

Living well together

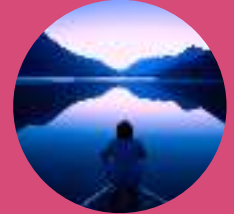
New Meanings in Business, Baikal sea, Russia



What matters for "the Whole"?

With a universal perspective, our questions for transforming business, society and self naturally become more integral and holistic. From this perspective: what ideas emerge as to what really matters and how we may we design our lives together?

We started out with a meditation that integrated our own bodies and souls with other bodies and souls, with humanity and all sentient beings as well as the Earth at large. From this holistic perspective we then asked ourselves what really matters when it comes to business, society and self. In micro- as well as macro-perspective, integration and meaning making is the foundation for emerging visions of holistic welfare. The Earth Meditation was appreciated for its simplicity and potential to easily create this basic integration.



What mirrors what?

So above, so below - what is played out in the inner world will also be expressed in the outer experience. Becoming aware of this phenomenon is called mirror-like wisdom.



A multitude of Universes

When we realize the infiniteness of what we are - there is no limit to the harmony we may co-create. Becoming skilled and motivated in all-accomplishing harmony together is our ultimate concern and the purpose of compassion.



Lighthouse leaders

Just as a lighthouse ceaselessly shines out its light for guidance, we will naturally shine together as communities, when wisdom and compassion are in harmony.

GNH as a holistic tuning fork (camertone)

GNH, Gross National Happiness, was introduced as a useful tool in harmonizing inner and outer dimensions and diverse aspects of wellbeing in society as well as in business and personal lives.

A brief introduction to GNH, Gross National Happiness gave an idea of its holistic potential for welfare in Bhutan and Sweden, but also for other contexts.

We all know that GDP (Gross National Product) as a measurement of progress in a nation is not very fruitful. Since it is limited to aspects of production, consumption and/or income, GDP measures progress in such a way, that war, illness and conflict would raise the scores. When people, products and planet are harmed, the production will go up, thus raising the scores. In this way GDP measures everything in short, except what really makes life worthwhile.

The same is true for our business and personal lives, where progress is far from whole as long as it is measured in ways that are limited to economy. No person or business will be happy with only money and no friends, inner peace, education or fresh air. The things we treasure most will need to be included when we talk about progress. We need to connect our measurements to the dimensions we value in life: ***It is time to measure what we treasure!***

However, being a more profound way of seeing welfare as a whole and for the whole, GNH is more than just a measuring index. It is also the expression of a profound mindset, connecting the inner with the outer as well as wisdom and compassion with emerging potentials for conscious leadership.

We talked a bit about the origin of GNH in Bhutan as a local method based on a global mindset. We also mentioned its development in Sweden, where it was first perceived as a bit exotic, but then how it was integrated in Swedish culture and developed in different ways such as:

- ***Consultant groups***
- ***Business networks***
- ***Leadership education***
- ***Eco-villages & communities***
- ***Society transformation***
- ***Spiritual communities***



In Sweden GNH has also been developed as a tuning fork (camertone) for wise decisions, so that the inclusion of every important dimension is ensured. This may be relevant anywhere, not least in connection to the 17 UN Global Sustainability Goals (SDG). When comparing GNH and the

SDG:s it becomes clear that two aspects are missing: time use and inner wellbeing. In this way GNH may be a useful tuning fork for decisions by reminding us of aspects that we might otherwise forget. Used with wisdom and compassion, adjusted to the local context, GNH has lots of potentials for an emerging community with a holistic vision.

Business, society and self

We divided ourselves into three groups, where we deepened the understanding of what is emerging in business, society and self from a holistic perspective.



1. Business

An example of how our ultimate concern may be expressed in business and worklife.

One participant, Alexander Tryndin, wanted to share experiences from his company Corpus Group. His story involved holistic happiness of colleagues and leaders as well as customers and society. His view of his company was that it is part of society at large. Maintaining and developing welfare in business is therefore also part of developing individuals and society. It is all integrated and interconnected. His suggestion for developing a more holistic worklife and business was to start internally (Step 1), then see what may be the company's contribution in external initiatives (Step 2). When all these basics are in place, it is beneficial for the whole to add engagement in dialogues around opportunities in the region and also around quality of life and welfare.

Step 1: internally - healthy worklife

- a) *Continuous strategic work for new opportunities.*
- b) *Harmonizing many interests in the company as well as between the company and other sectors. This may be done in the form of cross-sector meetings and dialogues.*
- c) *Harmonizing HR and Management Board.*

Step 2: Externally - societal engagement

- a) *cross-sector dialogues about the region*
- a) *cross-sector dialogues about quality of life*

2. Society

An example of how our ultimate concern may be expressed in society and community.

One participant, a former Mayor of Irkutsk, was concerned about the future of his region. He saw many problems. In the group there was a dialogue, where these challenges were re-interpreted as potentials and reminders of what really matters and/or is relevant to focus on. In the group there was a close and fruitful dialogue on how to build a community and what values we need to treasure in doing so. These are examples of what was mentioned:



STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY

1) IDENTITY

We need to stand on our foundation (not simply copy/paste ideas from other regions/nations or contexts). We need to find our own identity, be clear about what is specific with our region and what makes it differ and stand out as special, such as ancient spiritual practices and cultural heritage.

2) "GLOCAL" MINDSET

When building our community we need to be "(G)local", i.e. have a basic Global mindset but with a local implementation. This means understanding that we are all part of the same Global humanity, and yet safely anchored in our local context.

