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The Change of Power Paradigm in Art Education

Art Education and Non Violent Communication

DLA thesis

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SUMMARY:

INTRODUCTION

1. Psychological and pedagogical questions relevant to art education

- 1.1. Intelligence and Artistic Expression
 - 1.1.1. Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Artistic Expression
 - 1.1.2. Emotional Intelligences And Artistic Expression
- 1.2. Connection Between Feelings and Learning
- 1.3. Teacher's Credibility
- 1.4. Teacher-Student Relationship
- 1.5. The Importance of Mental Model
 - 1.5.1. Teachers Mental Model
 - 1.5.2. Students' Mental Model and Difficulties in Learning Drawing
- 1.6. Importance of Group in Learning Art

2. Questions of Freedom and Hierarchy in Education

- 2.1. Importance of Freedom for the Development of Full Human Potential
- 2.2. Hierarchy in Education:
 - 2.2.1. The Power Hierarchy in Current Educational System and in Art Education
 - 2.2.2. Difference Between Power Hierarchy and Functional Hierarchy

3. The phenomena of Drawing Gap

- 3.1. Drawing Gap and Difficulties of Learning to Draw in the Theory of Betty Edwards
- 3.2. Drawing Gap in the Theories of Zsuzsa Gerő and Andrea Kárpáti

4. Nonviolent Communication (NVC)

- 4.1. Introduction to Nonviolent Communication
- 4.2. Two Modes of NVC Connection
- 4.3. Formal NVC – Four steps
 - 4.3.1. Step One – Observation
 - 4.3.2. Step Two – Feelings
 - 4.3.3. Step Three – Needs
 - 4.3.4. Step Four – Request

5. Understanding Difficulties in Learning to Draw

- 5.1. Understanding Efficiency of Betty Edwards' Method.
- 5.2. Judging and Difficulties in Learning to Draw
 - 5.2.1. Judging seen from the perspective of Nonviolent Communication (NVC)
 - 5.2.2. Understanding the Efficiency of Betty Edwards Drawing Exercises
 - 5.2.3. Zsuzsa Geró's and Andrea Kárpati's Theories Seen From the Perspective of NVC
- 5.3. Three Elements Beneficial for the Development in Drawing
- 5.4. Chapter Conclusion

6. A Teaching - Learning Model for Visual Art Education

- 6.1. Changes in the 20th and 21st Century Relevant to Education
 - 6.1.1. Influence of the Internet on the General Education
 - 6.1.2. Influence of the Internet on the Hierarchical Organization Structures and Standardized Curricula
- 6.2. Changes in Art During the 20th Century Relevant to Contemporary Art Education
- 6.3. Understanding the Flow of Information in Some Educational Models used in the 20th Century Until the Present
- 6.4. Towards a Different Approach to Schools - A New Teaching-Learning Model
 - 6.4.1. The Diamond Model
 - 6.4.2. Relevance of the Diamond Model to the Current Situation in Education
 - 6.4.3. Eleven Pillars of the Diamond Model
- 6.5. Contemporary Art Education and the Diamond model
 - 6.5.1. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Art Education
 - 6.5.2. Relevance of the Diamond Model to the Contemporary Art Education
 - 6.5.3. The Diamond in a Real School Situation – My Personal Experience

CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

*“ The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands
but in seeing with new eyes ”
(Marcel Proust)*

The year I graduated from university, I was looking for options which would enable me to provide myself with sufficient income and still allow me to have enough time for my own art work. When I came across the Helen Doron method of teaching children English, and when I heard how it applies research in neurology, linguistics, psychology and pedagogy , I thought of it as something interesting to try out as a solution for my situation. What I did not expect back then was that learning and experiencing this new method of teaching English to children would thoroughly change my view and understanding of what education and learning can be.

In the two years which followed, during which I was teaching English using this method, I witnessed learning and teaching which were fun, enjoyable and easy. Children, even as young as two, were progressing fast and effortlessly and they loved attending lessons. I could not but notice that this was diametrically opposite from what my entire school learning experience had been. Obviously there was a big gap between what the academic world knew about the teaching-learning process and its application to the everyday classroom situation. Seeing how learning a foreign language can be easy and enjoyable made me wonder whether applying the knowledge and experience from other sciences could have the same effect on art education as well.

Another important influence on my research came from my personal experience in learning and applying Nonviolent Communication (NVC) to my teaching and personal life. Beside offering a new paradigm for understanding the motivation and causes of human actions and showing how people can communicate and connect to each other compassionately, it also provided me with the tools I needed to do so. Furthermore, through experiencing how large groups of people can be efficiently managed with the use of NVC, through reading about the experiences of other teachers and through my own efforts to use it in my teaching work, I was able to notice the benefits it can have on my students and me.

This thesis is a humble effort to collect knowledge and experience in the fields of psychology, pedagogy, neurology, anthropology and NVC and introduce it into art education.

The first chapter will give an introduction to topics in the fields of psychology and pedagogy which can be relevant to art education. This chapter will suggest that psychological

factors, more precisely intelligence and intrapersonal intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships may influence the way we learn art. Aspects of human intelligence related to creativity, visual expression and making art are shown in 1.1. Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and Daniel Goleman's research on emotional intelligence are discussed. Connection between feeling and learning is elaborated in 1.2. This subchapter shows how positive and negative feelings can influence our ability to act and react and it suggests state of flow as the ideal environment for learning and creative expression. Conditions for the appearance of flow are also explained. The importance of a teacher's personality to the whole teaching-learning process is shown in 1.3. This subchapter suggests an approach to education where working as a teacher does not mean playing a role, but rather genuine presence of the whole personality, which will correlate with subchapter 1.4 where teacher-student relationship is discussed. The same subchapter also discusses the influence of the student-student relationship to one's progress in learning. Finally in 1.6, the importance and the influence of group on learning art is shown. Since humans are biologically predisposed to live with, interact with and learn from members of a group, the group is suggested to be the most natural, the most stimulating and supportive learning environment.

Chapter two presents decades of the experiences of educational models that are based on the value of human freedom (2.1.). Examples are given to show how learning is a natural need of every human being which is autotelic if allowed freedom. The chapter also presents two different structural models in education, one with a hierarchy based on power of position and knowledge, and another one with a functional hierarchy where all participants of education enjoy equality (2.2.1. and 2.2.2.). The concept of functional hierarchy is illustrated with several cases of successfully run schools and courses.

The third chapter of this thesis deals with the question of the drawing gap. The phenomenon of artistic decline in children ages 10-12 is explained by the different theories of Betty Edwards (3.1.), Zsuzsa G r  and Andrea Karpati (3.2.).

The fourth chapter wishes to present the basics of NVC. The way the NVC paradigm differs from the usual one is presented, showing that how we feel is not caused by something that is happening to us, but because a need of ours was or was not met. This paradigm makes a general shift in approaching problems and people, as understanding and connecting to needs becomes the primary focus. In 4.2, The two modes of NVC connection, empathic (active) listening and genuine self-expression are explained; and it is suggested that the connection communication flows more harmoniously if these two modes are not mixed. 4.3 describes the four basic steps of the NVC structure: Observation, Feelings, Needs and Request; giving examples for each.

Chapter five compares the difficulties students in art schools face in their drawing lessons, and the drawing gap (5.3). These two problems are examined from the NVC point of view and its understanding of judgment (5.1). It is shown that the judgmental mental model may be the potential cause of difficulties in progressing in drawing, both for children aged 10-12 and art students, and that it may mean that we are talking about one problem (5.3. and 5.3.). In 5.4, the efficiency of Betty Edwards' exercises is explained, with the creation of non-judgmental thinking patterns in students which leads to the state of flow. Finally in 5.6, three elements; syncretism, flow and non-judgmental approach; are suggested to be the basic elements of problem-free development and self-expression in drawing.

The sixth and final chapter suggests a teaching-learning model for visual art education. In 6.1, changes relevant to general education which occurred in the 20th and the 21st century are presented. In 6.1.1, the influence of the internet on flow of information is explained, while 6.1.2 deals with the influence of the internet on the organization of learning and the appearance of self-initiated flat hierarchy among internet users. In 6.2, some changes which occurred in visual arts throughout the 20th and the 21st century are discussed, mainly stressing the influence of Duchamp's *Fountain* on diversity in artistic expression in the past 100 years. Subchapter 6.4 presents a new teaching-learning model, named the *Diamond Model*, which is based on functional hierarchy and the value system of NVC. The Diamond Model is suggested as relevant to current challenges the educational system faces in 6.4.2. In 6.5, its relevance to contemporary art education is elaborated. Relevance and advantages of the Diamond Model for art education are explained in 6.5.2. Finally, the suggested method is illustrated with my personal experience of applying elements of the Diamond Model to drawing lessons I taught.

The intention of this is to contribute to the creation of an education system where learning is seen as a basic human need which is self-initiated, pleasurable and even autotelic if given the right environment. Most of the educational system, as it is structured currently, is in my opinion tragically neglecting and violating this most natural human need. Standards and curricula are determined by an upper authority, and both teachers and students are expected to follow them. Children generally dislike going to school, they often see no meaning in learning and are bored. Teachers are feeling stressed and overwhelmed and often helpless, longing for support and relevance in education for the everyday needs of individuals in a rapidly changing world. This thesis is an effort to suggest a model which will create an education system which is more genuine and above all is more likely to support and meet the *real* learning needs of students and teachers.

The needs of students in current visual art education, in my opinion, particularly need to be addressed. The expanding diversity of approaches, techniques and attitudes in the

contemporary arts require an educational system with much flexibility and openness to new approaches and ideas. The educational structures of art education used until now have failed to either support the diversity or allow enough space to create connection between the participants in education. The Diamond Model is an effort to offer a new educational structure, which will be better able to cope with current changes and diversity in the art world.

1. Psychological and Pedagogical Questions Relevant to Art Education

*Real education is teaching you **how** to think and not **what** to think.*
(Krishnamurti)

The development of the sciences of psychology and pedagogy over the last 100 years has offered valuable understanding and experience about the process and the nature of learning. This chapter will explore several topics within these fields including the connection of visual-spatial intelligence to emotional intelligence, the relevance of feelings and human relations to learning and learning art, and the benefits of understanding the task of teaching as genuine presence and not just as a role. These subjects will be relevant to the topic of chapter 5 and the teaching model suggested in chapter 6.

1.1. Intelligence and Artistic Expression

1.1.1. Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Artistic Expression

In 1984, Howard Gardner published his *Theory of Multiple Intelligences* which brought a new, wider and probably more accurate perspective to understanding human capacities. Gardner reflects on the deficiency of general intelligence tests and criticized them for taking a narrow view of human intelligence and deriving conclusions about the whole of human comprehension by mostly testing only verbal and logical-mathematical abilities. (*Révész in Bernáth and Révész, 1998. p.171*). Simon-Binet and Stanford-Binet intelligence tests were created in the beginning of the 20th century and have been widely used up to the present. These tests were originally designed to differentiate students capable of attending regular schools from those who needed special education, as well as to measure and define the average abilities of students of different age groups. The abilities which are primarily measured in these tests are those relevant to the academic achievements of a student, which, up to today, remained mostly linguistic and mathematic. (i.s.. 31; *Vitez-Vidovic, Rajavac, Vlahovic-Stefic, Miljkovic, 2002. p.77*). Gardner's theory also responds to research which shows that in spite of the correlation between high scores in Stanford-Binet IQ tests and success in school, very little correlation is found between high IQ scores and success in

personal and professional life.¹ (*Vitez-Vidovic, Rajavac, Vlahovic-Stefic, Miljkovic, 2002. p.77; Bernáth and Révész,1998. p.171; Goleman, 2005. p.32*). In addition, Daniel Goleman states that high scores in IQ tests determine only 20% of success in life, with the remaining 80% due to other factors. (*Goleman, 2005. p.32*). A conclusion can therefore be drawn that these tests show little relevance to the general evaluation of human capacities including the capacity for visual expression and making art. The theory of multiple intelligences however seems to provide a deeper understanding to these questions.

Gardner forms his theory based on data about brain damaged patients, their behavior and way of living, experimental and psychometric research, as well as other descriptions and research on gifted individuals including savants². (i.s. 27) He suggests that "intelligence is not an entity composed of several abilities but one can talk about seven independent multiple intelligences"³ (*Vitez-Vidovic, Rajavac, Vlahovic-Stefic, Miljkovic, 2002. p.71*): namely *linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence*. Gardner observed that the lack or loss of any of these seven intelligences has a great impact on a person's life and that a certain minimal level of each intelligence is necessary for the successful and normal functioning of an individual inside society. (*Gardner, 1984*)

People with developed *linguistic intelligence* enjoy reading, writing or talking. They memorize verbal facts well, like extending their vocabulary, tell stories beautifully and have a sense for learning foreign languages. People with high *musical intelligence* can find rhythm and musical patterns in things which do not seem to have them (like birdsong), they like different kinds of music and may play an instrument or sing well. People with high *logical-mathematical intelligence* understand mathematical terms fast, enjoy logical games and tasks, deal with quantities by heart and easily put things into orders and groups. People with developed *visual-spatial intelligence*, notice symmetry and harmony easily, can easily rotate different objects in their mind and can draw what they see. They are successful in solving puzzles, can orientate well in the streets of an unknown city and express themselves visually (make art) with ease. People with high *bodily-kinetic intelligence*, are good with making and handling different objects, move their bodies with ease, enjoy exercising and experience success in it. People with developed *intrapersonal intelligence* know themselves very well, are aware of their own feelings, ideas and needs and are persistent in the activities they enjoy

¹ Research show, a strongly connector to social and emotional abilities, such as the ability to control emotions, handle frustration and get along with other people, (CHERNISS:2000) as well as motivation and persistence in case of failure, controlling instincts and ability to be hopeful and compassionate, correlate with the success in life.¹ (*Goleman, 2005. p.32*)

² *Savant syndrome* - sometimes abbreviated as savantism, is not a recognized medical diagnosis, but researcher Darold Treffert defines it as a rare condition in which persons with developmental disorders (including autism spectrum disorders) have one or more areas of expertise, ability or brilliance that are in contrast with the individual's overall limitations. Treffert says the condition can be genetic, but can also be acquired (*i.s. 28*)

³ author's translation

doing. People with *interpersonal intelligence* understand the moods and feelings of other people easily and are natural leaders. They have an ability to perceive situations from different perspectives and are therefore good in mediating conflict situations and are very popular. (*Vitez-Vidovic, Rajavac, Vlahovic-Stefic, Miljkovic, 2002. p.72*)

Intelligence primarily used for making art is the visual-spatial one. This intelligence is in charge when we make two and three-dimensional graphic depictions of the real world or in our comprehension of symbols, maps, diagrams or geometric forms. It reflects itself in our appreciation of works of art, in our "sensitivity to various lines of force that enter into visual or spatial display... feelings of tension, balance and composition that characterize a painting, a work of sculpture and many natural elements (like a fire or a waterfall) as well." (*Gardner, 1984. p.176*). It is in charge when we find two objects that are identical or resemble each other, or when we make a connection between two seemingly different objects or experiences. We use it when we visualize things and when we transform or recognize transformation of one element into another, when we enjoy a work of art, when we draw, paint or sculpt, and when we are engaged in making other visual representations. Spatial intelligence is also in charge when we use symbols to express ourselves, when we seek visual harmony, when we imagine and visualize something, and when we combine and connect different visual elements, objects, materials or experiences into an unusual conjunction. (*Gardner, 1984. p.176*)

Certain abilities, like the perception of color or understanding the rules of perspective, primarily engage our visual system. However, research with people who have been blind from birth shows that certain abilities in the family of visual-spatial intelligence do not depend exclusively on the visual, but can be grasped through tactile input as well. Landau showed that a blind child at the age of 4 who had never been exposed to a tactile map before, could grasp the concept of the map immediately and, by reading it, find a prize located in a room. Marmor proved that blind children are capable of rotating figures and understanding mirror images. Kennedy's experiment with blind from birth and non-visually impaired blindfolded students shows that both groups could recognize even complex geometric shapes and their size by making steps, finger movements and other tactile motions needed to grasp the shape. Millar's experiment with drawings made by blind children show that once these children appreciated the possibility of drawing with a raised line, their drawings as well as the difficulties they experience while drawing resembled to a great extent the drawings and difficulties of children with normal sight. (*Gardner, 1984. p.185-186*) She concluded that: "Drawing depends upon the acquisition of rules for which prior visual experience is a facilitating but not necessary condition". (*Gardner, 1984. p.186*)

Each of Gardner's seven intelligences comprises several sub-categories or families of

abilities. In this way, for example, an ability to perceive symmetry and harmony, to visualize objects rotating, to draw after sight, to solve puzzles well and having a good ability for map reading and orientation, all fall into the family of visual-spatial intelligence. Gardner (1984, p.173) noticed that developing one ability usually effects and simultaneously encourages the development of other abilities in the same family. This means that by practicing perception of symmetry, for example, or by learning to draw after sight, one can also develop an ability to visualize and rotate different object mentally. Furthermore, this opens up new doors and ideas about how art could be taught. For example, the ability to draw an object could be developed not only by practicing drawing in a studio, but also by solving other tasks which engage intelligence from the visual-spatial family, such as visualizing objects as enlarged or reduce in size, moving in space with eyes closed or reading a complex diagram.

It is, however, important to note that some people may not have the capability to develop all sub-categories of an intelligence family. In some cases, abilities may be independent of one another and may develop and break down separately. "An individual may be acute, say, in visual perception, while having little ability to draw, imagine, or transfer an absent world". (Gardner, 1884. p.173-174) or may be very good in expressing thoughts in writing while not being able to do the same in speech. Still, in the majority of cases, abilities within an intelligence family are connected and reinforce each other.

