation to transform others

In their focus on creating motivational learning environments, the teachers in the non-formal adult education consciously use their skills as means to develop the participants' personal competences. By creating "the room of high skills" – in a sports hall or in a workshop e.g. – they pave the way for new possibilities of articulating, experimenting and developing the participants' options and competences. By using sports a teacher expresses it this way:

*Among other things we do it with help from sports, because it's a room for action, and at the same time it's a room for "pretending", where you think "we are just playing". Actually we use this room for playing to build up social, communicative and self-esteem competencies – and anything else belonging to the box of prior learning. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

The sports teacher describes the double perspective of the activity – both to let the activity develop the participants personally – and to make them actively involved in the activity itself.

*"It is the same mirror as when you're standing on the playing field. By facilitating the activities you can focus on the fact that for instance Søren [a Danish name] becomes better at taking initiatives, to be in an active social position. How can we organize the activities so that becomes the central part? That's one side of sports. The other one is, and that concerns me a lot, the question of, what it is by sports, that turns us on? (teacher and guidance counselor)*

In the same way a manager explains the meaning of using a professional activity as a frame:

*You could call it a common third. We can put it between us, and we can put it on the table. We can draw and write. Instead of sitting and being navel gazing. So you can say that our methods...the methods we use, are all some we use to be able to draw something away from the individual and look at it from a distance. (manager)*

The possibilities in this approach are pointed out as pivotal in the development process of the participants self-knowledge.

*What we experience is that you can externalize it and make it something you can look upon from the outside, outside yourself. That makes a difference. A huge*

*difference. It makes it manageable. To draw attention to the possibilities of being in both identities and to the fact that you actually can choose which one of them you'll be, that's somewhat of an eye opener for the most. (teacher and guidance counselor)*



**Teachers, guidance counselors and managers at the research and developing seminar exemplified the qualities in the non-formal adult education with these words:**

Drive -  
things have to  
succeed

Breaking  
barriers.

The non-formal  
sector attracts  
people interested  
in pedagogics

Use humanistic  
knowledge. Use  
the situation  
as the point of  
departure

Broaden hori-  
zons and buil-  
ding bridges

Humor  
Innovation  
Development

To repair the  
damages made  
by the formal  
educational  
system

Joy.  
Awareness of  
what you are  
doing

Exchange of  
Ideas and  
knowledge



## ***E. Education***

### **13. Visibility and accessibility of the opportunities offered by society and in connection to the labour market**

For many participants it is impossible to find out where to go for assistance and guidance. It is vital for teachers and guidance counselors in the non-formal adult education system, to take the lead as guide and “translator” in relation to the surrounding society. The way the teachers and the guidance counselors are working in the non-formal adult education has as a natural consequence – and side effect – that the participants view it as a comfortable base for exploring the surrounding society:

*When they walk out the door they have an image in their minds that here you can come for help. That's just it. Like the guy calling me yesterday saying: "Bodil [A Danish name], what shall I do, I really want this truck course?" "Yeah, but what are you doing now?" "I'm on social security; I don't have the post job anymore." "Well, then you shall call Karsten [A Danish name] at the job center" "Oh, okay". And that's a long time ago he was with us. It tells you something about the impact. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

That the relation between teachers and guidance counselors often is very close is underlined by the fact that the participants often call back – even when they are not in need for help:

*"Often someone calls or emails us just to tell us how things went". (teacher and guidance counselor)*

In the work of creating regained motivation for accepting new challenges the approach among teachers and guidance counselors is that "the door is always open" – simply because often it is a necessity for creating the settings to make the participants dare moving ahead:

*There are many pathways they may go. Normally we use a metaphor saying that you walk out of life's highway, and then there are some roundabouts. You walk in circles for a while then you must figure out... You take one way and realize it might be wrong or blind. Then back on track and try out in a safe environment with people they trust. There are some ups-and-downs in it, they move a bit out in the open, then there is a stress factor "what happens here?" and they go back on safe ground. And so on. So the time perspective we must hold in mind before we can assume it's possible to provide vocational guidance. (teacher and guidance counselor)*

