THE LANGUAGE OF THE BODY IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

- contact, presence, embodied leadership and personal communication

Daring to make an impact
Qualitative Conference
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25. marts 2014
Dias 1
The language of the body

An overseen factor in professional practice & Education

How can it be trained?
The body is always speaking

Human beings “speak” first through and with the body.

The flow of words may stop, but the body is always in movement – always communicating.

Still, the body, and certainly movement, is an often overlooked potential in many forms of education. (Winther, 2012; Sabetti & Freligh, 2001; Merleau-Ponty, 2006; Thornquist, 2005).
Tacit Consciousness

The language of the body in professional practice and leadership is thus often lived through

......a tacit consciousness (Meekums, 2007).
THE BODY - a paradox?

Earlier **disregard** of the body may have been due to the formerly dominant dualistic view of the body and of humanity, which has characterised Western society.

Thus we may gather inspiration from phenomenology, philosophy of the senses, body psychology and movement psychology in the attempt to shed light on the **meaning** of the body in dialogue processes and professional practice.
The language of the body in professional practice

Trust
Contact
Presence
Empathy
Leadership
Authenticity
&
Crisis management

in professional practice

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The embodiment of leadership

Covering leadership in the arts and humanities, this volume explores the notion that leadership is situated in a body that

moves,
acts,
has emotions and desires,
ages,
experiences,
hurts,
and senses.
Projects: EMBODIMENT IN EDUCATION

1. **PE education.** University of Copenhagen. Dance teaching and high school teacher training. University of Copenhagen.

2. **Teacher education.** University College.

3. **The hospital field** Nurse education. "The dancing nurses", The professionals: doctors, nurses physiotherapists,

4. **Leaders.** Financial Sector, Copenhagen – Business School and contact to the international leadership organisation.

5. **Post graduate education** - different types of experienced professionals

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
Resonans

To meet through the third dimension
THE LANGUAGE OF THE BODY?
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; Winther, 2009).
Trust beyond words
The bodily is also of great importance in professions which involve confidentiality, trust building, and senses-based attention to patients or clients.

In these professions, all bodies, the professionals’ included, become more visible, and the body language dynamics, which always exist, are experienced more distinctly (Andersen Kjær, 2011; Meekums, 2007; Payne, 2008; Winther, 2012).
The *personal* in the professional

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).

In spite of the fact that increasingly more focus has been given to personal, emotional and relational work in the professional room, the importance of soma for this dynamic, paradoxically enough, has been given relatively little attention – also in leadership studies (Ledkin & Taylor, 2010; Meekums, 2007).
The magnified bodily communication

Professionals who work with others as such, taking into account their profession, position, responsibility and authority, receive a form of magnified attention to their bodily and emotional communication

(Winther, 2012; Andersen Kjær, 2011).
Embodied professionality

Professional communication finds itself, in a constantly present triad which is at once bodily, personal and professional (Winther, 2009).

One does not exist without the other, but may display itself with varying strength.
Embodied professional 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
Bodyawareness

The better the professional knows him- or herself
And their own bodily signals
In various situations
The easier it will be to keep or find selfcontact.
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 (Winther, 2012; 2013)
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.

*Using the senses can also be trained*
The body is always communicative and 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 *harmony* (Løgstrup, 1983) and *resonance* (Sabetti and Freligh, 2001).
RESONANCE & DISSONANS

the sensual & energetic dimension

Eyecontact

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

The eyes can lit up with love, but they can also express distance, power or lack of empathy.
To clients or patients the energy in the professional’s gaze can be what decides whether the feel,

seen, stripped, watched or overlooked.

Therefore professionals must also train their ability to

See (‘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.

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

(Argyle, 2006; Moberg, 2006; Winther, 2009)
Bodycontact
MOVEMENT READING

& MICRO-MOVEMENTS

& MICRO-MOVEMENTS
TERRITORIALZONES
~.subcodes in embodied communication

Dynamic, feelable, energetic, universal and yes cultural influenced zones

* intimate zone,
* personal zone
* social zone

(Gebauer & Wulf 2001; Hall 1973; Winther, 2012).
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)
3.
Entering and creating a Space

To create and hold the professional space is important for credibility, authority and creating relationships.

In teaching or leadership contexts, it may be important to be able dare to be “on.”

To be personal, powerful, bodily and professionally present.

It is important to be able to bear such magnified bodily communication, for it is through the body that authority in the room is negotiated (Thornquist, 2005).

To be personal, powerful, bodily and professionally present - authority
3. Holding a space – about humility

Here too, the professional must fill the room with his or her sensed presence

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.

(Winthner, 2012)
POWERPOSITIONS

Status ...høj og lav status i kropssproglig kommunikation
THE LARGE DANCE &
THE TINY DANCE
THE LARGE AND THE TINY DANCE

Movement with inspiration from dance and martial arts

Grounding and centering
- Body awareness
- 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

Training of both flexible and powerful body movements/energy.

Consciousness, narrative embodied stories,
THE DILEMMA

The work in a e.g. a hospital does involve to a large degree body communication presence and contact (Andersen Kjær, 2012).

On the other hand many students struggle with a personal bodily modesty when they start this course of study.
UNFOLDING THE NOW ..from body to language

Rich moments research


Builds on the principle of sharing stories and that of elucidating what is essential in a phenomenon by focusing on important situations and filled moments (Dadds, Hart & Crotty, 2001).

KAIROS MOMENTS

(Stern, 2004)
Kairos & Kronos

Kairos
Intense presence
Awareness
Felt experience
Short
Wholistic experience
Connected to experience of self.

Some kairos moments can change your life (Stern, 2004)
Meaningful moment descriptions
Co-researchers

1. First person perspective

2. Presence... (e.g. I walk quitly..story of the now).

3. Poetic- to get in touch with the experienced

4. Not about.. but through the body – Sensual lived pre-reflecsive embodied level.

Beyond evaluations, analyses, beliefs, theoretical concepts

Embodied professional leadership competence

1. Self-contact and somatic awareness

2. Communication reading and contact ability.

3. Leadership in groups or situations. (Winther, 2012; 2013)

Embodied professional leadership competence is a constantly moving and also very personal competence which may be developed, made more aware, and matured.
A journey not a guided tour

It can be trained.

From the first day as a student & for the rest of one’s professional life. … with the body as teacher

More research is needed about Embodiment in Education
Relevante publikationer om kroppens fortællinger

References
References


udvalgte Publikationer