1.1.2. – Emotional Intelligences And Artistic Expression

Even though it may not seem obvious, making art does not solely engage spatial intelligence. It may also require the use of other intelligences, such as intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. Personal intelligences or *emotional intelligence* as Daniel Goleman describes them in one term, are in charge of making connections to ourselves and to people around us. In its simplest form *intrapersonal* intelligence engages our capacity to distinguish pleasurable feelings from unpleasant or painful ones, while at an advanced level it helps us detect and symbolize a wide scale of complex feelings. (Gardner, 1984. p.239). It is also the kind of intelligence which leads to self development (*Révész in Bernáth and Révész, 1998, p.171*) or in other words to *self-consciousness*, and is usually highly valued, since a developed sense of self often appears as the highest achievement of human beings" (Gardner, 1984. p.243). *Interpersonal* intelligence is the "ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals and, in particular, among their moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions. " (Gardner, 1984. p.239). It is the intelligence we use when we try to understand other people's feelings, life situations, ways of thinking or when we empathize with them. It is the intelligence needed for being a successful politician, teacher, merchant, therapist or any kind

of professional related to working with people.

Making art, as well as the appreciation of it, is directly connected to feelings. The more *emotionally literate*⁴ a person is, the more capable they are of complex artistic aspirations and deeper expression and understanding. Feelings are not the only factor in understanding art, but it is hard to imagine that an artist would be capable of a high level of creative expression without them. High emotional intelligence is more likely to result in an elevated sensitivity to fine nuances, meaning and symbols that an artwork may present. It also effects the level of a person's maturity and is tightly connected to decision making ability. This can be seen from the study of a neurologist, Antonio Damasio. Damasio reported a case of a patient who was completely unable to experience feelings. The patient had undergone an operation during which, together with a tumor, a part of his prefrontal cortex was removed and the connections between his emotional and cognitive centers were cut. After the operation, the patient's logic, memory and cognitive skills were fully preserved, but he was completely detached from feeling anything. Even when he was recounting tragic events from his personal history he did not experience any sorrow, disappointment or pain and was completely apathetic. Besides this, the patient had difficulty making even the simplest decision, such as deciding when he would next meet his doctor. His way of thinking resembled a computer: he was able to make every step of a decision, but was not conscious of his feelings. He was unable to grasp the value of things and therefore he could not make priorities while deciding. Lack of consciousness about what he was feeling lead to great difficulties in making a decision. (Goleman, 2005. p.51) In spite of his fully preserved cognitive skills, this patient was unable to live a full life.

There is a strong connection between the ability to experience emotions and our ability to make decisions. Without the ability to effectively make decisions, artists would not be able to express themselves: they would probably not even be able to decide where to start and where to stop a line, with what intensity to press the pencil, where to apply a red field and where a black one, and whether to draw an eye a bit above or under the nose line. Even though, following a period of artistic training, an artist is able to make these decisions faster and even automatically, while an artist is creating, their brain is continuously making decisions. The more mature an artist is emotionally, the quicker he is able to make the right decisions. Therefore, there is a high probability that improving the emotional literacy of an artist by developing high intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence, would result in that artist producing more mature work. Artists' decision-making ability is even more relevant to those who engage in contemporary arts, since after Duchamp art history reached a turning point with artists decisions having the crucial role for an art work itself. (Danto, 1997) (see CH 6.2.)

⁴ *Emotional literacy* is an awareness of the feelings a person has, both of his own or of other people, as well as ability to deal with these feelings in a mature way and react successfully in different life situations. (Goleman, 2005, p. 245-269)

A person's community and the people that surround them play essential roles in the development of both intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. It actually seems that these two intelligences are tightly bound and that they simultaneously stimulate the development of each other.

"...A child does not develop in isolation: he is inevitably a member of a community, and his notions of what individuals are like cannot develop in a vacuum. True, he has his own effective experience, but it is the community that provides an essential point of reference and the necessary interpretative schemes for these affects. Accordingly, knowledge of one's place among others can come only from the external community: the child is inextricably impelled to focus on others, as a clue to himself. Stated most strongly, without a community to provide the relevant categories, individuals (like feral children) would never discover that they are "persons" " (Gardner, 1984. p.248)

It is known that people and groups from a child's nearest environment play an essential role in healthy development and learning. Healthy emotional bonds between a child and their caregiver is another crucial way of supporting the proper development of that child, including the development of emotional intelligences (Gardner, 1984. p.246) which are essential tools for the successful functioning of an individual in a group. (see 1.6.)

1.2. Connection Between Feelings and Learning

Human beings developed the ability to create strong emotional bonds to one another and become social beings. This sociality provides young people with the potential for the kind of protected and supportive environment needed for learning and for physical and neurological development. It also offers an environment with more physical and psychological protection and security through the whole of adult life. (Berezkei, 2008. p. 238-241 and 277) Over time, humans became dependent on each other and living in small groups offered the most nurturing environment. Emotional attachment to members of the group, particularly to the primary care giver (usually mother) plays an essential role in healthy physical and emotional development of humans.

Even though comparing the results of research on monkeys with the results of research on humans needs to be taken with care, I would like to mention Harry Harlow's decades long studies on rhesus monkeys. This research shows the enormous importance of the social environment to normal development and the seriousness of damage caused by mother deprivation and isolation. Harlow observed that monkeys who grow up in complete isolation were unable to react appropriately to other monkeys; they did not assume a proper role in the

social hierarchy, they reacted aggressively or with fear in inappropriate situations, could not always conceive and were unable to take care of their offspring. The extent of the developmental damage caused and the potential for full or partial recovery from that damage was in direct correlation with the length of mother deprivation and isolation. The effects of the emotional damage caused by motherless rearing could be slightly reduced if a substitute doll mother was put into the baby monkey's cage or if the monkeys played with peers. (*Kollar and Szabó, 2004. p.80-82*).

Similarly to the monkeys in Harlow's research, children may also suffer severe emotional damage due to early mother deprivation and, when adults, they may result in having underdeveloped emotional intelligence and social skills (*Bowlby, 1968*). In the case of children who grew up in orphanages, where their physical needs were taken care but they did not receive enough affection and attention from care-givers, physical and intellectual retardation and personality disorders almost always resulted. (*Kollar and Szabó, 2004. p.82*) Again, similar to the rhesus monkeys, the extent of the damage caused by inadequate care or mother deprivation as well as the potential for full or partial recovery from it, was in direct correlation with the length of deprivation and the age of the child when the deprivation happened. (*Bowlby, 1968; Kollar and Szabó, 2004; Bereczkei, 2008*). Children who were deprived of the affection of their mother and other human beings are usually dejected, withdrawn and avoid making social contacts, and have difficulty empathizing or identifying another person's feelings. (*Kollar and Szabó, 2004*) They also often lack one of the most important human characteristics: developed emotional intelligence. These studies show the importance that contact with other people and belonging to a group plays in the healthy psychological development of a human being, including learning and the development of emotional intelligence. Clearly, these severe cases serve to reinforce the idea that a natural and stimulating environment for emotional and psychological development as well as for learning is connected to emotional interaction with other humans.

Feelings can be a very important factor in learning. Negative feelings may make learning difficult, boring or stressful while positive ones can make it successful, easy, pleasant and fulfilling. On the other hand, good mood, especially humor, seems to increase our ability for flexible and complex thinking, helping us to find solutions for intellectual and interpersonal problems. "This means that if we want to help someone to solve a problem, we need to tell him a good joke. It seems that laughter is as a form of elation which helps people think more openly, express themselves more freely and notice details which they could otherwise miss; creative work does not only require creative ability, but also a skill for

recognizing mutual connections and envisioning the consequences of the decisions made.”⁵
(*Goleman, 2005. 81*)

More than 100 different research studies made on over 36,000 individuals show that anxious students generally receive lower test grades. (*Goleman, 1995. p.75*). The more difficult the test questions are, the worse their results are. Anxious students have difficulty making decisions or randomly choose an answer in multiple-choice tests. They often need to repeat a year of school or quit university, while their average grades are lower than those of students who have the same level of cognitive abilities but who are not apt to worry, stress or anxiety. (*Vitez-Vidovic, Rajavec, Vlahovic- Stefic, Miljkovic, 2002. p.102*) One research study asked a group of people who tended to worry was asked to solve a simple cognitive task. They were also asked to reflect their thoughts while solving the task. Unsurprisingly, their thoughts were mostly negative, reinforcing that they were not good enough and that they were unable to solve the test. These thoughts obviously affected their ability to make choices and decisions and ultimately their success in solving the test. Anxiety effects intellectual performance. “Students who are anxious, angry or depressed, cannot learn; people who are in similar situations are unavailing in their efforts to perceive information and to handle it.”⁶
(*Goleman, 1995, p.75*)

Another research study involved a group of people who were relaxed but made anxious for 15 minutes just prior to taking the test. The anxiety caused a radical decrease in their ability to solve the task. On the other hand, after they were given a break and asked to relax, they had no problems solving the same test. (*Goleman, 2005. p.80*) "Worrying simply decreases mental capacities which are necessary for the execution of an intellectual task and the transfer of information; if we are preoccupied with failures, our concentration, which is in charge of helping to form an answer, decreases."⁷ (*Goleman, 2005. p.80*) People experiencing fear, anger, anxiety or other strong negative feelings, are shown to mostly have a hazy and narrow state of mind and diffused and limited awareness, while their behavior is disorganized and lacking intellectual control or precision. (*Bárkoczi and Putnoky, 1980. p. 211-212*) I would suggest that if we want to help students increase their mental capacity and perform better in their studies we could do so by reducing their stress levels and helping them to relax.

Aside from the negative effects of worrying and anxiety described above, it has been shown that people in these emotional states also become neurologically exhausted and that

⁵ author's translation

⁶ author's translation

⁷ author's translation

"concentration with tenseness... increases cortical activity"⁸ (Goleman, 1995. p.88) The EEG of people experiencing strong, intensive emotions such as fear, anger, anxiety shows fast, irregular waves with short amplitudes. (Bárcoczi and Putnoky, 1980. p. 211-212) This increase in cortical activity while experiencing intense negative feelings and stress also increases the demand for energy and therefore causes tiredness and, in the long run, exhaustion. If a person is exposed to a high level of stress and anxiety for a long period of time, they can develop "burnout" – a condition of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion marked by chronic fatigue, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, negative self-concept and negative attitudes towards work, life, and other people. (Paine, 1984. p.30)

It is well known that sleep is a way for resting our brain. However, it is interesting to note that our brain does not rest the most when we sleep. The least cortical activity actually happens when we perform an activity with wakeful relaxation. When we are vigilant and completely focused on what we are doing, and if the task matches our level of skill and ability, our brain actually spends *less* energy compared to what it spends while we sleep. (Goleman, 2005. p.88) In this state of mind our attention wanders freely and associations are made while EEG shows slow, regular waves with long amplitudes. (Bárcoczi and Putnoky, 1980. p.211-212). This phenomenon was researched by Mihály Csikszentmihályi who named it *flow*.

Csikszentmihályi, together with several teams worldwide, collected more than 100,000 samples of flow experiences, ranging from people in the United States to Korean women, adults from Thailand and India, teenagers from Tokyo and peasants in the Alps. He noticed that the flow experience was described similarly by all people, regardless of their culture, social structure, gender, age or education. (Csikszentmihályi, 2001. p.22-23, and 2008. p.118) *Flow or the optimal experience* is a state of psychological tenseness (arousal), when we devote our full attention to an action which we experience as very fulfilling and self-rewarding and which, in spite of potential complexity, we perform with ease and very efficiently. While being in flow, we are completely absorbed and focused on what we do, the activity is done with ease and very few or no mistakes; we do not pay attention to any potential distractions, we lose track of time, we experience it as automatic, and our motivation is at its peak. (Csikszentmihályi, 2008. p.119-121)

Csikszentmihályi examined the conditions needed for the appearance of flow, and noticed that people experiencing flow were always relaxed (Goleman, 2005. p.88) while people who felt anxiety, worry, apathy, depression or boredom could not reach flow. (Olah, 2005. p.115-116). Flow is experienced when there is a feeling of high psychological arousal, as well as confidence that the task can be solved (personal control over the action). (see fig.1)

⁸ author's translation

On the other hand it is important to stress that even though adequate complexity of a task is required, flow does not appear when a task is a too big a challenge. (Olah, 2005. p.118). If a person's ability is low and the task is too complex, that person will experience frustration or anxiety . If a person's ability is high but the task is too simple, that person will experience boredom. Flow appears when both ability and the complexity of a task synchronize, and when the level of these two is gradually escalating. (Csikszentmihályi, 2001. p.116) (see fig.2) Csikszentmihályi (2001. p.26): "The optimal state of inner experience appears when the *mind is reigned by order*. This appears when psychological energies, or in other words attention, are turned toward realistic goals and when capabilities stand in proportion with the

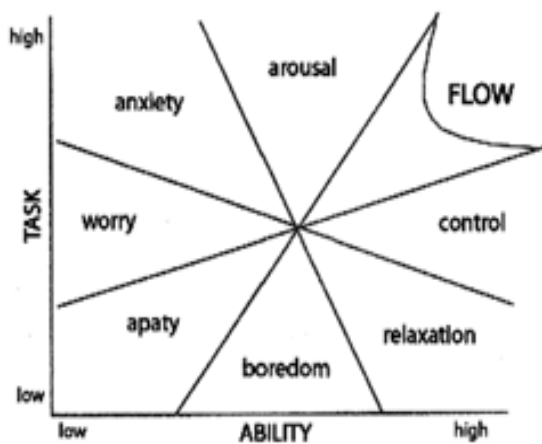


fig.1 - Mental state in terms of challenge level and skill level, according to Csikszentmihaly

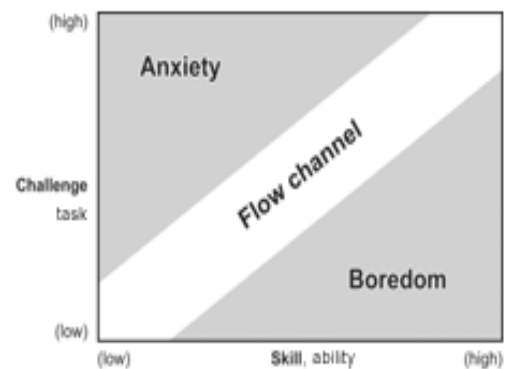


fig.2. - The flow channel

possibilities for action. By following an aim, order inside of the mind is created by itself, because focusing full attention on a task in hand and forgetting everything else, is required. Humans are the happiest in situations when they are their potential.⁹

Flow is the ideal psychological state for any physical or mental activity including learning. A research with high school students in Chicago showed that successful students enjoyed learning and experienced flow during 40 % of their working hours, while in the case of unsuccessful ones, flow was experienced in only 16% of their working time while anxiety, caused by tasks which exceeded their abilities, appeared rather more often. (Goleman, 2005. p.89) Flow is also often described as the condition artists experience while creating.

Daniel Goleman suggests that helping students and teachers achieve flow should be taken into consideration when creating new educational models, since their teaching and learning could be much more pleasurable, motivated and effective. (Goleman, 2005. p.88) To create more experience of flow in schools, education systems need to make a aim shift: from

⁹ author's translation

learning with the aim of achieving grades and a school diploma to learning as a self-rewarding activity which helps us understand the world around us; and from externally controlled learning to internally controlled learning. (Csikszentmihályi, 2001. p.202)

1.3. *Teacher's Credibility*

“In every class I teach, my ability to connect with my students, and connect them with the subject, depends less on the methods I use than on the degree to which I know and trust my selfhood.” (Palmer, 1998. p.10)

The concept that being a teacher means playing a role is perhaps one of the most entrenched attitudes in education and one that is accepted by the majority of teachers. In this role, teachers are expected to be impersonal and particularly to hold back from showing their real feelings and needs. Carl Rogers (1969, p. 107) refers to this: “It is quite customary for teachers rather consciously to put on the mask, the role, the façade, of being a teacher, and to wear this façade all day removing it only when they have left the school at night.” According to this educational paradigm, exposing one’s true feelings and needs as a teacher, or in other words being vulnerable in front of students, is often considered a weakness and rather risky. Teachers fear that if they reveal their vulnerability then students may take advantage of this and lead to a loss of authority and control. Referring to this, Thomas Gordon talks about the eight myths of an ideal teacher’s qualities. Among them stands the myth that “Good teachers can and do hide their real feelings from students” (Gordon, 1974. p.22), that they are consistent and that “they never vary, ... feel high or low”. (Gordon, 1974. p.22)

Several decades of humanistic education however proves that an attitude where a teacher does not play a role can be very efficient and even beneficial for quality education. Carl Rogers supports *the teacher's real-ness*, meaning that a teacher is simply the person that they are, aware of their attitudes and accepting of their own feelings. “He is a *person*, not a faceless embodiment of the curricular requirements, or a sterile pipe through which knowledge is passed from one generation to the next” (Rogers, 1993. p.287) Brad Barton (2006. p.73) also supported the genuine expression of personal thoughts and feelings, suggesting that it creates trust: “If I decide that I truly will be sincere and say what I feel and experience, I show, with this, that I can be trusted.”¹⁰ Similar to this, Rogers also claims that once free of facades, roles and pretense, the teacher-student relationship develops safety and emotional balance. This is, according to Rogers (1969. p.106), a stimulating environment in

¹⁰ author's translation

which *significant learning*¹¹ can happen. Hence the ability of a teacher to be who they are and not play a role helps the teaching-learning process, enabling space for true and meaningful learning. “When a facilitator¹² is a real person, being what he is, entering into a relationship with the learner without presenting a front or a façade, he is much more likely to be effective.” (Rogers, 1969. p.106)

A teacher with 25 years of teaching experience speaks of the times when he was not playing teacher’s role:

“For most of my teaching career I saddled myself with the role of “Super Teacher”. My intentions were seemingly reasonable. I wanted to be the best teacher I could. From time to time, out of frustration or weariness, I would drop my role and be just me - a person. When this happened the relationship between me and my students changed, became closer, more intimate, more real. This frightened me since I had been taught to keep distance between me and my students, warned that “familiarity breeds contempt” and that I would lose control of the situation if the students really got to know me.