A manager describes it like this:

*Sometimes this is a midstream. A place to walk around and to find out which way to go. And when people haven't found their way yet, they shall be allowed to try out things. (manager)*

Often the participants themselves have a clear picture of being in a process with a transformative aim:

*That's the meaning of it – to smell the real world and to become part of it. To get out of the "system". It will just take a while. (participant).*

To help the participants into formal education or into the labour market often means that the teachers and the guidance counselors lead the young participant by the hand through the different relevant officers in the system. A guidance counselor describes a typical program like this:

*For example this summer I had one [participant] coming to me saying that an education as a building painter might be something for her. She was in work placement/ trainee position, came back and said it had been pretty much fun, I would like to become one. Fine with me, so we went down to a guidance counselor at the school for vocational education to talk and hear about the education, and she applied for enrollment right away. There was a period of time between her stopping in our program and before attending the education. In the meantime we established a new work placement for 6-7 weeks in the same company. She was receiving the social security until she began the introductory course at the building painter education here on the 27th of October. She is now attending.” (teacher and guidance counselor)*

A teacher and guidance counselor has this comment to the situations in which the participants' wishes are being stopped by economical reasons from the “system”:

*..it's damned that you're being stopped, because of economical issues. If the participant had chosen to attend education at upper secondary school – now I become a bit political – he or she would have had three years in upper secondary school at really high cost. Without getting competences in the end. Here they get labour market competence right away – and that's bad? (teacher and guidance counselor)*

**At the research and development seminar, teachers, guidance counselors and leaders exemplified the qualities in the non formal education by using these words:**

Support  
integration

The societal  
perspective.  
Community

Precondition  
for democracy

Community  
Inclusion  
Democracy  
Pay back to  
society

You have  
influence  
and is a part  
of society

Motivate  
for political  
awareness

A place for  
citizens to have  
a voice  
- what is  
democracy?

Experience  
of value  
among the  
participants

Enlightened

Form an  
interest in  
political  
matters among  
the students



# Short description of the five educational programs

## Common goals in the programs

The purpose is to make educational programs, which will change the lives of the participants from a situation of receiving subsidies to participation in formal education or in the labor market. In different ways the aim is to find the opportunities, the joy and the motivation hidden in the life story of the individual; to work with operational goals; to set up and to implement plans of action for the individual.

## Galaksen, Kompetencehuset i Århus/ "The Galaxy", House of Competences in Aarhus

### Objectives

Galaksen does not consist of classes in a traditional form with fixed points for intake and ending, common planning and goals. Every participant makes an individual plan for participating, which is being followed closely via talking to guidance counselors and individual coaching. The program comprises the elements of clarifying, defining goals, acting and reflection on action.

### Target group

The program is especially for low skilled in the 2nd to 4th year of social benefit, but in principal it is for all with special needs in relation to educational and vocational clarification. There are no requirements regarding previous qualifications, and the program is suitable for all kinds of job areas and fields of education. The participants are characterized by having bad experiences from compulsory school, dropped out of the upper secondary education or are in general insecure in relation to educations. Often the participants have experienced failure in the labor market, a long period of unemployment, lack of motivation or are having social or personal barriers, which are preventing them from having an ordinary everyday life or working life – former addiction, overweight, being physically unstable and having a low self-esteem e.g..

### Goal

The goal is to make the individual participant more and more responsible for own situation and learning how to handle his/her own situation by using clarification, describing goals and acting on them – primarily with the intention of starting formal education.



## **Idrætslinjen og 3M, IDA - Idrætsdaghøjskolen i Århus/ Sports and 3M, IDA, The Sport Day Folk High School in Aarhus**

### **Objectives**

The programs are individually planned – with continually intake and ending of programs and it is a strategy to let the 'experienced' participants mentor the newcomers and help them become part of the community. Every day is an interaction between sports, exercise, teaching and guidance, all focusing on motivation and choices of life style. Individual and group guidance is provided in order to make the participants take action for their own lives. Emancipative learning focusing on physical activities is the centre of the community and another cornerstone is appreciative social networks.