3) HOLISTIC VALUES

We need core values that are based on a holistic mindset, inspired by concepts like GNH, Gross National Happiness and Ubuntu. GNH and Ubuntu such models may be of great inspiration, but for course they need to be adjusted to the context in Irkutsk.

4) CONFIDENCE

We need to see that we are so much more than (the results of) our money system and that everyone can contribute in co-creating new systems that include and transcend economy.

5) GOOD RELATIONS

We need communicative and relational strategies to make people stay, not only for making people come in. We should be able to care about the human element and take care of each other so as to make our community last.

6) PERSONAL COMMITMENT

When we co-create our new community we should not ask so much "What can Irkutsk do for me/us?" but rather "What can I/we do for Irkutsk?".

Another participant, Edgar's Leichteris, had initially asked for minimum three projects that would be possible for inspiration in Irkutsk. At the end of the session we had accomplished this request in the following suggestions:

1) MAKE IN BAIKAL

A project for leveraging local production and confidence (similar to for example "Make in India")

2) WELLBEING

Baikal for emotional and physical happiness (a project for holistic wellbeing)

3) CROSS-SECTOR DIALOGUE

Cross-sector dialogues on quality of life and/or opportunities in the region (See Alexander's suggestion above)



3. Self

An example of how our ultimate concern may be expressed in personal development and transformation.

Some participants chose to focus on personal development and transformation of self. The dialogue was partly about shifting mindsets in order to raise awareness and the ability to handle complexity in fruitful ways. This involves working "vertically" in leadership, not only "horizontally", i.e. developing new ways of thinking altogether rather than merely fixing what is broken on the current level of understanding. In order to raise awareness we need to include and transcend all the former experiences. This means being more whole as a human being, and also as a societal agent and/or a leader.

The group talked a little about harmony between worklife and private life and the need for a personal space from time to time, to ensure balance in life and harmony within and between diverse roles. Barriers were mentioned, barriers and blocks that limit our communication and connection with ourselves and each other. Some participants also mentioned fear, for example fear of war and how this fear may be a wake up call but also a potential reminder of the need to create and maintain peace.

1) MINDSETS

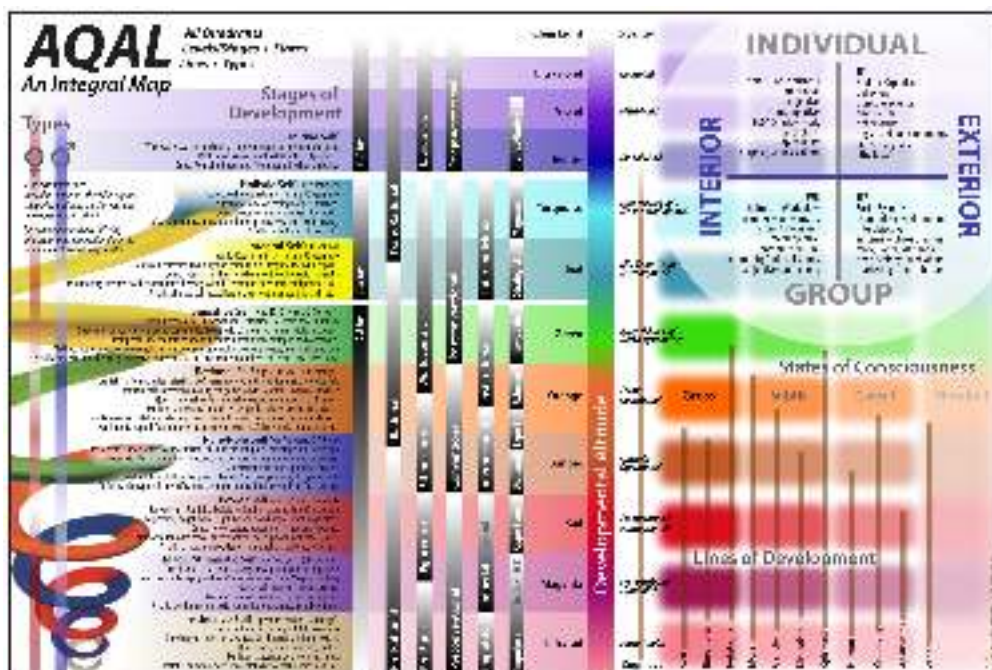
Personal development aiming for raising awareness vertically, not only horizontally is a key ingredient in any paradigm shifting initiative.

2) LIFE BALANCE

Balance between diverse aspects of life is crucial to wellbeing and our potentiality to contribute.

3) TRANSFORMING FEAR AND BARRIERS

We need skillful means to transform fear and barriers into compassion and wisdom.



1)MINDSETS

The wider our mindset is, the more complexity it may handle naturally. Every cultural change or paradigm shift involves a shift of mindsets, where every level integrates internal and external individual and collective aspects.



2) LIFE BALANCE

GNH is a powerful tuning fork also for life balance and individual wellbeing.

3) TRANSFORMING FEAR AND BARRIERS

The bell and the dorje (ritual tools in tibetan buddhism) symbolize wisdom and compassion. These two aspects are crucial for transforming fear and barriers. With wisdom we may discern, balance and analyze, with compassion we may act and accomplish our purpose with skilful methods. This is the way to transform our lives and shift our reality from inside out.



FINISHING WITH COOKIES

Swedish "Pepparkakor" are traditionally made according to a complex recipe. These yummy cookies are said to make you both compassionate and wise.



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