“Yet, as afraid as I was when I dropped my role, I recognized that these were times when I could really teach and the students could really learn.” (Gordon, 1974. p.23)

My personal experience supports this as well. I recall my first art history lesson held in September 1996, during the first year of my teaching in a secondary school of arts. When I entered the classroom I faced an unexpected surprise: instead of having a class of 20 students as I had been previously told, in front of me stood a class of 37, placed in an enormously big classroom with terrible acoustics. In spite of this, feeling excited about teaching art history for the first time in my life, I enthusiastically tried to use the co-operative methods which I had learned on several university courses, and which I thought would be a more interesting way of teaching the subject. After an introduction, I divided the students into small groups and gave each one the material and books needed to make a poster. However, what followed was a complete chaos. Most of the students had never experienced working in small groups or in a co-operative method different from the frontal one, where they were asked for little activity and interaction and were expected to do and learn what they were told without much questioning. Hence in my lesson, which was different from anything they experienced before, they used every chance to talk to each other. Every time I turned my back, a student would run from one table to the other just to show off in front of his class mates, who would then

¹¹ By *significant learning* Rogers means “Learning which is more than accumulation of facts. It is learning which makes a difference – in the individual’s behavior, in the course of action he chooses in the future, in his attitudes and in his personality. It is a pervasive learning which is not just an acceptance of knowledge, but which interperates with every portion of his existence” (Rogers, 1993. p.280)

¹² Instead of having teachers teaching students, Rogers supports idea of facilitation in education. Person who facilitates a group of students in their learning is called facilitator.

burst into laughter. Two or three students were constantly asking questions, not allowing me to give attention to anyone else. Finally, as usually happens with large groups of people who talk, the sound volume of the class rippling was increasing to the level of shouting. I tried using all the methods and tricks I learned from my pedagogy lessons and books, but all to no avail. The class was out of control, slipping out of my hands and by the end of the lesson only two groups managed to finish their posters. I remember leaving the classroom thinking that if I had to teach a class like this every time I simply would not survive.

I felt so terrified by the bunch of 37 uncontrollable 14 year-olds, that my last weapon to deal with this situation was to risk being genuine and express my feelings and hopes. It was the “giraffe scream”, as my NVC¹³ teacher calls it – when one feels helpless but says how he feels. The following week, I entered the classroom and kept silent for a while. Surprisingly, students slowly started quieting down. I then sat down and started telling them (using steps of NVC) what I observed in the previous lesson, how I felt helpless and scared, and how I longed for co-operation. Then I told them about my dream to make their lessons interesting and fun and about a school where teachers are not controlling students but are partners and assistants in their learning. I also expressed how I was feeling enthusiastic and hopeful about teaching art history to them and how desperate and disappointed I got by the end of the previous lesson. I felt very vulnerable and I absolutely had no idea how my words would affect the students – but out of despair, I was using my last pedagogical “weapon”: genuine self-expression. I was not criticizing them nor blaming them. All I did was express how I felt. I will never forget the silence that followed my words. I was surprised. Something happened to those children then, because from that moment until the end of the school year, 9 months later, I never again experienced any significant disciplinary problems with them.

A teacher often plays roles, not only in school but also in other aspects of life, perhaps not daring to be fully expressed and playing a role of a parent or a spouse at home or a friend when out socializing. (*Blanton, 2006*) Roles are always idealized pictures of oneself and hence never fully achievable. They can create a lack of acceptance of someone being who they truly are and hence they can be dehumanizing. (*Gordon, 1974. p.22*) Gordon claims that children want teachers who do not hide behind their desks, charts, books and tests, who do not play the “distance game” and who relate to them. (*Gordon, 1974. p.36*) When teachers show their vulnerability, their true feelings, thoughts and needs, they are also more likely to be accepted by their students. “Once you come closer to a person, perceive his thoughts, his emotions, his feelings, he becomes not only understandable but good and desirable.” (*Rogers, 1993, p.306*) And as mentioned above and in 2.c, this kind of connection facilitates more efficient learning.

¹³ NVC- nonviolent communication will be elaborated in chapter 4.

Making the shift from the mental model to another is by no means an easy thing to do. It usually happens in situations when a teacher is overwhelmed with a strong feeling. Justine Mol, an NVC trainer, shared her experience with me about daring to break through her fear of being judged and to express her tiredness during a workshop she had been giving.

“I was doing a workshop and I was so tired that I could not focus. So I put more effort in it and it got worse. My body was really tense. In the past I would have forced myself to continue, even if it was for a whole day workshop. Now I decided to feel my fear of being judged and laughed at. So I stopped, closed my eyes and said: “I cannot do it right now. I am too tired. Will you please continue sharing about the subject? I will join as a participant. “And they did not kill me. They thanked me for being authentic. After a few moments of hesitance they continued and soon I joined in again. I felt relieved and energy came back. I ended up facilitating the process creatively and in a relaxed way.” “ (Gutman, 2006)

What Justine experienced was a situation in which her tiredness forced her to stop playing the role of a workshop facilitator. Playing a role (not being real) is always tiring, but once Justine stopped playing the role, she slowly re-energized. She was delighted to discover that she does not have to play role at all to be efficient educator. She facilitated more effectively when she gave up playing the role.

1.4 Teacher - Student Relationship

“Bad teachers distance themselves from the subject they are teaching – and in the process, from their students. Good teachers join self and subject and students in the fabric of life.” (Palmer, 1998. p.11)

One commonly accepted opinion concerning the nature of the teacher-student relationship is that being personal with students is something risky and not recommended. It is also often believed that if a teacher uses informal ways of communicating to students and if he does not keep a distance, it may cause students’ disrespect and loss of authority and credibility as a teacher. This was partly discussed in 1.3., where a person teaching is expected to play the role of teacher hide and to hide their real feelings, values and vulnerability. As Palmer explains: “To reduce our vulnerability, we disconnect from students, from subjects, and even from ourselves. We build a wall between inner truth and outer performance, and we play-act the teacher’s part. We distance ourselves from students and the subject to minimize the danger”. (Palmer, 1998. p.17) Obviously, there is a great amount of fear and tension

connected to a teacher's "realness". Teachers fear to lose control and their authority. They fear "That the ignorance of students may interfere with their knowing what is the best for them", (*Rosenberg, 2003a, p. 71*) or that students might reject values that are crucial for teachers (*Rosenberg, 2003a, p. 71*). Being subjective and personal is often considered a taboo in the educational world as is it believed that keeping some distance helps the teacher to protect their integrity, authority, system of values and the credibility of their teaching. Hence a teacher is expected to be impersonal with students and avoid becoming openly vulnerable. Students, on the other hand, are believed to be taking advantage of teacher's weaknesses and imperfections and so an image of mistrusts is nourished.

The distance teachers keep and the role in which they do not reveal their true self also affects students, who then react to this by starting to play their own role – the role of student. They do not dare to be who they truly are, nor express themselves sincerely and freely. In the same way as the teachers act, students put on their own masks and façades when taking part in education. Maintaining this imaginary self-image requires attention and energy, the attention and energy that could otherwise be used for learning. It also creates an atmosphere filled with tension, fear and guilt, as well as feelings of not allowing oneself to be who one really is and show what one really feels. In this way education becomes filled with negative feelings and contributes to the stress and anxiety of students. As already discussed in 1.2., stress, anxiety, worry or apathy limit or paralyze the capability to learn. On the other hand, relaxation and feelings of being accepted, peaceful, loved and appreciated, and especially the mixture of arousal and having control over the situation, may lead to appearance of flow. It can therefore be clearly seen that feelings either assist or inhibit learning.

Many authors have examined the connection between learning and the quality of the relationships inside education. It has been shown in practice that the most nurturing and stimulating learning environments are directly connected to emotional charge (see 1.2.), and is dependent on the quality of the teacher-student and the student-student relationships. The ability to connect, accept and be genuine is not only biologically favorable, but results in the reduction of tension and fear, creating a low threat and stress free learning environment. Carl Rogers (*1969, p.106*) insists on the sincerity and realness of teachers and on unconditional care, acceptance and a non-judgmental attitude as the optimal environment in which significant learning may occur. Thomas Gordon (*1974, p.25*) pays special attention to the teacher-student relationship, claiming that students were free to learn only when the teacher-student relationship was good. He further stresses: "Teachers are seldom helped by merely being told that they will be more effective if they would only improve their relationships with the young people they teach." (*Gordon, 1974, p.25*) Gordon also developed a communication technique in order to help teachers improve their relationship with their students and create an

optimal teaching-learning environment. Marshall B. Rosenberg (2003) also emphasizes that the teacher-student and the student-student relationship are just as important to school-based learning as the student's connection to the learned material. "Public education has for some time been heavily focused on what curricula we believe will be helpful to students." (Rosenber, 2003a. p.XV)

While working in schools, Rosenberg observed lack of real and compassionate connection between teachers and students and concluded that: "The way schools were structured created suffering for the majority of teachers and students". (Rosenberg,2003a. p. XV). He developed an educational model which is based on the principles of nonviolent communication (see chapter 4) and the premise that the relationship between teachers and students, the relationships of students with one another and the relationships of students to what they are learning are all equally important in preparing students for the future. In this model, a teaching-learning relationship is based on connection and cooperation rather than competition; the teacher-student relationship is personal, compassionate and pays attention to both the needs of teachers and students. (Rosenberg, 2003a. p. XV) Rosenberg's approach to education will be explored further in chapters 5 and 6.

Teacher-student relationship may be considered a part of the learning-teaching environment. "Nelson and Cleland (1971) consider that the teacher organizes an environment which can have different influences: creating or destroying self-confidence, encouraging or suppressing interests, developing or restricting abilities, creativity, critical thinking and achievements." ¹⁴ (Vizek-Vidovic, Rajavec, Vlahovec-Stefic and Miljkovic, 2002. p.113) It could be an additional task for teachers - to pay attention not only to the school curricula, but also to the creation of the stimulating and nurturing learning environment. Caine and Caine (1997. p.33) suggest that for the appearance of meaningful learning, teachers and schools need to assure an optimal learning environment that encourages *relaxed alertness*, or in other words a low threat and high challenge environment. Rogers speaks in favor of the environment of acceptance and understanding created by the teacher. "...Significant learning may take place if the teacher can accept the student as he is, and can understand the feelings he possesses...the teacher who can warmly accept, who can provide unconditional positive regard, and who can empathize with the feelings of fear, anticipation, and discouragement which are involved in meeting new material, will have done a great deal toward setting the conditions for learning." (Rogers, 1969. 287-288)

¹⁴ author's translation

1.5. The Importance of Mental Model

1.5.1. Teacher's Mental Model

“ To be able to bring in a new technique, the whole personality needs to be open. The way of thinking needs to be changed.” (Gutman, 2005)

In the 1990's, Renate Nummela Caine and Geoffrey Caine (1997) made an effort to introduce a new teaching model to elementary and high school teachers in the United States. It was during these trainings that Caine and Caine noticed that some teachers understood the theory and how to apply the new teaching model, and still would not apply it once back to in the classroom, but instead continued teaching in the same way as they did before. Caine and Caine started researching the possible reasons for this phenomenon and understood that there was a strong connection between how the teachers relate and think about teaching and learning (*mental model*), and their way of teaching (*instructional pattern*). They described their experience:

“Even though we believed we were on the same wavelength as the teachers, we saw that some where not changing fundamental patterns. We began to examine what they were doing in relation to their mental model – that is, how their actions reflected deep basic assumptions. We looked at what they actually did, ignoring their formal explanations, and found that observable, overall instructional patterns were playing out. These patterns influenced how teachers related to us and translated theory into action, and they organized how teachers implemented what we suggested.” (Caine and Caine, 1997. p.42)

They understood that teachers' ability to relate to and understand new theories on education seemed to be shaped by their attitudes about education. They realized that no matter what a new teaching method was, a teacher would filter, construe and use innovation according to their mental model and previous personal experience in education. Caine and Caine conclude that efficiency of a new teaching model does not only depend on a teacher's ability to understand and use the model, but also on their capability to change their old way of thinking, their values and their attitudes. (Caine and Caine, 1997. p.42)

The connection between a teacher's attitude about the teaching-learning process and the

way they teach has been well known in pedagogical literature. (Szivák, 2002. p.14) The way a teacher thinks about their role, education, teaching, learning, as well as their value system and the kind of image they have about children, influenced their decisions and actions in the classroom. (Bárdossy, Dudas, Pethőné Nagy, Priskinné Rizner, 2002. p.43) Carl Rogers, a great supporter of freedom in education¹⁵, speaks about the essential need for the right teacher attitude and level of personal engagement when applying their method of teaching: “To give self-direction and freedom to children can clearly be a complete failure if it is simply a new ‘method’. Commitment and conviction are essential.” (Rogers, 1969. p.23) Studies by Calderhead, Johnson, Wubbels and Borko made on university students majoring in education show that the students’ preconceptions as well as their previous personal school experiences usually worked as a filter when learning new educational approaches. It defines what they absorb from their studies, what they consider important, how they interpret things they observe and how they conceive of the educational aim and potentials. Their preconceptions and personal experience define their whole pedagogical pursuit. Hence, it was suggested that when teaching students of education, their preconceptions and personal school experience should be taken into consideration and used as a basis for evaluating, forming and acquiring new teaching-learning strategies. (Szivák, 200. p. 14)

Real adoption of new educational models seems to be possible only when the new model is in harmony with the mental model of the teacher. It sometimes means that in order to acquire a new teaching model, a teacher also needs to undergo changes to their way of thinking. Without the appropriate mental model, the teacher will fail to acquire and efficiently use the new teaching method. The application of the Gordon method in Hungary will be given as an illustration for this.

The Gordon method has been successfully used in the United States and a number of Western countries. However, efforts to integrate it in the Hungarian schools failed. In the 1980’s a group of young pedagogy graduates formed The Hungarian Gordon Society, with an enthusiastic aim: to contribute to the modernization of the Hungarian school system by teaching the Gordon method to primary and secondary school teachers. Two-week intensive trainings were offered, during which teachers were taught the theory and then trained to use the method. In spite of all genuine efforts and the seeming success of the trainings, the method failed to be transferred into Hungary’s classrooms. The main cause for this was that while the two-week training enabled teachers to cognitively understand and learn the technique, it did not allow enough time to initiate a real shift in the teachers’ mental model and compete with decades long personal experience ingrained by completely different educational models and values. What was not taken into consideration was that, due to the

¹⁵ Rogers’s approach to freedom in education will be elaborated in 2.1.

political and historical background of the country, teachers' ways of thinking, their educational philosophy and their value system differed from the Western one. The idea of a teacher being personal or not playing a role¹⁶, for example, was completely alien to Hungarian education at that time. As a result, teachers used the Gordon method only as a technique to solve students' behavior problems, while the honest and personal presence of the teacher, their deep personal conviction in the values of the educational paradigm that the Gordon model represented, was missing. Therefore, when it was taken into real classroom situations, the method turned out to be ineffective. (*Gutman, 2006*) Without the adequate mental model, even the best teaching methods are likely to fail.

Knowing the connection between the mental model and the way of teaching can however be a useful indicator about a teacher's true progress in teacher training courses. Caine and Caine noticed that when a change in the way of teaching appeared, it was always a reflection of a shift in a teacher's way of thinking. "As we worked with and observed the teachers, we were able to identify behaviors that indicate what a teacher's mental model is and show when teachers have shifted out of time honored patterns." (*Caine and Caine, 1997. p.43*) Hence, they suggested monitoring changes in the way of teaching as a tool to indicate changes in teacher's mental model.

1.5.2. Students' mental model and difficulties in learning drawing

In the previous subchapter, we have shown how mental model of the teacher may significantly influence the way new information is processed and prioritized, as well as the way the teacher behaves in the classroom setting. This subchapter will examine how a thinking pattern of a student, i.e. his perception of the world, relates to his ability to learn art and in the results of his work. A positive mental model is essential for a healthy psychological functioning. A study with college students who never suffered from depression but had a negative cognitive style, showed that these students had higher chances of becoming depressive in the following 2,5 years than the students with positive cognitive style. (*Nolen-Hoeksema, i. s. 47*) Understanding the dynamics of the cognitive patterns can give us an insight in the cause of some learning inhibitions. Helping students make a shift from a negative to a positive mental model, may also be beneficial for realizing their full potentials.

The benefits of initiating a shift in the thinking patterns, or in other words, replacing the old thinking pattern with a new one (*i.s. 51*) is apart of cognitive psychotherapy often used in

¹⁶ educational approach based on role-free teaching model will be elaborated in chapter 2

treating mental disorders such as major depression and the obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)¹⁷. (i.s. 51)

As a part of their therapy OCD patients are taught to relate to their compulsive thoughts and behavior as a malfunctioning of their brain, which, in certain situations, involuntarily chooses a neurological path (thinking pattern) that leads to an undesirable behavior. OCD patients are usually aware of their strange behavior, but feel helpless to do something about it. In the cognitive therapy, they are taught to consciously choose a different path of thinking in the situations that would previously trigger the unwanted behavior. By repeating this new cognitive choice over and over again, the new thinking pattern becomes stronger, while the old one, causing the obsessive-compulsive behavior weakens, which then leads to a change into normal behavior. (Schwartz and Begley, 2005)

Another kind of cognitive therapy, Aaron Beck's cognitive-behavior therapy (CBT) is used in treating people who suffer from major depression. The therapy tries to teach patients to identify and challenge their negative thoughts, beliefs and biases, to explain evidence for their interpretations and to see whether there are other ways of looking at the situation. It also teaches them new coping skills, which seem to be useful in curing depression, preventing a relapse into the new depression episodes, as well as in being engaged and coping with the circumstance and the problems (Nolen-Hoeksema, i. s. 47) Obviously, acquiring a new thinking pattern increases person's quality of life and his ability to function well in everyday situations.