### **Target group**

The target group is characterized by having bad experiences from compulsory school, maybe dropped out of the upper secondary education and are in general not clarified in relation to education. Often social or personal problems are preventing them from having an ordinary every day life or a working life – physical instability and low self-esteem e.g..

### **Goal**

The goal is to support the participants in changing life styles, to get more healthy habits and to make a plan for further progress in relation to the educational system and the labor market.

## **Daghøjskolen Fokus i Aalborg, Kaffé Fair/ Day Folk High School in Aalborg, Kaffé Fair**

### **Objectives**

The café is a work community. The participants learn how to work together and to take responsibility. The practical work in the café gives the participants an introduction to and training in managing a café, a kitchen and to take part in life at a workplace.

Participation in the project starts with a visitation interview with the manager of the café and a clarification of the participants' prior learning. During the rest of the program the participants get areas of responsibilities and they have to work in cooperation with the others.

Participation is developing skills and personal competences and builds up a social network and gives the participants knowledge about life at a workplace. During the whole program the participants are receiving comprehensive guidance and personal coaching.

### **Target group**

The primary target group for the project is young people between the age of 18 -30, who have incipient problems with addiction and who are fighting with social as well as personal problems.

### **Goal**

The goal for Kaffé Fair is to structure the everyday life of the participant, to make a realistic plan for the future, to find the participants strengths, and to get experiences that can be used in the search for a job or an education. For a long period of time the target group typically has felt different and excluded from other communities among young people. At Kaffé Fair they learn how to change life style and to make manageable goals for their future life.

## **AOF JOB Sjælland Nord i Asnæs, Jobviften/ WEA JOB the north of Sjælland in Asnæs, "A range of jobs"**

### **Objectives**

The program has a duration of 8 weeks with attendance for 25 hours, 5 days a week and is organized as a job seeking program, with individual as well as group guidance. All the participants are introduced to a 'short work placement' of 1-2 weeks to get an idea of how it is to work and the goal is to give the participants a possibility for experiencing a specific field of industry. The classes bring into focus choice of education and identity, introduction to various industries and to the labour market, communication, life style and societal problems.

### **Target group**

The target group is young people receiving social benefits between the ages of 18-30, who does not have a vocational education.

### **Goal**

By the end of the program the participant must have an educational plan and either begin a formal education or in a job, alternatively having a plan for a work placement in a company or a plan for relevant vocational training.

# **AOF Gladsaxe Daghøjskole, EGU/ WEA Gladsaxe Day Folk High School, Basic vocational education and training**

## **Objectives**

Basic vocational education and training lasts from 1 ½ - 2 ½ years depending on the prior individual qualifications and does primarily comprise practical training with an enterprise inclusive 4-5 school-based elements lasting 5 weeks each.

For every student a personal educational plan is being made. During the practical training of the program the participants get to know different positions of work and the life at a workplace and in the school-based part focus is on developing vocational skills as well as personal competences. The social networks among the participants are important, including learning about one self, that one is working surprisingly well in a group of equals.

## **Target group**

The target group is young people - primarily between 17 and 23 years – who does not immediately meet the requirements for accomplishing another upper secondary education. The target group is characterized by having bad experiences from compulsory school, and in general they are not clarified in relation to education and work. Often social or personal problems are preventing them from having an ordinary every day life or a working life – physical instability and low self-esteem e.g..

## **Goal**

The goal of the basic vocational education and training is to develop the participants' personal, social and vocational qualifications, which immediately will give admission to continue in a formal vocational education at upper secondary level as well as giving the basis for employment in the labor market. The basic vocational education is supposed to contribute developing the participants' interest in and ability for active participation in a democratic society.

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Which qualities are unique for the pedagogy in the non-formal adult education in relation to creating motivation for learning – especially for those who as a starting point are less motivated.

This report focuses on these questions. The report is based on research based analysis made by academic assistant Steen Elsborg and associate professor Steen Høyrup from Danish School of Education, University of Aarhus (DPU).



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