A similar process, albeit not that drastic, can occur in the cases of healthy individuals. "The more we think certain ways about things, the more prone we are to think the same ways about those things, because we are reinforcing the neural architecture to make it easier to think the same way the next time,.. In other words, playing the same programs in our mind, time and again, will cause those programs to run more automatically each time. " (Dispenza, 2007. p.243-244). Our mental model, the way we approach and see the world, becomes a subconscious and an automatic way of thinking, reacting and acting to the things around us if repeated enough times. Depending on its kind, this usually subconscious and automatic thinking pattern can, to a great extent, affect our ability to learn.

To give a better understanding of how a mental model influences the artistic performance of the students, I would like to give an example from my own teaching practice in a vocational secondary school of arts. In almost every group I was teaching, there would be one or sometimes a few students who would usually or occasionally experience difficulties in

¹⁷ **Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)** is a mental disorder most commonly characterized by intrusive repetitive thoughts resulting in compulsive behaviour acts that the person feels driven to perform, according to rules that must be applied rigidly, aimed at reducing anxiety by preventing some dreaded event or by resolving a more nebulous sense of tension. (i.s. 49 and 50)

progressing with their drawings. I suspected that this difficulty could be related to their mental model and hence I would ask them to pay attention to the thoughts and feelings they have while drawing. I asked them to write them down on a separate piece of paper. They would always report negative and/or judgmental thoughts, and a range of negative feelings such as tension, frustration or even fear. I realized that if I want to help my students learn how to draw, I first need to teach them how to *think* in relation to their drawing. I would often point out the paradox, that in the learning process, they are more likely to arrive to their aim, if they do not try to reach the aim, but rather focus on the process. I was trying to free them from their fixation and fears that they must reach certain results or necessarily finish their drawings in a lesson. This naturally did not mean that results and the progress of my students were not important to me, but rather that I was aware that they will more likely progress and make better results if, while drawing, they were not stressed thinking about the results.

I also tried to make the students aware that they can express themselves in a way which does not use negative statements and judgments. The easiest technique for achieving this shift, was to simply teach them to reframe the negative or judgmental sentences into positive and nonjudgmental ones. I would ask them to notice the sentences in their heads, to write them down and then to translate these sentences – expressing the same thoughts- into positive statements. This way, a sentence like: “My drawing is so bad” or ” I hate drawing” might become: “ I really wish to create a drawing that satisfies me” or “I feel so tired today and would like to rest. I wish I were at home watching TV”. It was surprising to see that after this simple reframing exercise, usually in a matter of couple of minutes, students’ motivation would increase, their energy and mood would grow, and they would be able to continue to work with more ease. This turned to be helpful in most of the cases. Having gone through such a reframing process, some of my students would self-initiatively use the techniques, as a self help method in the situations when they had difficulties in drawing and/or were in a bad mood, or would preventively stick positive statement onto their drawing board before starting to draw.

I have also found the technique of reframing extremely helpful in the tuning in part of the lesson, if majority of the students in a group would arrive to the lesson having low energy and/or in a bad mood. It would usually happen after a stressful event in school (a test or getting bad marks) or if they experienced was some tension or conflict related to their personal lives. In a situation like this, I was aware that the general low energy and the anxiety and frustration of the students, would probably result in difficulties in going through the drawing tasks in my lesson. One way to help their negative emotional state was to *show them empathy*.¹⁸ However, if the number of students needing empathy would outcome my ability

¹⁸ The metod of *giving empathy* was elaborated in chapter 4

or not fit the time frame , I would use the more simple technique of reframing explained above. If they required, I would help them in this process. My knowledge of NVC (see chapter 4) was highly helpful in this, as it gave me technical skills to help my students differentiate the judgmental from the nonjudgmental sentences as well as the linguistic skills necessary to help transfer their negative statements into positive ones, and usually become aware of their needs. Generally, it would take 5 to 15 minutes for the shift to occur -from low energy and no motivation, to high energy, good mood and willingness to draw.

I would like to stress, that the technique of reframing was helpful in most groups and in most cases. It, however, was not effective if a student refused to do it, if he did it unwillingly, or if he ridiculed it. It also seemed to be less effective in groups where interaction between the students was extremely not harmonious. I suspect that the reason for this might be that this bad group dynamic created additional tension, worry and other strong negative feelings.

1.6. Importance of group for learning

Psychobiological factors of human interaction and the natural capacity to create emotional attachment were discussed in relation to learning in the subchapter 1.2. This subchapter will examine the importance and effects a group can have on an individual, and the potential it offers for the improvement of school-based learning.

Learning in schools is organized in groups or, to be more precise, in classes. The size of the group that students belong to influences the group dynamics, the relationship between students and the efficiency of learning. Usually, the larger the group is, the less space a student gets for active participation in a lesson. Beside this, students in large groups will spontaneously differentiate roles and start forming subgroups, and soon leaders will emerge among those subgroups. On the other hand, students in smaller groups are more likely to develop a close relationship to each other and will participate in a lesson more actively when compared with students in large groups. Roles and leadership in small groups are usually shared and rotated. (*Jaques in Dunkin, 1988. p.291*) “Most theories, research and practitioners agree that *five to seven* (students) is the optimum for leaderless groups. In case of led groups, as for academic discussion, the maximum for member satisfaction according to students ...is 10 –12. Larger groups are an advantage when the combining of individual efforts, as in brainstorming, is required. They are, however, of less value when everyone must accomplish a task.” (*Jaques in Dunkin, 1988. p.291*) The size of the optimal group equals the size of the

groups humans lived in pre-Neolithic, and the average family size in post Neolithic times.¹⁹ We might therefore determine the biological and psychological range for the number of people an individual can be close to and handle within their comfort zone. It was shown that in a school setting, students studying in small groups benefit from receiving more attention from their teachers, since teachers are able to take care of the needs of every student. They have more opportunities to be active during a lesson, and they become more motivated and involved in what they learn. Moreover, when in small groups students are also able to pay more attention to each other and they are less likely to form subgroups or dominant members and are more likely to function as a community. (*Jaques in Dunkin, 1988. p.291*)

Belonging to a group has also a social dimension. Through interaction with one another, students learn how to work individually as well as to co-operate with other members of the group (*Jaques in Dunkin, 1988. p.292*). They may adopt certain socially accepted behaviors or ethical norms and they can experience different interpersonal situations and learn how to manage them. *Rogers (1999)* reports that the students in the group he was facilitating underwent radical changes in only a couple of weeks. Students who were hard, inflexible and dogmatic became more sympathetic, understanding, and less judgmental. Shy students became less shy, aggressive students became less aggressive, and so on. However, these changes not only improved their personalities, but also greatly affected their ability and motivation to learn. Rogers reports:

“One might say that this appears to be essentially an emotional process. But that, I believe, would be altogether inaccurate in describing it. There was a great deal of intellectual content, but the intellectual content was meaningful and crucial to the person, in a sense that it meant a great deal to him as a person. In fact one student brought up this very question. “Should we be concerned,” he asked “only with emotions? Has the intellect no part to play?” It was my turn to ask, “Is there any student who has read as much or thought as much for any other course?”

*The answer was obvious. We have spent hours and hours reading; the room reserved for us has occupants until 10 o'clock at night, and then many left only because the university guards wanted to close the building. Students listened to recordings; they saw motion pictures; but best of all they talked and talked and talked.”²⁰ (*Rogers, 1993. p.306*)*

Learning in a group also has benefits for academic achievement, as students can learn from one another. A group also provides them the opportunity to learn not only from their own experience or mistakes but also from the experiences and mistakes of other students as well.

¹⁹ family unit which is natural (not artificially determined)

²⁰ Some of the benefits of Roger's approach were elaborated in chapter 2

In co-operative learning²¹, small group dynamics are used for the development of both social and academic skills. Students learning in co-operative education simultaneously develop social skills, acceptance of cultural, religious and ethnical differences as well as students' academic knowledge. (i.s.37). This learning model eventually expands academic knowledge, and has a great impact on students' emotional maturity and personality development.²² Therefore, learning in a group may be one of the most natural and stimulating learning environments, effecting the whole personality of a student and not only his academic achievements. This idea will be elaborated further in chapter 6.

Having mixed age groups in one kindergarten group is becoming well accepted in pre-school education today. Bigger children can provide learning and act as role models to the smaller children, while the presence of the smaller children develops the compassion and understanding of the bigger children. (*Gutman, 2008*). Beside kindergartens "...there is ample evidence that students can teach each other as effectively as trained teachers can teach them. This is certainly not a new concept to those who work in a country school setting, in Montessori schools or in other multi-age classrooms." (*Rosenberg, 2003a. p.98-99*) In these kinds of schools, the teacher may give a lecture to the 4th grade students and ask that in the meantime students from the 3rd grade explain some teaching material to 2nd grade students. Even though some teachers worry that asking students to teach is unfair to the students who do the teaching, "...most teachers agree that no one learns more about a subject than the person teaching it, and that a child who teaches stands to benefit as much as the one being taught." (*Rosenberg, 2003a. p.99*)

Students in a well functioning group can provide support and a feeling of safety to one another, which is a base for a stimulating learning environment. However, if a group does not accept a student, if he does not feel comfortable belonging to it and is missing support, it may have a counterproductive effect on his learning. Maybe the best example for this could be taken from my teaching in an art high school in Hungary. I was teaching drawing to 13 students, with rather mixed levels of talent and drawing ability. Some students were progressing extremely fast, others were just meeting expectations of the school and only one girl was hardly progressing at all. During every lesson she obviously put all her effort into drawing and worked hard, but no matter how many times I explained certain things to her, tried to use different approaches, and no matter how much she seemed to understand them, she was never able to apply them to her drawing. By the end of her third semester, the

²¹ *Cooperative learning* - „an instructional strategy that simultaneously addresses academic and social skill learning by students. It is a well-researched instructional strategy and has been reported to be highly successful in the classroom...Students work towards fulfilling academic and social skill goals that are clearly stated. It is a team approach where the success of the group depends upon everyone pulling his or her weight.” (i.s.37)

²² Connections between emotional intelligence and learning was elaborated in 1.1 and 1.2. an will further be elaborated in chapter 5.

situation was becoming hopeless for me and since it was an art school, I feared that she might not pass the year. So as a last effort to help her, I told her to come to additional after-school drawing lessons where I could give her all my attention and hopefully help her with drawing. What happened then was the biggest surprise for me: in half an hour she achieved everything I asked of her at around the level of the average student in the group. It was as if a completely different student was drawing. I shared my surprise with her and told her that I was confused and wished to understand what had happened, how all of a sudden she could draw so well. She told me that when she drew at home she could always draw well, but that at school she had problems with her drawing lesson group and that with them she simply could not draw at all. Later, that same school year, I had one more similar case with a student who could not progress well due to bad interactions with the group. Even though most of the students could, in one way or the other, cope with group interaction, these two cases show that groups, and particularly feelings initiated by belonging to a group, might influence the ability of students to learn and achieve results.²³ Psychological factors connected to these problems in learning art will be discussed further in chapter 5.

Being aware of the natural human ability to benefit from belonging and learning in a group is something that could and probably even should influence the way students are taught in schools. "...caring for others is an intrinsic ability to being whole and caring for self. We also suspect that the almost total distinction currently made between the individual and the community will have to be modified. In many respects the brain is a social brain, and intelligence is a function of the way we interact in context." (*Caine and Caine, 1997. p.23*) Understanding the human need for sociality and its benefits can contribute to learning efficiency. Decades of successful experience using it in education can be taken as valuable information for the improvement of education – not only in alternative and experimental schools but in cases of regular schools as well.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The topic of Howard Gardner's intelligences is examined in order to understand the connection between intelligence, visual creativity and artistic expression. The relevance of feelings to efficient or inefficient learning and the phenomena of flow as the most optimal emotional state for learning and making art are suggested. The quality of a teacher's way of thinking and the teacher's personal experience in education are both shown as closely connected to their ability to improve old teaching models and the degree they can acquire new teaching models. The quality of the teacher-student and student-student relationship is suggested as an important factor for efficient learning. Finally, the importance, effects and possible benefits of learning within a small group are elaborated.

²³ connection between feelings and learning was elaborated in 1.2

2. Questions of Freedom and Hierarchy in Education

“Learning is the most amazing and most entertaining game in life. All children believe in this from their birth until we assure them that learning is a very difficult and unpleasant work.”

(Doman, 2003, p.132)

Alongside the results of research in the fields of psychology and pedagogy elaborated in chapter 1, the 20th century and the 21st century so far have seen success in efforts to bring more freedom and interaction based on genuine trust and equality between students and teachers. We can nonetheless still see a rather large gap between the results of research and experience in psychology and pedagogy and how learning is organized in most of the schools. One of the reasons for such slow change was elaborated in 1.5.1. This chapter will expand on this problem further and examine the structure and some of the values of the current general educational system. It will also present a number of examples where educational models based on freedom and flat hierarchy were used. The experience and successes of these schools in achieving good academic results while being run with liberal educational models and values could be inspiring and stand as models for the education of the future. This chapter will be a supporting pillar for the new educational model suggested in chapter 6.

2.1. Importance of freedom for the development of full human potential

“Freedom is not a reaction; freedom is not a choice. It is man’s pretence that because he has choice he is free. Freedom is pure observation without direction, without fear of punishment and reward. Freedom is without motive; freedom is not at the end of the evolution of man but lies in the first step of his existence”

(Krishnamurti)

In 1921, an English psychologist, Alexander S. Neill founded Summerhill, a boarding school for children between aged 5-18 in the village of Leiston in Suffolk, England. It was an experimental school with a rather radical, pedagogical approach for those times. Its main goal was *“to make the school which fits the child – instead of making the child fit the school”* (Neill, 1960. p.4). Neill tried to avoid the *“adult conception of what a child should be and how the child should learn”* (Neill, 1960. p.4), a concept conceived before psychology became a science. Instead, the responsibility of when and what is learned was left to students: children were given freedom to attend lessons only when they wanted. Teachers would give lessons

following the school schedule and the national school program, but students were free to choose between playing and attending school lessons. (Neill, 1960) A child in Summerhill was allowed to do as they pleased with regard to the things that affected them personally. They could play or study all day long, but were not allowed to act in ways that bothered others, harmed other's property or might cause accidents or be dangerous. Summerhill was historically speaking probably the very first school to take away the traditional teacher's role of being the person responsible for students' learning and instead passed this responsibility to students.

The principles of Neill's school reflected his life philosophy. He believed that a child was born good and that he had "...the full potential to love life and to be interested in life." (Fromm in Neill, 1960. p.xii) Neill believed that education should be preparation for life, not only intellectually but as a whole person who thinks, feels and explores the world. The happiness of a child was considered to be the ultimate goal in life - and hence the goal of education as well. He trusted that when a child is raised without dogmatically imposed discipline and punishment - which create fear and guilt - they are more likely to develop to their maximum capacity: "A child is naturally wise and realistic; If he is given freedom and autonomy to be who he really is, he will develop the most he can and when he can." (Vidovic, Vlahovec-Stetic, Rajavec, Miljkovic, 2003. p.497) In Summerhill, both teachers and students were given freedom and autonomy; the opposite to what would be expected. But this did not mean anarchy prevailed nor license to act without responsibility. In the introduction of the 1960 edition of Neill's book on Summerhill, Fromm states: "...respect for the individual must be mutual. A teacher does not use force against a child, nor has a child the right to use force against a teacher. A child may not intrude upon an adult just because he is a child, nor may a child use pressure in the many ways in which a child can." (Fromm in Neill, 1960. p.xiii)

Neill noticed that society and education support the gap between intellect and feelings: "... separation between intellect and feeling has led modern man to a near schizoid state of mind in which he has become almost incapable of experiencing anything except his thought." (Fromm in Neill, 1960. p.xii) Neill stresses that education needs to develop not only the child's mind but also their emotions and their whole personality. He considers that students who were educated in this separation respond to life rather with their brain and not with their whole personality and are therefore unable to grasp life in its fullness: "For they have been taught to know, but have not been allowed to feel. These students are friendly, pleasant, eager, but something is lacking - the emotional factor, the power to subordinate thinking to feeling. I talk ... of a world they have missed and go on missing." (Neill, 1960. p.25-26)

Unlike a person socialized in standard schools would expect, children in Summerhill did attend lessons even though not obliged to. It is interesting to note that children who came to

Summerhill at kindergarten age attended all lessons from the very beginning, while children transferred from other schools would avoid going to lessons and instead played for a certain period of time, only to start voluntarily attending lessons after this period. The time before voluntarily returning to lessons sometimes lasted for months, but they all students seemed to choose to attend lessons in the end. This “recovery time” as Neill named it correlated with the child’s experience of education prior to attending Summerhill: “The recovery time is proportionate to the hatred of lessons that their last school gave them. Our record case was a girl from a convent. She loafed for three years. The average period of recovery from lesson aversion is three months.” (Neill, 1960. p.5) Even though no great attention was paid to bringing alternative methods of teaching but rather on freedom of choice to attend lessons or not, reports from the British Ministry of Education state that children in Summerhill were never bored (Vidovic, Vlahovec-Stetic, Rajavec, Miljkovic, 2003. p 477). Academic progress of each child ran in its own individual pace and rhythm, sometimes slower and sometimes faster, from the pace of the standard school. On the other hand, when the average academic knowledge of students finishing Summerhill was compared to that of students graduating from other, standard schools, there was hardly any difference. (Neill, 1960) Inspection reports released by The Office for Standards in Education in Britain in 2007, also finds quality of teaching and the academic knowledge of students in Summerhill satisfactory. (Mc Carthy, 2007) On the other hand, when compared to children attending standard schools, students in Summerhill proved to be more independent, balanced, disciplined, confident and never bored. (Neill, 1960; Mc Carthy,2007; Vidovic, Vlahovec-Stetic, Rajavec, Miljkovic, 2003. p. 477)

The significance of Neill’s experiment lies in the proof that when children learn based on their own freedom and responsibility and are not forced, learning becomes a natural need and a pleasurable, meaningful and self-satisfying activity. The experience of Summerhill broadens our understanding of human nature. It can also stand as a criticism of the standard educational system, in which we know that students often experience fear, anxiety, guilt, boredom and motivation problems. Students in standard education usually find little or no meaning in academic knowledge and going to school is usually described as boring or stressful. In Summerhill, the opposite seems to be the case – children love going to school and love learning.

When it was founded, Summerhill was an experimental school with a rather radical approach to educating children. Yet, over time, it turned into a demonstration school. It prepared the ground for the birth of humanistic education (Vidovic, Vlahovec-Stetic, Rajavec, Miljkovic, 2003. p. 477), with Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers as its main representatives. (i.s. 21). Similarly to Neill, Rogers also considered that “...every human being has a natural need for learning” (Vidovic, Vlahovec-Stetic, Rajavec, Miljkovic, 2003. p.486) and he valued

the importance of freedom for more efficient, meaningful and fulfilling learning. His educational approach was student and learning centered.

	RESPONDENT GROUP (N 38)	OPERANT GROUP (N 38)
Statement of goals	0	26
Journal articles reposted	0	165
Research proposals	0	25
Experiments (original)	0	18
Group projects	0	3
Demonstrations	0	8
Library studies (term paper)	38	23
Vocational test batteries	5	7
Field trip	0	7
Counseling	0	1
HDI program	0	19
Interview with instructor	0	32
Other activities	0	4
Course Examinations	190	190
Total production	233	523
Mean number	6.1	13.7

table 1 - Comparison of the results between Dr. Faw's group and control group²⁴

In his book *Freedom to Learn* (1969), Rogers writes about teaching experience of Dr. Volney Faw, a university professor. In 1960's Prof. Faw was giving a course in introductory psychology at Clark College. One of the rules he set was that students were not obliged to do anything that was not meaningful for them. Students were asked to choose their own interests and goals in learning the subject, as well as the ways to reach those goals. They had freedom and responsibility for their own learning and making the course interesting. The professor's role was to assist students and he was responsible only for his own interests and research, as well as for presenting those to his students. Students were free to find a way of learning most suitable to them: they were encouraged to read books and journal articles on subjects which interested them, to carry out experiments, take field trips, conduct interviews, to give lectures and attend sittings led by their professor. (Rogers, 1969). After giving his students freedom to learn what they wanted and how they wanted, Prof. Faw reported similar results to Neill: "...it seems clear that when students perceive that they are free to follow their own goals, most of them invest more of themselves in their effort, work harder and retain and use more of what they have learned, than in a conventional course." (ROGERS, 1969. p. 95) Furthermore, motivation, creativity and the amount of work invested in the course exceeded by more than double those results generated by other introductory courses in psychology based on frontal lecturing and exam taking. (see table 1)

Summerhill and Dr. Faw's course are only two examples of many which show the

²⁴ table adopted from Rogers, 1969

importance of freedom in creating motivated and meaningful learning. They also show that learning is a natural need of every human being and that when freedom is allowed this natural ability prospers and students tend to learn willingly and with self-initiative. These experiences also question whether it is the teacher's task and responsibility to compel students to learn and progress or if it is sufficient if a teacher makes an effort to create a learning environment in which students can be trusted to learn out of choice.

Even though the science of pedagogy holds valuable experience, knowledge and a potential for better and more effective education, schools and educational systems seem to follow it rather slowly. It is still the intellect which is educated in most schools and not the whole person, while the idea that learning can be a natural, self-satisfactory, fulfilling and meaningful activity is widely neglected.

2.2. Hierarchy in Education

One of the most important revolutions in the history of human kind began about 14,000 years ago with the discovery of agriculture. It provided a successful solution for a problem that human beings had faced for over 200,000 years –hunger. For the first time humans could have some control and security over having enough food to survive, and sometimes even a significant surplus. The most vulnerable members of the group – children – started to have a higher chance of reaching adulthood, which also contributed to the security of the species. As humans started to settle in Neolithic times, the communities which would earlier number 5 – 12 people now grew to the size of villages and later towns. Humans were facing changes that also brought challenges to their communities and the way they organized life.

The stability and the larger number of people living in settlements resulted in individuals being less dependent on the rest of the community. In Paleolithic times, the size of the groups people lived in was smaller and each individual was needed and actively involved in the wellbeing and the survival of the community as a whole. In Neolithic times however this was no longer possible due to the size of the group living together. Hence smaller units and groups of interest were formed. Together with the accumulation of food and property, this resulted in inequality between these smaller groups as well as the potential conflict of interests. Hierarchy, which was once a natural social structure needed for the organization and the survival of the group as a whole, started to give more rights and power to a privileged group of people who then dominated the rest of the group. About 14,000 years ago, hierarchy based on power was born, which in different forms has survived until the present day.
(Rosenberg, i.s. 44)

Social structure has deeply infiltrated in most aspects of our lives and it has greatly influenced the ideas we have about education as well as about how humans learn and should learn. (*Caine and Caine, 1997. p.93*) One of the top attitudes about education is still based on the approach claiming that “education is something done to students rather than with students”. (*Rosenberg, 2003a. p.xii*) According to this approach, the teacher is an authority that provides students with knowledge and who causes students to be motivated learners.

This subchapter will first elaborate on the problems with this educational approach and then offer a different structure for teaching and learning, which is more likely to be in harmony with basic human nature and the natural need for learning. This will be relevant for forming the learning model elaborated in chapter 6.

2.2.1. The Power Hierarchy in the Current Educational System

“ The problem is that the education system has institutionalized a way of thinking based on the power of position, rather than on personal power and the self-efficacy of its participants.” (Caine and Caine, 1997. p.93)

As mentioned above, the Neolithic age brought a new structure in organizing people based on a hierarchical model. This model has, in number of variations, remained to today as the primary model for organizing society, as well as for political and economic structures. In such society “...people derive their power and authority from the position they hold in the system, and they use that power to sustain the system by specifying and carrying out the responsibilities and activities that these positions define.” (*Caine and Caine, 1997. p.94*) Every person knows where his place is inside the social ladder – who they are subordinate or superior to, what their duties and rights are and the unwritten rules which they are expected to obey. There is usually a certain amount of emotional or financial dependency on and fear of those who are hierarchically superior and who are therefore considered to have more power. This is often accompanied with different ideologies, moral systems, social norms or commonly accepted attitudes, which support this hierarchy structure.

Educational structures often reflect political and economic structures. (*Fromm in Neill, 1960. p.IX-XI; Robinson, i.s. 61*) “Historically, the education system was set up to model a command-and-control hierarchy, which was used as a far back as Ancient China and Rome to maintain and administer their empires. One good reason for adopting this mode of organization is that it led to stability and ease of control because people were given precise roles and functions. Thus the model for education reflects the model employed throughout the world of business and government.” (*Caine and Caine, 1997. p.94*)

Palmer talks about a commonly accepted myth explaining the way we learn in a hierarchical way and which “has profoundly deformed the way we educate.” (*Palmer, 1998. p.101*) in that it falsely portrayed the real process of learning. Palmer further claims that on top of this hierarchical scale are the objects or knowledge, described by facts, which exist in a conceptual space and which are placed somewhere “out there”. (see fig. 3) This knowledge, he stresses, can be transferred one step down to the experts (teachers), who are entitled by their training and their degrees to forward it to the amateurs (students). Amateurs are, it is believed, people who are considered to have no knowledge, are full of bias and who in order to receive pure and objective knowledge depend on the experts, their knowledge providers. (*Palmer, 1998. p 101*) In addition, baffles are created between the objects of knowledge and the experts as well as between the experts and the amateurs. These baffles allow the downstream flow of knowledge while preventing subjectivity from flowing back up. (*Palmer, 1998. p 100-101*) It is obvious that in this system of understanding learning, the flow of information is always from above to below and that there are subjects qualified to both receive and transfer the knowledge (experts/teachers) while the others (amateurs) are entitled only to receive it. It is obviously a linear, hierarchical system according to which the person who has more knowledge is also considered the dominant and the more powerful one. It is also obvious that knowledge, according to this approach, is considered a possession, which gives certain power and status to the person who possesses it. Besides this, there is a myth that knowledge can be transferred only through a person who is an authority, who holds a higher

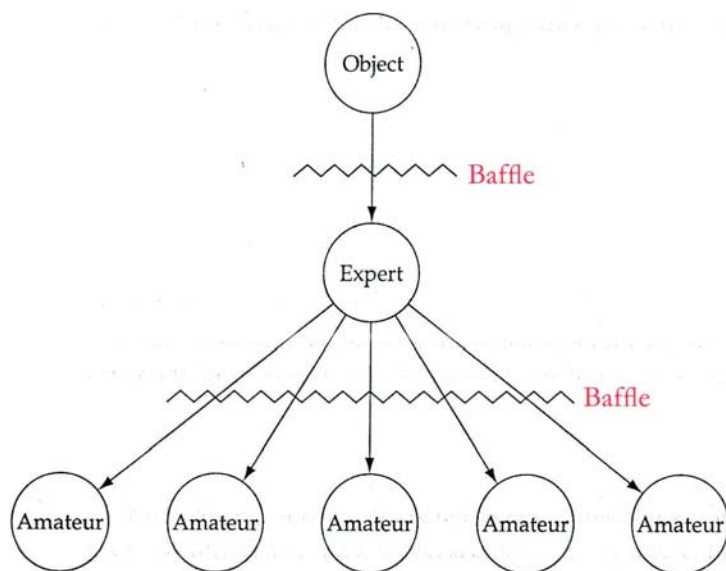


fig.3 - Linear flow of knowledge
adopted from Palmer, 1998. p.100

position in the hierarchy and who holds a degree. This is obviously similar to the structure of the economic system and company management hierarchies from the period of the industrial revolution when the public school system started to be formed. (*Robinson, i.s. 61*)

Educational institutions, together with schools and teachers as their executors, show little tendency toward change and actually seem to constantly reinvest in strengthening their own power positions. “In every society, the

educators are the most conservative people, and primarily not themselves but the institutions (which are) placed above them. Institutions representing power in the society can preserve their power if the educational purpose and structure are reinforced by the ideologies that strengthen their positions.“ (*Bugan in Buda, 1997. p.13*) Numerous attitudes or myths are derived to support this educational approach.²⁵ One of them is the well-accepted attitude about double standards for students and teachers. “Few schools are without two set of rules, expectations and standards of acceptable behaviors: one set for adults, the other for young people... the double standard grants freedom, privileges and rights to teachers that are denied to students.” (*Gordon, 1974. p.36*) This applies to the smallest details in school, starting from the right to give opinions, evaluation and judgments or to speak with or without permission, to having separate entrances for students and teachers. A trivial example of this is the case of separate toilets, where teachers’ facilities are usually kept locked and clean with supplies of soap, toilet paper and towels, things often missing in the case of students’ toilets! In addition, those who hold higher positions in the hierarchy are believed entitled to decide in the name of the majority. Rosenberg stresses: “We have been further educated to believe that persons in positions of authority know which judgment best fits any situation. If we find ourselves wearing the label “teacher” or “principal” we think we should know what is best for all those we supervise.” (*Rosenberg, 2003a. p.11-12*) This attitude is also reflected in national curriculum, which are tailored by an institution or a selected person and expected to be unquestionably applied regardless of whether it is meeting the needs of students or not.

It is generally considered that the task of the educational system, schools and teachers is to choose and decide what is good for students and then make them do it. This aspect of the hierarchical system also develops a belief that “people have to be made to do things that are good for them. Such thinking not only justifies but also calls for the use of punishment and reward as the extrinsic motivator. Intrinsic motivation is seen only as ‘you should want to do this on your own’ or ‘this is for your own good’.” (*Caine and Caine, 1997. p.107*) Ideally, things that “should” be done are served as a sugar coated pill which should gladly and willingly be taken by the students. However, if students resist them different sets of punishments and measures, mostly in the form of scolding, preaching or low grades are given. Such hierarchical systems based on power create an education system which is filled with fear, anxiety and which is lacking sincerity and real freedom.²⁶ Students are not motivated to learn because of their own curiosity or need for learning, but to learn out of fear of punishment. “They will not take time to understand why they are learning or, more correctly, why they are doing what they are doing.” (*Caine and Caine, 1997. p.98*) Caine and Caine

²⁵ The importance about teacher’s attitude on education was elaborated in 1.5.1

²⁶ Importance of being genuine and free in education were elaborated 1.3, 1.4. and 2.1

tested students learning in number of schools and classes with instructional approach based on hierarchical dominance. After asking students why they were doing what their teacher had assigned, they report: “We found no students who could articulate a purpose for what they were doing other than something related to punishment...Students also could not relate what they were learning to a personal goal or see connections between their assignment and the world outside of school. Complex associations to other fields of study were inevitably absent, as well as the ability to question or challenge a topic or parts of a topic.” (*Caine and Caine, 1997. p.98*) Further more, *Robinson, (i.s. 61)* stresses a growing tendency that children are bored in school and with most of school learning. An education system based on domination and power is less likely to create a learning environment fertile enough to support students in reaching their full potential. This is probably one of the reasons why success in school has little to do with later success in life²⁷. Learning in schools simply does not connect to students’ personalities. It is missing true meaning for them and above all, it is not offered but forced upon them.

2.2.2. Difference Between Power Hierarchy and Functional Hierarchy

“He must learn to face the world as an individual. He must learn to find his security not in any symbiotic attachment, but in his capacity to grasp the world intellectually, emotionally, and artistically. He must use all his powers to find union with the world, rather than to find security through submission or domination.” (E. Fromm)

Authority as a term can have different meanings depending on the value system it is approached from. However, authority is usually always associated with respect: a person of authority is a person we consider worthy of respecting. In the system based on power hierarchy²⁸, authority is usually equated with power and position in society or in an institution. It is often thought that because a person belongs to a higher class or is in a higher position, he automatically has power, is an authority and should therefore be respected. On the other hand, if approached from another system of values, authority as a term can be understood differently. Authority might not be defined by a position or status and might not be considered a power that works from the outside in, but instead be something determined by the personality of the authority, by inner characteristics, and something that works from the

²⁷ Connection between academic achievement and success in life was also elaborated in 1.2.

inside out. (*Palmer, 1998. p.32*) According to this approach students are not expected to respect a teacher per se, merely because they happen to have a position of a teacher in the school. They respect a teacher when there is a meaningful connection between them, when the personality of the teacher offers them something they find valuable and above all when they feel that the teacher respects and appreciates them. Obviously, once school is approached from the second perspective it needs to adopt a different understanding of hierarchy from the one described in 2.2.1

For quite some time, democracy has been valued and used as an example of the most advanced social and political structure. It has been considered liberal and righteous to people, especially when compared to autocratic or totalitarian structures. It has been believed that in a democratic system one can enjoy personal rights and freedom and that the will of people is carried out. Besides being a social and political structure, democracy is also a way of thinking and a value system, reflected in the behavior of people and their interaction, and hence teaching this value system has been stated as one of the aims of contemporary education. We have seen democracy enter schools when a new school principal was elected by the teachers' board or when students voted about the destination of their school trip or their class representative. A more radical example of democracy in a school can be seen in the example of Summerhill boarding school. This school has been successfully implementing democratic principles in its management for nearly 90 years, with students, teachers, the principal and other staff in the school having equal say concerning most matters. When voting, a vote of one person, regardless of his age or position in the school, is counted as one vote. (*Neil, 1960*) Opposite to what might be expected, Summerhill proves that once students were trusted to make wise and responsible decisions, they then do so. An official school inspection of Summerhill in 2007 evaluates the school as being successfully managed and students behaving well. (*McCarthy, 2007*)

Despite being generally highly valued, democracy also might have several deficiencies, which directly affect the school system. It is believed that, since democracy is the reign of people in the system, all people are taken care of. This however can be questioned however, since in a democratic system, it is often case that the majority of voters decide about matters concerning the whole group. This basically means that the majority chooses, decides and has power over the minority. Hence the needs of the minority might not be taken into consideration. In a school setting it will, for example, mean that if in a class of 12 children, nine want to have an additional lesson in music while three want to have an additional lesson in art, the class will get the additional lesson of music in a vote. In this way, children who had an inclination towards art will be forced to attend music lessons chosen by the majority of children. Democratic structure, naturally, offers more freedom and possibilities for students

than the structure where teachers or the principal decide all matters. However, in this kind of democratic structure, the interests and needs of the minority of students will still be marginalized or subordinate to the choices of the majority. Hence, it can be said that the structure of the dominance hierarchy remains even in the democratic system, having the majority taking over the role of what was once the single governing person or a small group of people. It is the majority that now has power over the minority.

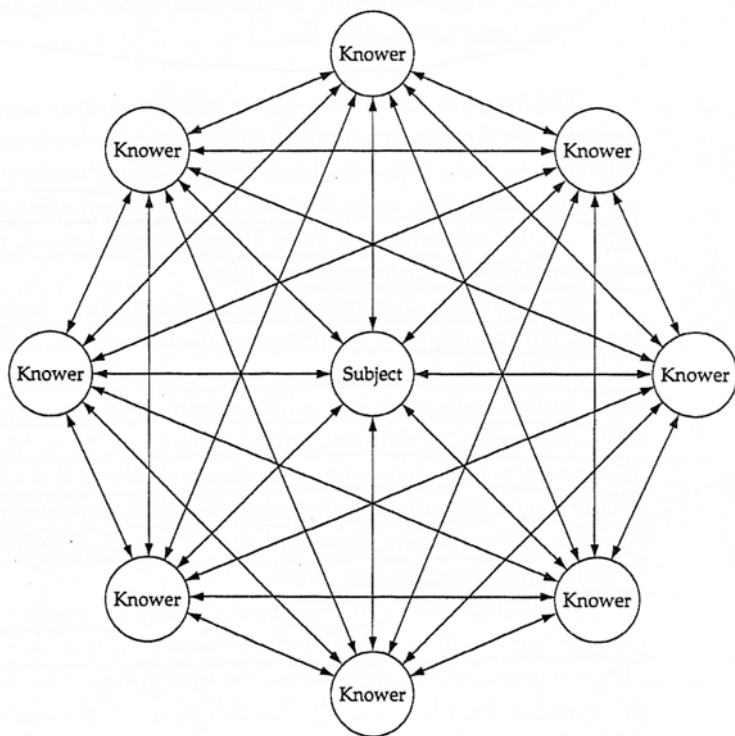


fig.4 - The community of truth adopted from Palmer, 1998. p.100

One of the reasons democracies implanted the vision of liberation onto the old hierarchical model might lie in how humans learn and implement new concepts. As we have seen in 1.5., when we learn a new approach or a new system of values, our preconceptions and previous experience affect and shape how and what we understand and how much we will truly be able to learn and absorb the new approach. To be fully able to absorb a new system of reasoning, we first need to make a shift in our way of thinking. (Caine and Caine, 1997.

p. 42; Bardossy, Dudas, Pethőné Nagy, Priskinner Rizner, 2002. p.43) What may have happened with democracy was that the new system was grafted onto the trunk of the old one. Even though a new liberating system was introduced as opposing the old oppressive one, the old concept of dominant hierarchy was not fully overcome.

A concept of an organization based on equality and without dominance hierarchy was first introduced by the French positivist philosopher Auguste Comte in 1851 under the name of “sociocracy”. Comte suggested “a system of governance using consent-based decision making among equivalent individuals and an organizational structure based on cybernetic principles”. (i.s. 40) In the mid 20th century, Kees Boeke expanded the sociocracy idea and saw it as a form of governance or management that presumes the equality of individuals and is based on consent. This equality is not expressed with the 'one man one vote' law of democracy but rather by “a group of individuals reasoning together until a decision is reached

that is satisfactory to each one of them” (i.s. 40) Boeke also applied the sociaocracy concept to the Quaker model of self-governance (Henrion, 2006. p.4) His principles were later applied to management of business and institutions by Gerard Endenburg and a have over 40 years of successful experience. (i.s. 40; Buck and Endenburg, 2006)

Sociocracy does not completely abolish the concept of hierarchical structure, but transforms it to a non-dominant form. Sociocracy functions based on consent where it is important that a group of people, a school, a company or an institution is managed in a way that everyone is in agreement with the decisions made. Each person is considered important since each human being has a need to be recognized (Endinburg in i.s. 41) and is actively involved in decision-making. After a consensus decision is made, each person fulfills his duty in the structure. “It is not a management style. Rather it modifies the basic structure of power.” (Buck and Endenburg, 2006. p.25) Hence hierarchy in a sociocratic structure is rather a *functional hierarchy*, not based on dominance, but on active roles that each person fulfills in the structure. Managers and workers or headmasters, teachers and students, still exist, but they are rather a team working together to reach a common goal.

Palmer (1998) suggests a community and organization of education based on equality. He states that the linear approach to education (see 2.2.1) falsely portrays how we know and that it deforms the way in which we educate. He suggests a different educational model and names it the *community of truth*. (see fig.4) Palmer describes this model:

“ In the community of truth there are no pristine objects of knowledge and no ultimate authority. At the center of this communal circle, there is always a subject – as contrasted to knowing, teaching, and learning: a subject is available for relationship; an object is not. In the community of truth, the connective core of all our relationships is the significant subject itself – not intimacy, not civility, not accountability, not the experts, but the power of the living subject.” (Palmer, 1998. p.101-103)

Palmer does not suggest only a different, non-hierarchical structure of education. He also suggests a different understanding about how human beings learn. He suggests non-competitive, dynamic and interactive community based learning which derives from united efforts to solve a problem and is based on communication between members.

“As we try to understand the subject in the community of truth, we enter into complex patterns of communication – sharing observations and interpretations, correcting and complementing each other, torn by conflict in this moment and joined by consensus in the next. The community of truth, far from being linear, static and hierarchical, is circular, interactive, and dynamic.

At its best, the community of truth advances our knowledge through conflict, not competition. Competition is a service, zero-sum game played by individuals for private

gain; conflict is open and sometimes raucous but always communal, a public encounter in which it is possible for everyone to win by learning and growing. Competition is the antithesis of community.” (Palmer, 1998. p. 103)

Some of the first schools which embraced the non-dominant hierarchical structure in their functioning were Quaker schools. Quakers, a religious community founded more than 350 years ago, have been successfully implementing their value of equality between all human beings regardless of their religion, race, gender or age. In addition, the Quaker ideal that says that something of God can be found in each person (*i.s.* 39), led to a very strong value of equal respect for everyone and functioning free of a dominance hierarchy structure. This value system is also reflected in Quaker schools: teachers relate to their students as equal to them and everyone is addressed by their first name. Students are not expected to stand up when a person of “authority” enters the classroom as is the case with this and similar behavior usually expected in schools as a way of showing respect to authority. (*Murray, 2009*) The reflection of the values of equality and respect in a Quaker school is well described on the official web sight of Leighton Park School in United Kingdom:

“From experience, we know that this practice breaks down many of the barriers often encountered in a school environment. Pupils feel that staff are both approachable and 'on their side'. This leads to a high degree of mutual respect between staff and pupils which, in turn, results in good discipline and a willingness to listen and co-operate: pupils choose to observe the school's code of conduct not because they have been told to by what they might see as a symbol of authority but because they understand its purpose and reasonableness, and because they value the special relationship they have with staff. They feel respected, and respect them in return.” (i.s. 38)

Another example of a school functioning based on equality, acceptance and respect is Skapnäck Free School in Sweden founded in 1998. The school was established by Marianne Gothlin and a group of parents who wanted to design education for their children with a different approach to the one found in state schools. They envisioned “a school where teachers employed the emerging practice of compassionate communication” (*Gothlin and Sanders, 2009. p.4*) also called nonviolent communication (NVC).²⁹ Marshall B. Rosenberg, the father of NVC describes his vision about schools: “No longer will students and teachers alike be given only two choices, to submit or rebel. When there is only one goal, to get everyone’s needs met, classroom and school can be transformed. Because what we discover is that everyone’s needs are the same.” (*Rosenberg, 2005. p.107*)

Skapnäck Free School is run as a community, having teachers, students and parents all taking an active role in management and functioning of the school. Thanks to having parents

²⁹ NVC- Nonviolent Communication- structure and the princilas of NVC will be elaborated in chapter 4

help with the maintenance and cleaning of the school, Skapnäck was able to redirect its funds to budgets reserved for hiring more teachers. Unlike other Swedish schools, Skapnäck Free has approximately one teacher for every 10 students. This primarily means that each student can receive adequate attention. Students do all their learning at school and are not given homework – unless they ask for it. The school pays particular attention to creating a learning environment where the needs of all – teachers, students and parents – are taken into consideration with the aim of creating an environment of safety, acceptance and inclusion. The needs of every person regardless of his age, gender or position in the school are considered important and great effort is made to fulfill them. It is believed that this environment is essential for learning. Based on this, the principles and the language of NVC “support a paradigm shift and create a place for engaged and meaningful learning, where everyone learns how to relate to authority differently” (Gothlin and Sanders, 2009. p.20). Moving from “power over” dynamics to “power with” dynamics is prioritized in the school structure. Lara, a 15-year-old student of Skapnäck Free explains the domination free model of the school:

“There is no power game between the teachers and it’s nice to see, as a student, that the teachers feel good about each other. They are like a big family! And to see all these ambitious people working to get this atmosphere so nice also makes you want to be involved in creating something. So many students feel comfortable going to school. The feeling of being taken seriously is very important for young people, especially when it involves school, because we spend most of our time here and it makes it a little bit easier to wake up in the morning, knowing that you are going to a place where you can effect everything from the look of the classroom to the decision of who’s going to be the new teacher.” (Gothlin and Sanders, 2009. p.13)

Besides having school structures based on equality of all participants in education, I would like to stress that both Quaker schools and Skapnäck Free School, similarly to Summerhill school, report very few disciplinary problems and a very high level of academic achievement. (i.s. 38, 39 and 40; Gothlin and Sanders, 2009) An inspection reports by the Swedish National School Authority on Skapnäck Free School in 2006 states that students of the graduation class (year 9) have higher grades, are better prepared for the next level of study and include a higher proportion of students to accomplish grades in all subjects than the national average. (Gothlin and Sanders, 2009. p.11)

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The subject of hierarchy in education is examined from two sides: one with determined power relations between students and teachers and one based on equality of power between all participants in education. Hierarchical structure based on domination of a small group by the rest was adopted from political and economic spheres into education. Parker J. Palmer explains a myth which is reflected in the concept of education in a hierarchy based on power and one-way linear learning. It shows that students learning inside such a hierarchical structure are motivated to learn out of fear and not by genuine understanding and interest in the subject. Advantages and problems of democracy in education are described and sociocracy is presented as an example of a structure based on consent and equality. Palmer's circular model of learning is presented as an opposite to the linear, hierarchical one. Quaker schools and Skapnäck Free School are offered as examples of decades long success, functioning with teaching-learning models based on equality of power.

3. The Phenomenon of the Drawing Gap

A phenomenon, named the *drawing gap*, is a decline in artistic performance between the age of 10 and 12. It has been noticed, that a vast majority of children reaching this age, completely stop a self initiated expression through drawing or painting, and it remains so for the rest of their lives. “Most children between the age of 10 and 12 draw in their free time only if it is required of them. Unlike when they were just a few years younger, their creations please neither them nor the others.” (Kárpáti, 2005. p.25) Visual language used does no longer process the experiences and emotions, the content becomes empty, patterns are lacking, and compositions meaningless. Gardner stresses that a teenager, reaching the bottom line in the quality of his drawing, is unable to rise up and achieve high artistic results again, unless he/she is very talented. (Kárpáti, 2005)

3.1. Drawing Gap in the Theory of Betty Edwards

In the late 60's and early 70's, Roger Sperry and Michael Gazzaniga, being interested in various cognitive and perceptual processes of human brain, studied split brain patients³⁰. In their research, they showed lateralization of human brain and mapped different functional centers. (i.s. 64) They also researched different mental activities appearing on the different hemispheres and different parts of the brain. (see fig. 5) It was shown that the centers in the left hemisphere are generally responsible for language (speaking, reading and writing), verbal memory, complex movements, calculating, analytic thinking, linear logic, feeling of time, etc, while the centers in the right hemisphere are in charge of emotions, visual arts, music, creative, holistic thinking, feeling of space, etc.³¹ (Hámori, 1985; Doman, 2005; Edwrds, 1989) (see fig. 5 and table 2) “In most people the left side of the brain deals with logic, language, reasoning, number, linearity, and analysis etc, the so I called 'academic' activities. While the left side of the brain is engaged in these activities, the right side is

³⁰ Split-brain patients are patients who have undergone corpus callosotomy (usually as a treatment for severe epilepsy), a severing of a large part of the corpus callosum. The corpus callosum connects the two hemispheres of the brain and allows them to communicate. When these connections are cut, the two halves of the brain have a reduced capacity to communicate with each other. (i.s.64)

³¹ Understanding brain lateralization will be important for understanding Betty Edwards theory, elaborated in chap. 6

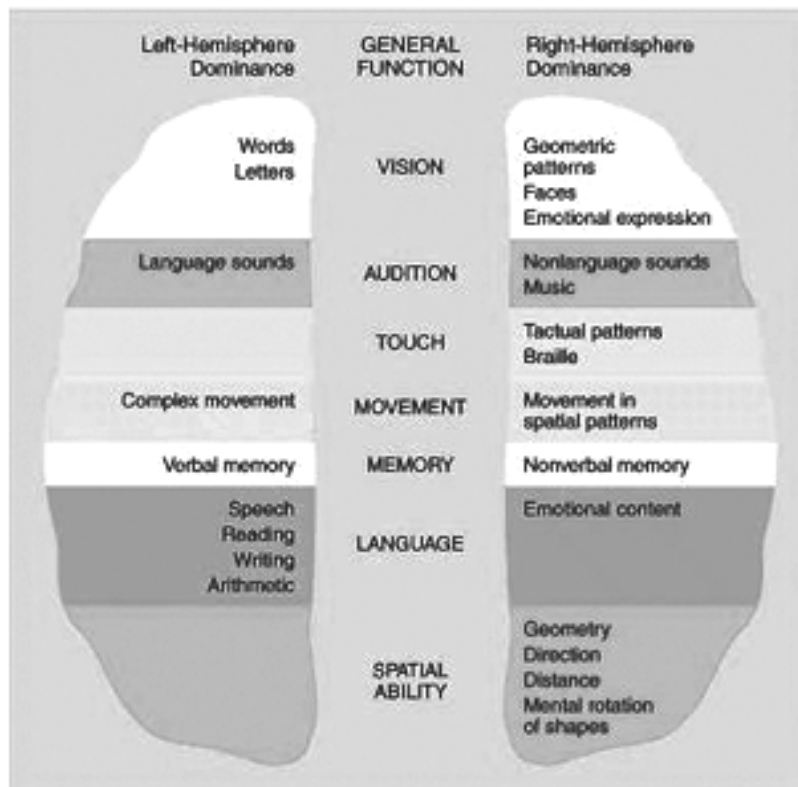


fig. 5. – Cerebral lateralization of function

LEFT hemisphere	RIGHT hemisphere
Verbal – Using words to name, describe and define	Nonverbal – Awareness of things, but minimal connection with words
Analytic – Figuring things out step-by-step and part-by-part	Synthetic - Putting things together to form a whole
Symbolic – Using a symbol to stand for something	Concrete – Relating to things as they are, at the present moment
Abstract - Taking out a small bit of information and using it to represent the whole thing	Analogical – Seeing likeness between things; understanding metaphoric relationships
Temporal – Keeping track of time, sequencing one thing after other: doing first things first, second things second. Etc.	Nontemporal – Without a sense of time
Rational – Drawing conclusions based on reason and facts	Nonrational – Not requiring a basis of reason of facts; willingness to suspend judgment
Digital – Using numbers and counting	Spatial - Seeing where things are in relation to other things, and how parts go together to form a whole
Logical – Drawing conclusions based on logic: one thing following another in logic order – for example a mathematic theorem or a well-stated argument	Intuitive – Making leaps of insight, often based on incomplete patterns, hunches, feelings, or visual images
Linear – Thinking in terms of linked ideas, ne thought directly following another, often leading to a convergent conclusion.	Holistic – Seeing whole things all at once; perceiving the overall patterns and structures, often leading to divergent conclusions.

table 2 - List of some of the basic functions of the left and right brain hemisphere.

in the 'alpha wave' or resting state. The right side of the brain deals with rhythm, music, images and imagination, color, parallel processing, daydreaming, face recognition, and pattern or map recognition.” (Buzan, 1991. p. 17) In a nutshell, when a person tries to solve a mathematical problem or reads a book, it is the left side of the brain which primarily completes these activities, and when he paints or plays music, the right side of the brain is in charge.

Deriving from the researches by Sperry and Gazzaniga, Betty Edwards published a book titled *Drawing On The Right Side Of the Brain*, in 1979. In this book, Edwards suggests a theory about the activity of the brain during the process of drawing and develops a method for teaching how to draw realistically. She claims that the left side of the brain, which is in charge of speaking, reading, writing, calculating, analytic and logical thinking, becomes dominant over the right side of the brain which is in charge of artistic expression, music, creativity. In her opinion, the reason for the left brain side dominance lies in our society and schools being primarily focused on subjects performed by the left hemisphere, such as reading, writing, vocabulary development (verbal) and mathematics (calculating, analytic thinking, logic), while subjects such as arts, music and dance receive mostly marginal attention. This is reflected, she continues, in the curricula of the most of the schools, where subjects like arts, music and sports are largely outnumbered by mathematics, literature, spelling, natural science and humanities. In her theory Edwards claims that, after several years spent in school system and developing mostly left brain side skills, children's left hemisphere becomes so strong that it starts to dominate over the right one. Further more, she claims this dominant hemisphere creates a barrier which causes difficulties in using the non-dominant side of the brain. She claims that this barrier creates difficulties in creative expression of children and adults and that it is to blame for the occurrence of the drawing gap, too. In her opinion, the ability to draw well what one sees can be realized when a person can freely use

his right side of the brain. Whereas, when the usage of the right hemisphere is blocked by the dominant brain half, a person experiences difficulties in drawing. According to her theory, in order to help a person to be able to draw well, the right side needs to be liberated from the cramp of the left brain side.

Intending to help the liberation of the right hemisphere, Betty Edwards developed a number of exercises. She claims that knowing how to draw realistically is not an ability of a few talented people, but rather that anyone who learns how to unblock the right side of the brain, will be able to draw realistically. Her theory is very logical, and the exercises given by her, are simple and easy to follow. By way of illustration, some of these tasks are: drawing a hand without looking at the paper, copying a drawing seen upside-down or tracking the empty space on the sides of an observed model. In most of the tasks the attention is taken away from achieving any result, and exercises are simply meant to liberate the right side of the brain

from the dominance of the left. (*Edwards, 1979*)

Already at the time her book was published, Edwards theory was considered not accurate, and even pseudoscientific. (*i.s.64*) . Since Sperry and Gazzaniga researched mainly the split brain patients, it did not explain functioning of the brain as a whole in cases of healthy individuals. Further more, they showed only the major hemispheric activity of the brain. More precise measurements showed that in almost any activity both brain hemispheres are active, even though one side is usually more active than the other. Zaidel, who continued Sperry's research, “ discovered that each hemisphere contains many more of the ‘other side’s’ abilities than had been previously thought, and that each hemisphere also is capable of a much wider and much more subtle range of mental activities.” (*Buzan, 1991. p.18*) It was also shown that, for example, while drawing, one uses both sides of the brain, each serving different aspects of the *process*. That is how Edwards's theory was deemed to be inaccurate, as well as her explanation of the drawing gap.

I find it interesting to stress, that in spite of failure of Edwards's theory, her exercises proved to be rather helpful in teaching drawing. (*Youngblood, 1981; Nutter, 1983; Jones, 1997*) This will be elaborated in chapter 5.

3.2. Drawing Gap in the Theories of Zsuzsa Gerő and Andrea Kárpáti

Another theory explaining the drawing gap was given by Zsuzsa Gerő, who was mainly interested in the psychological side of the phenomenon. Gerő links the phenomenon of the drawing gap to the cognitive development of children. She claims that children between the age of 5 and 7 show strong syncretism between processing their experiences and emotions, as well as the content and the form in their visual expression. Not being able to express themselves well enough verbally, they often choose visual expression. However, by the age of 9, she claims, children's cognitive development starts to approach the logic and the rational tendencies of adults, which leads to disintegration of the syncretism. Children's processing of experiences shifts from the inward one to the rational explanations and a more outside orientated one. Content and form become seemingly separated, function of form is replaced with a strong interest in the criteria of “beautiful” and there is an attempt to meet the cultural expectations of realistic depiction. (*Gerő, 1974. p.156 - 165*) “In this way, pictorial conversion becomes less and less a companion of the situation and problem solving. And when day-dreaming slides back to syncretism, mental endeavor, which used to be

characteristic of the experience processing, is missing.“³² ((Gerő, 1974. p.163) Children at the age of 9 and 10, she claims, still make an effort to solve new visual problems, such as presentation of space and different actions. However, focus on these problems is not accompanied with synergetic charge which existed in their earlier age, which results in the decline in the quality of their visual expression. Hence, the main cause of the drawing gap, according to Gerő, does not lie in the natural psychological development of children, but in the ambition to draw realistically. (Kárpáti, 2005. p. 24)



fig. 6 - illustrations from „The Little Prince” by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

European and North American art tradition have a very strong linear understanding of children’s artistic development, with a final aim of imitating what is seen as accurate, and as realistically so as possible. (Gerő,1974; Kárpáti, 2005) A child is often not only exposed to these kinds of expectations in the school but also at home or any other place that deals with aesthetics. Even though it might not be the case in some smaller artistic and intellectual circles, the wider society still considers that a piece of art is lovable and good if it realistically represents Nature. This idea that art *should* resemble reality, is often transferred to children unintentionally or subconsciously. It is rather often the case, that a child who is drawing is

approached by an adult and asked what he is drawing. The drawing is then usually evaluated as successful if the object presented is recognizable and even more if it resembles the object presented. This leads to an early understanding that what a child draws needs to be recognizable and resemble the world around him. In Saint Exupéry’s *The Little Prince*, the author tells us how, as a child, he drew a snake digesting an elephant. (see fig.6) When he showed his drawing to adults, they did not see a snake but a hat in the drawing. The boy then decided to explain to adults what he was drawing, and made a drawing of a snake from the inside, showing the elephant inside its the belly. Adults again did not recognize a snake in the

³² autho’s translation

drawing and as a consequence advised him to give up drawing and rather concentrate on history, geography, mathematics and grammar. The author then says: “That is why, at the age of six, I gave up what might have been a magnificent career as a painter.” (*Saint-Exupery: 1981*)³³

The phenomenon of the drawing gap is also explained in the theory of Andrea Kárpáti (2005). According to her, drawing ability of very few children between the age of 10 and 12, is sufficient to reach the standards and expectations of the Western tradition of pictorial representation. She claims that, even though most children stop drawing around this age, visual language remains an important means of expression for them. Kárpáti, suggests, that one cannot really talk about the drawing gap but rather about a change of expressive medium in the visual field. Children in their teens, she claims, continue to use drawings in different subjects in school, such as geography and biology and engage in interior design, (such as their own bedroom), fashion, make-up, photography and digital imaging. She also asserts that we cannot talk about a true decline in artistic performance, but rather about a *change* of the visual language or more precisely the appearance of a special “adolescent style”. She links this phenomenon to the “taste gap” between the adolescents and adults, as well as between visually sophisticated and lay viewers of art. (*Kárpáti, 2005; Kárpáti and Kovács, 1997*) Kárpáti claims that basic visual skills and abilities do not decline between the age of 10 and 16, but rather that the visual languages used change, and are sometimes closer to the visual languages of subcultures. Using large, age and art education representative samples of these age groups, she showed a continuous development of spatial abilities, use of color and symbolic representation. (*Kárpáti 1997; Kárpáti and Schönau,, 1997*)

Kárpáti observes the appearance of the drawing gap in European and North American countries, and compares them to those where there is no drawing gap, such as Japan or Arab countries. She concludes that whether drawing gap will appear or not is culturally determined. According to Kárpáti, exaggerated emphasis on realism in traditional (academic) Western art education, is not favorable for teenagers, who are fully capable of seeing the difference between their drawing achievements and the realistic depiction, but not able to meet their own expectations and hence stop to visually express themselves through drawing and painting. She stresses that teenagers simply prefer other kinds of visual expression in which they can experience success. (*Kárpáti, 2005, 26*)

Seeking a solution for continuous quality visual education, and inspired by Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligence (see XY), as well as by her personal experience in Leonardo Program where visual expression and visual talent are understood in a much wider sense than pictorial expression, (*Kárpáti,, 1997. p79-87*) Kárpáti proposes a change of

³³ author’s translation

approach in art education. She suggests that the focus of art lessons held to teenagers, should be on *self expression* and should include introduction to contemporary arts and design. Self identity and self expression are central topics of interest for teenagers anyway, and using language of contemporary arts which does not necessarily require high level representational skills and the inclusion of other tools of expression such as video, performance or installation, might be a fruitful solution for art education after the age of 10. She also claims that “if there is a motivating learning environment where tools are affluent, teenagers gladly create, to the same extent as their younger peers do” (Kárpáti., 2005. p. 26)

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Drawing gap, decline in artistic performance around the age of 10-12 is explained by theories of Betty Edwards, Zsuzsa Gerő and Andrea Kárpáti. Edwards claims that the drawing gap appears due to the dominance of the right hemisphere over the right one. Gerő connects it to psychological factors and ambition to draw realistically, while Kárpáti claims that drawing gap actually presents a change in taste and ways of visual expression, and not a true decline in quality. Seeking continuity in visual expression, Kárpáti suggests a change of focus and tools in art education.

4. Nonviolent Communication (NVC)

At the end of 1960's Marshall B. Rosenberg, an American psychologist, developed an approach to understanding causes of human feelings and behavior and a way of dealing with both everyday communication and conflict situations, naming it Nonviolent Communication (NVC). He was interested in understanding the reasons and initiating motives for human violence. As a student of Carl Rogers, Rosenberg was inspired by humanistic psychology and created a method which aim is to help people *communicate* in a more compassionate and more efficient way with as much clarity (little misunderstanding) as possible. This compassionate connection is created through communication and usually leads to conflict resolution. (Rosenberg, 2003b; i.s. 34)

4.1. Introduction to NVC

*Out beyond ideas of Wrongdoing and Rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.
(Rumi)*

One of the most radical and refreshing ideas of NVC is the shift in understanding the causes of people's feelings and reactions. We have learned, through the way of thinking taught to us by our culture and language, that the way how we feel is usually caused by what other people do or say to us, or by the events which we experience. It is usually the outside force or a person who is considered responsible for the way we feel. For example, when John forgets to bring his homework, he is the one who *makes* his teacher feel disappointed. Similar to this, things that we do or say are considered to be responsible for the way how other people feel. This can be seen from sentences such as: "I make my parents proud" or "Sorry if I bore you".

Marshall B. Rosenberg makes a shift from this approach, offering a different understanding of reality by claiming that it is not what other people say or do to us, but that it is our met and unmet needs which cause how we feel. When our needs are met, according to Rosenberg, we will experience pleasant feelings, like being happy, peaceful or grateful, and when they are unmet we will experience unpleasant feelings like pain, fear or helplessness. According to NVC, feelings are indicators showing us whether or how much our needs were met, and not something that can be caused by other people or events. Other people and events can be an initiating stimulus for a feelings, but the cause is always a met or unmet need.

This shift in understanding what causes human feelings gives space for a kind of communication which is life serving and free of coercions such as fear, guilt, shame or obligation. NVC thinking patterns avoid any kind of evaluation and judgment and instead, focus on expressing, through feelings and needs. “A key principle of nonviolent communication that supports this is the capacity to express oneself without use of good/bad, right/wrong judgment, hence the emphasis on expressing feelings and needs, instead of criticisms or judgments.” (i. s. 16) To support this judgment and evaluation free approach, Rosenberg created a formal structure of nonviolent communication, consisting of 4 steps: 1) *observation*, 2) *feeling*, 3) *need* and 4) *request* which will be discussed in detail in the continuation of the text. It is important to stress that this formal structure, as it is case with learning foreign a language, is important for clearer understanding and adaptation of the NVC thinking pattern. On the other hand, once thinking in the 4 steps of NVC is learned and becomes more automatic, it is the attention and the active presence which overtakes the most important role in communication, and hence a less formal and more supple way of using NVC can be adopted. (Rosenberg, 2003b; i.s. 33)

4.2. Two Modes of NVC Connection

“Empathy arises as a form of self-consciousness; the more we know our emotions, the more accomplished we will be in reading other people’s feelings”. (Goleman, 2005. p.93)

NVC strives to find the way for highest efficiency and clarity in communication. To achieve this, it uses two communication modes: *genuine self expression* and *empathic listening*. Both of these modes seek to create a genuine connection between speakers by using the 4 structural steps of NVC.

Genuine self expression is used when speaker wants to express his thoughts, feelings and needs to an other person. He may say: “ I see that 6 days before the deadline, you have not started working on your project. Seeing this, I am a bit concerned because I would like clarity and ease about organizing the annual exhibition. Would you be willing to tell me what your plans are concerning your participation?”. NVC suggests that the person expressing himself use 4 structural steps since they are more likely to provide him with maximum clarity and therefore help avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding. (Rosenberg, 2003b; i.s. 33 and 34)

The second mode of connecting to other people is through empathetic listening. This form is used when we want to be present with the speaker, when we want to understand what other person is saying or in times when the other person needs empathy. Empathetic listening, in other sources is also called *active listening* and was first introduced by psychologist Carl Rogers. Rogers noticed that when we only listen to a person speaking and reflect what we have heard (we do the “parrot speech” as he calls it), without interfering with our thoughts, opinions or judgments, the other person will experience it as being heard. With active listening there are higher chances for finding a solution for a problem and it also has proved to be a helpful tool for solving conflict situations. Thomas *Gordon (1974)* explains this simple technique: "Active listening is certainly not complex. Listeners need only to restate, in their own language, their impression of the expression of the sender." Marshall B. Rosenberg took active listening one step further, by introducing the four NVC steps into it. The person “giving empathy” (listener) transforms what he heard into 4 steps of NVC and then reflects it to the person ”receiving empathy” (speaker). The person giving empathy is basically listening to the words of the speaker and trying to guess what needs might be expressed. “When we hear the other person’s feelings and needs, we recognize our common humanity” (*Rosenberg, 2003. p.151*), or in other words, hearing needs creates connection between people. It also gives space for the speaker to deepen into his subject and introspect. (*Rosenberg, 2003b*)

NVC teaches that, when two persons are engaged in a dialogue, the focus of the conversation always needs to be on one of them, in order to create connection between the two sides. During the conversation, sides might shift from one person to the other, but in each shift it is always important to keep clear who is the empathic listener and who expressing himself. If the roles of the empathic listener and the person expressing himself mix in a dialogue, it can create miscommunication and misunderstanding, and two sides engaged in conversation will probably not connect. For example:

A: *The children again forgot to bring paper to the drawing lesson! I cannot work like this!*

B: *Yes, I know how you feel but it is not worth getting upset about.* (person B talks about himself and expresses *his* opinion instead of connecting with what person A may be experiencing frustration because she longs for cooperation. Person Aa also says that what person A is experiencing is not worthy.)

A: *It is the third week in the row that they have done it!*

B: *You may want to consider buying paper for all class and then charging them for it.* (Person B now gives advice instead of hearing that person A is probably overwhelmed and longing for ease)

A: *Children today are really irresponsible. (person A has not experienced that person B has truly heard her, and she is really in pain now. She starts generalizing)*

B: *Yes terrible! I really feeling sorry you have to work in this school (person B again expresses how he is (feeling sorry), instead of hearing how person A feels)*

A: *I hate this school!*

The above example shows how we usually communicate. When person A was in pain her pain was denied, and she received opinions, judgments or advice. Person B was not connecting to person A, but was switching focus of the conversation from the speaker to himself. When we express our opinions, thoughts, feelings, needs, advice, evaluations or judgments when listening to a person we do not really focus on the person we are listening to, but shift the focus to ourselves. This means that the roles of listener and speaker change from sentence to sentence and that a true connection between speaker and the listener cannot be created.

If person B was listening with empathy, the previous conversation might have looked like this:

A: *The children again forgot to bring paper to the drawing lesson! I cannot work like this!*

B: *When this repeats are you feeling upset because you would like cooperation with your students? (person B is guessing what may be the feeling and the need behind person A's words)*

A: *I work so hard to prepare the lessons and make them interesting. And all they need to do is to remember to bring one lousy sheet a paper on Tuesdays.*

B: *When they forget to bring paper on Tuesdays, do you feel really frustrated because you would like some recognition for your work? (person B again guessing the feeling and the need)*

A: *It's not about recognition. I really care about them and I want to teach them to love arts as much as I do love it myself. Art is my life!*

B: *So, you really long to share something so precious to you? (B trying to guess person A's need which was unmet)*

A: *Yes, this is exactly what I was telling you. I love sharing my love for art. This is why I teach. Maybe in the next lesson I could ask them what role art plays in their lives.*

Empathic connection can be created not only with other people, but with ourselves. NVC uses technique of self-empathy, which is similar to the above mentioned one, with the exception that in case of self empathy, the whole dialogue runs within one person. Self-

empathy uses NVC steps to connect the person to himself and become aware of his needs. This also might help solve inner conflicts, calm the person down , and facilitate genuine self-expression of the person. (Rosenberg, 2003; i.s. 33)

4.3. Formal NVC - Four Steps

As mentioned above, the NVC paradigm contains four steps : 1) *observation*, 2) *feeling* 3) *need* and 4) *request* , which are expressed with normal, everyday words. It is the content of each of these steps and their order which help NVC to become a tool for creating compassionate connection and effective communication between people, while being free of judgments, evaluations, criticism, praise, fear, guilt or shame. These four steps will be elaborated in this subchapter. (Rosenberg, 2003b)

4.3.1. Step One - Observation

The highest form of human intelligence is the ability to observe without evaluating.
(Krishnamurti)

The first out of four structural steps of NVC is observation. In NVC observation is separated from evaluation, because, among other things, efficiency of communication depends on the clarity of the things that are desired to be expressed. “When we combine observation with evaluation, ... we decrease the likelihood that others will hear our intended message. Instead, they are apt to hear criticism and thus resist what we are saying.” (Rosenberg, 2003. p.26) NVC chooses a way of expression which might be different from the one we have experienced so far. In a situation where person A says to person B : “*You are boring*”, person A evaluates (labels) person B. Further more, the sentence does not give clarity to person B about what exactly did he do to inspire the person A have such an opinion. It also expresses A’s opinion as if it was a general truth, while it is only an opinion of one person or a group of people. This can create confusion which is most likely to lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretations. Person B will probably not understand or hear what person A really wanted to say, but will experience his statement as criticism. To reach maximum clarity, NVC suggests expressing this sentence as following: “*When you speak about football for 20 minutes, I think that you are boring*”. In this sentence it is clear what exactly person B did (he spoke about football for 20 minutes) which made person A have an opinion of him (being boring). This sentence is structured in a way that avoids generalization

by clearly indicating personal opinion (*I think*). Beside this person B or other people are given freedom to create a different opinion from that of person A. (Rosenberg, 2003. i.s. 33 and 34)

The NVC kind of observation separates observation from evaluation and it indicates what is seen, heard or experienced with senses, like: *I see Judy lifting boxes* or *Anna hears two students fighting*. It also strives to reach maximum clarity in communication and therefore tries to avoid generalizations by being specific in time and context. It usually focuses on one particularly event at a certain time. For example: *While we were in the museum two days ago, John asked to go out to bathroom four times*. In addition, NVC tries to avoid mixing observation with evaluation stressing that it is the person who evaluates who is responsible for the evaluation and that his statement is not a general truth, but a personal opinion. For example: *When I saw her paintings, I thought she had no sense for color*.

It is important to note that, since they are also considered to be categorizing, positive labels may create the same amount of confusion the same way as the negative ones. (Rosenberg, 2003b) For example if person A says to person B : “*You are really creative*”, it does not really give clarity about what did person B exactly did to stimulated person A to make this conclusion. Expressed in a way which is in harmony with NVC, this sentence might sound: “*When I see how you retailored your mother’s old dress combined it with this fashionable belt, I think that you are creative*”.

	<i>Communication</i>	<i>Example of observation with evaluation</i>	<i>Example of observation separate from evaluation</i>
1	Use of verb to be without indication that the evaluator accepts responsibility for the evaluation	You are so generous.	When I see you give all your lunch money to others I think you are being too generous.
2	Use of verbs with evaluative connotations	Doug procrastinates.	Doug only studies for exams the night before
3	Implication that one’s inferences about another person’s thoughts, feelings, intentions, or desires are the only ones possible	She won’t get her work in.	I don’t think she’ll get her work in. or She said, “I won’t get my work in.”
4	Confusion of prediction with certainty	If you don’t eat balanced meals, your health will be impaired.	If you don’t eat balanced meals, I fear that your health may be impaired.
5	Failure to be specific about referents	Minorities don’t take care of their property.	I have not seen the minority family living at 1679 Ross shovel the snow on their sidewalk.
6	Use of words denoting ability without indicating that an evaluation is being made	Hank Smith is a poor soccer player.	Hank Smith has not scored a goal in 20 games.
7	Use of adverb and adjectives in ways that do not signify an evaluation has been made	Jim is ugly.	Jim’s looks don’t appeal to me.

table 3. – *Examples of observation with and without evaluation*³⁴

³⁴ adopted from Rosenberg, 2003b. p. 30-31

Rosenberg stresses that it is very important to distinguish the observation which is mixed with evaluation from the observation which is separate from evaluation. He gives examples of seven cases in which mixing observation and evaluation occur in the usual way of using language. In the table below (see table 3), he also suggests how the same sentence (observation) can be expressed separately from evaluation and in harmony with NVC. (Rosenberg, 2003b. p. 30-31)

The NVC kind of observation resembles a mirror. It reflects without commenting, labeling or evaluating. When something is desired to be expressed in words, clarity of the observation is important, because it is the observation which gives understanding about what is talked about and about what was the specific stimulus which gave rise to the feelings and needs. This clarity helps the further 3 steps of NVC structure to create an effective communication and flowing connection between two people.

4.3.2. Step Two – Feelings

Emotional literacy programs speed up children's academic achievements and success in school. (Goleman)³⁵

The step following the observation without evaluation, is the expression of feelings. NVC recognizes only two categories of feelings: those that feel pleasant, such as happy, peaceful, hopeful, enthusiastic etc. and those which feel unpleasant like tired, hungry, worried, sad, etc. Feelings, according to NVC, serve us as indicators showing whether and how much have our needs been met. When our needs are being met we experience pleasant feelings, while when they are being unmet we experience unpleasant ones. For example: “When I see my students make progress in their drawings, I feel happy because I find so much meaning in my work.” or “When George refuses to answer my question, I feel frustrated, because mutual trust with my students is very important to me.” Experiencing pleasure or pain when our needs are met or unmet are nature's way of signaling us whether we need something or are satisfied. Unpleasant feelings have function to mobilize us to try to meet our needs. (Rosenberg, 2006. i.s. 44) To give a very simple example: if we did not feel thirsty when our body gets dehydrated, we would probably not drink, which could have fatal results for us.

It is often the case that people are not aware about what they feel. If asked how they are, or what do they feel, they will most probably automatically answer “good” or “bad”, or

³⁵ Goleman, 2005. p. 267

variations on this, such as “ great”, “awesome” or “terrible”. Marshall B. Rosenberg talks about this: “ Our repertoire of words for calling people names is often larger than our vocabulary of words that allow us to clearly describe our emotional states.” (Rosenberg, 2003b, p. 37) We have simply never been taught nor have we seen examples at home, in school, or at work for an active usage of a wide vocabulary of feelings. This is the reason why Rosenberg suggests development and strengthening of the feelings vocabulary. In his books he gives a list of feelings which can help us find the exact word to express how we feel (see fig. 7 and 8)

In NVC all feelings are considered acceptable and equally legitimate. There are no feelings which “should not” be felt or which are less important than the others. Denials of feelings such as “Big boys are not afraid” , “You have no reasons be depressed” or “don’t be sad” are not in harmony with the values of NVC. “There is not such a thing as “ wrong feeling”. It is possible that in the same situation I would feel differently, but still this does not change the fact that the other person feels the way he does. It follows that “appropriate” and “inappropriate” feeling does not exist: every real feeling of every human being is equally respectable.” (i. s. 33)

In our culture, the verb “to feel” is often used for expressing an opinion or a thought. For example: *I could feel that he was lying to me* or *I feel this student will be a great artist*. In both of these sentences opinions were expressed and not feelings. NVC makes a clear distinction between statements expressing that something is felt, from statements where something is thought. If we want to express the above sentences in a way that is in harmony with NVC, we would say: *I thought that he was lying to me* or *I think that this student might be a great artist*. (Rosenberg, 2003b)

List of feelings when your needs are satisfied:			
AFFECTIONATE compassionate friendly loving open hearted sympathetic tender warm	ENGAGED absorbed alert curious engrossed enchanted entranced fascinated interested intrigued involved spellbound stimulated	EXCITED amazed animated ardent aroused astonished dazzled eager energetic enthusiastic giddy invigorated lively passionate surprised vibrant	PEACEFUL calm clear headed comfortable centered content equanimous fulfilled mellow quiet relaxed relieved satisfied serene still tranquil trusting
CONFIDENT empowered open proud safe secure	HOPEFUL expectant encouraged optimistic	REFRESHED enlivened rejuvenated renewed rested restored revived	EXHILARATED blissful ecstatic elated enthralled exuberant radiant rapturous thrilled
INSPIRED amazed awed wonder	JOYFUL amused delighted glad happy jubilant pleased tickled		
GRATEFUL appreciative moved thankful touched			

fig. 7 – List of feelings when needs are met³⁶

³⁶ adopted from i.s.15

List of feelings when your needs are not satisfied:

AFRAID apprehensive dread foreboding frightened mistrustful panicked petrified scared suspicious terrified wary worried	DISCONNECTED alienated aloof apathetic bored cold detached distant distracted indifferent numb removed uninterested withdrawn	PAIN agony anguished bereaved devastated grief heartbroken hurt lonely miserable regretful remorseful
ANNOYED aggravated dismayed disgruntled displeased exasperated frustrated impatient irritated irked	DISQUIET agitated alarmed discombobulated disconcerted disturbed perturbed rattled restless shocked startled surprised troubled turbulent turmoil uncomfortable uneasy unnerved unsettled upset	SAD depressed dejected despair despondent disappointed discouraged disheartened forlorn gloomy heavy hearted hopeless melancholy unhappy wretched
ANGRY enraged furious incensed indignant irate livid outraged resentful	EMBARRASSED ashamed chagrined flustered guilty mortified self-conscious	TENSE anxious cranky distressed distraught edgy fidgety frazzled irritable jittery nervous overwhelmed restless stressed out
AVERSION animosity appalled contempt disgusted dislike hate horrified hostile repulsed	FATIGUE beat burnt out depleted exhausted lethargic listless sleepy tired weary worn out	VULNERABLE fragile guarded helpless insecure leery reserved sensitive shaky
CONFUSED ambivalent baffled bewildered dazed hesitant lost mystified perplexed puzzled torn		YEARNING envious jealous longing nostalgic pining wistful

fig.8 - Lists of feelings when the needs are unmet³⁷

³⁷ i. s. 15

Our culture has taught us that the way how we feel is usually caused by another person. It has also created a linguistic structure to support this idea. (Rosenberg, 2006. i.s.44) Words like: misunderstood, ignored, provoked, unwanted, abused, rejected, diminished, etc. all tell that the way how a person feels is caused by someone else. These are not real feelings but rather interpretations of actions. NVC avoids using these words, since they are not in harmony with its paradigm claiming that the way a person feels is always caused by a met or unmet need and not by an other person. NVC would rather separate an interpretation from a feeling and say that *John feels lonely when he thinks that the teacher misunderstood him* or that *Susan was hurt when she thought that her idea was ignored*.

Rosenberg also stresses the importance of expressing feelings for creating genuine and life enriching connection to other people, stating that when feelings are hidden (not pronounced), other people do sense them and then might misinterpret them. He brings an example of a NVC course he was giving to students in a school. He felt very uncomfortable when he entered the classroom, but he was afraid to express it. Instead, he started telling them that they would learn a process of communication and how this would be beneficial for them. The students did not show much interest, and as time was passing, he noticed them looking out of window, rummaging through their bags, and none seemed to listen. This eventually brought even more discomfort to Rosenberg. Then one of the boys said: “You just hate being with black people, don’t you?” Rosenberg then understood, that since he did not express his discomfort to the class, the boy, who felt that something was happening, misinterpreted it. Rosenberg then told them that he had felt discomfort when he had entered the class, but not because they were black, but because he did not know anyone and he wanted acceptance. The honest expressing of his feelings changed the energy in the class, the students started to ask questions, tell things about themselves and express interest in NVC. When Rosenberg dared to show his vulnerability, by honestly expressing his feelings, the students were able to connect to him as a person and to the subject he was teaching. (Rosenberg, 2003b)

4.3.3. Step Three – Needs

The third step of the NVC structure is identifying needs. Rosenberg suggests that the way how we feel is due our needs were being met or unmet. According to NVC, needs are the cause of all human actions while feelings only serve as mobilizing power for meeting these needs. “Judgment, criticism, diagnoses, and interpretations of others are all alienated expressions of our own needs and values.” (Rosenberg, 2003b. p.61) When a teacher say to his student: ” you are insensitive!”, she might actually mean: “When I hear you say that you do not care about arts, I feel annoyed because sharing my love for the subject is giving me so much meaning in my life”. Everything a person does or says is because he is expressing or

meeting a need of his. However, becoming aware of what the need one expresses is not always so easy. “Unfortunately, most of us have never been taught to think in terms of needs. We are accustomed to think about what’s wrong with other people when our needs aren’t being fulfilled.” (Rosenberg, 2003b. p. 53) NVC makes a shift in this, and gives tools which help us become aware of what needs of ours as well as the needs of other people might be met or unmet. It also helps hear feelings and needs behind the language of judgment, criticism, diagnosing and interpretation as it simply helps translates the judgmental sentences into 4 steps of NVC. In this way, there is a smaller possibility that the message expressed will be received as blaming and that compassionate connection will be created. ((Rosenberg, 2003b). To help this process of translation Rosenberg also gives a list of needs. (see fig.9)

CONNECTION acceptance affection appreciation belonging cooperation communication closeness community companionship compassion consideration consistency empathy inclusion intimacy love mutuality nurturing respect/self-respect safety security stability support to know and be known to see and be seen to understand and be understood trust warmth	PHYSICAL WELL-BEING air food movement/exercise rest/sleep sexual expression safety shelter touch water HONESTY authenticity integrity presence PLAY joy humor PEACE beauty communion ease equality harmony inspiration order	MEANING awareness celebration of life challenge clarity competence consciousness contribution creativity discovery efficacy effectiveness growth hope learning mourning participation purpose self-expression stimulation to matter understanding AUTONOMY choice freedom independence space spontaneity
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fig. 9 – List of needs ³⁸

Similar to what it is case with feelings, NVC does not recognize hierarchy of needs. All needs are considered legitimate and equally important. There are also no needs one “should not” have or needs which are bad or forbidden to feel. Accepting the existence of needs can sometime be hard and frightening, since our culture often judges us severely when we identify or express our needs. When expressing our needs, we might be labeled as selfish, needy, weak or dependent and told to be ashamed. We have also been taught that the highest form of love is when we subordinate, or completely give up our needs to meet needs of other people. This is particularly case in of women: “ For centuries, the image of loving woman has been associated with sacrifice and denial of her own needs to take care of others. Because women are socialized to view the care of others as their highest duty, they have often learned to

³⁸ adopted from int. source: 15

ignore their own needs.” (Rosenberg, 2003b, p.55) NVC teaches to value and accept all needs of all people. It’s aim is to create environment where needs of all people are identified and taken care of. In a classroom setting it will mean that the needs of students are as important as the needs of their teachers.

There are also situations when a need of a person cannot be met. This might be painful and create lots of negative feelings for this person. A person might want to take time and mourn the inability to meet his needs. Space and legitimacy to mourn when needs are unmet is as important as celebrating when they get met. The NVC technique of empathy offers support to these processes.

It is very common that needs are mixed with strategies for meeting needs. (Rosenberg, 2003b) We might say “ I need you to do the dishes today” when we actually mean “ I feel tired and would *need* some *support*. Would you be willing to do the dishes today?” In this sentence, doing dishes is not a need but a strategy for meeting need for help. Or we may say: “ You need to go out and dance” when we mean: “ After working 12 h daily during this week, you feel overwhelmed and are longing for (needing) some fun.”. Going out and dancing is only a strategy for meeting the need for rest and fun.

When needs are separated from the strategies they are always *impersonal* and *universal* for all human beings, such as the need for acceptance, support, food, harmony, contribution, etc. “All human beings have the same needs. The differences are in the strategies for meeting needs. All humans have a need for physical nourishment for their bodies (food), but what is the strategy for meeting that? In some countries they eat quite different food to meet that need. So strategy is different form culture to culture, but all human beings have the same needs. “ (Rosenberg, 2006. i.s.44)

NVC teaches people how to express their feelings and needs clearly, and how to see and hear feelings and needs behind other people’s words and actions. It’s focus is on creating compassionate connection through which needs of all sides are recognized. When people connect to each other on the level of needs, they experience it as a very deep and fulfilling connectedness and they feel energized. Moreover, if there is a conflict, a connection on the level of needs can, in most cases, bring a solution where the needs of both sides are willingly met.

5.3.4. Step Four – Request

The fourth and the last step of the NVC structure is request. NVC requests always tend to be positive and clear, expressing what exactly we would like the other person to *do* to meet our needs.

It is common in our culture to make request using negative form, to express what we

do not want instead of expressing what we *do* want. When requests are expressed negatively, the person requested is not provided with the needed information about what *exactly* are we asking him to do. He does not know what he could *do* to meet our needs, which may result in confusion and a fertile ground for misunderstanding and misinterpretation, while it is also less likely that our needs will be met. (Rosenberg, 2006. i.s.44) Marshall Rosenberg brings an example of a woman frustrated because her husband was spending a lot of time at work. She described the request she had told to her husband: “ I asked him not to spend so much time at work. Three weeks later, he responded by announcing that he’d signed up for a golf tournament!” She has successfully communicated to him what she did not want – his spending so much time at work – but had failed to request what she *did* want. Encouraged to reword her request, she thought a minute and said: “ I wish I had told him that I would like him to spend at least one evening a week at home with the children and me.” (Rosenberg, 2003b. p.68)

NVC requests also try to be *exact*. The more accurately we ask for something, the more likely it will be fulfilled. If a teacher tells to her student: “I would like you to work harder”, he might not get a clear idea about what exactly is he asked to do. However, if she says: “Would you be willing to bring an extra 20 sketches every week?”, the student can understand exactly what his teacher is asking him to do. The clarity of the request can be helped if we express where, when, how and who we request from. The more specific a request is, the more it helps communication .

An other important quality of an NVC request is that it is deniable. An NVC request is neither a demand nor a vindication and the person asking needs to be conscious that the request might receive both positive and a negative response. The deniable quality of an NVC request prevents us from asking what we want in a way that an other person might hear what we ask as demanding. “Requests are received as demands when listeners believe that they will be blamed or punished if they do not comply . We can help others trust that we are requesting , not demanding, by indicating our desire for them to comply only if they can do so willingly.“ (Rosenberg, 2003b. p. 85) NVC also suggests to use “Would you be willing “ request form rather than other more commonly used ones, such as: “ Can you (do something)” or “ I would like you to (do something)”, since this form leaves more space for accepting or refusing to do what is requested. Sometimes, it is hard to accept denial of our requests since fulfillment of our needs often depends on other people. Thinking about the possible pain, loneliness, mourning we may experience when our needs are not met may be frightening for us. The absurd situation about human nature is that the more we are able to accept a “no” answer for our request, the more likely the person asked will not hear our request as a demand and more likely he will be willing to fulfill our request. (Rosenberg,

2003b. p.81; i. s. 33,)

When we genuinely express our vulnerability (feelings and needs), we often would like to know how does this affect the person we are talking to. Marshall B. Rosenberg states three different types of requests we can make: “ (a) what the listener is feeling; (b) what the listener is thinking; or (c) whether the listener would be willing to take a particular action. (Rosenberg, 2003b. p.81; i. s. 33,) We may like to know how did what we had said stimulate feelings in the person we are talking to (a). For example: *Would you tell me how you feel about what I’ve just said?* “. We may also like to know what the other person thinks about what we said (b). For example: *“Would you tell me your opinion about my health problem and whether you think I need to see a specialist.?”* or *“Would you tell me what do you feel about what I have just said.”* Or we might like to know whether the person we are talking to is willing to do what we are asking for (c): *“Would you be willing to postpone your visit for the summer?”* Or *“Would you be willing to tell what you have heard me saying?”* . When we express our request as a question rather than as a statement, the person we are talking to gets space to answer and a choice to agree or not agree to do what is requested. For example, *“Would you be willing to do the dishes?”* is more open than *“I would like you to do the dishes”*.

It is important that when an NVC request is made, it is accompanied with an expression of our observations, feelings and needs. If we make a request without expressing the other 3 elements of NVC, there is a great possibility that the request will be heard as a demand. For example: *“I would like you to call me if you know that you are running late,”* vis *“When you are 45 minutes late and do not call me, I feel upset because I would like respect for my time. Would you be willing to call me if you know that you are running late?”* . The second sentence gives clear information about why the request is being made (person is feeling upset) , which event inspired it (the person requested was 45 minutes late), and what need will be met if the person requested will agree on fulfilling the request (respect) . The first sentence lacks all this information and therefore might confuse the person requested, which may further result in hearing the request as a demand as well as lowering the chance that the request will be willingly fulfilled. (Rosenberg, 2003b)

CHAPTER SUMMARY

I find it important to stress in the end of talking about the 4 NVC steps, that the objective of NVC is not to find strategies and ways to meet our needs. If it were, NVC would be manipulation and not communication. The objective of NVC is to establish a relationship, a connection with other people, based on honesty, compassion and empathy. Request, together with the other 3 steps of NVC structure, only serves as a tool for expressing what a person wants in a way which is more clear and more understandable than our usual way of communication. It is due to the clarity and the compassionate nature of this connection, that the person requested is more likely to be willing to meet our needs, and not because our needs

5. Understanding Difficulties in Learning to Draw

During my teaching work with students of different ages in a number of art schools, I sometimes noticed that students had difficulties in learning to draw. These difficulties were usually temporary, and they would be experienced both by the high school and the university students. Being a practicing artist myself, I have also personally known the infertile periods in my own art work, which could last from a few hours to as long as six months. During these periods anything I would create seemed to be wrong and lifeless. I would feel confused and desperate wanting to understand what caused this sudden lack of ability to express myself well and with ease.

Exploring topics relevant to art education in the field of educational science and psychology, I started to find similarities between a phenomenon referred to, in the research on children's art, as the *drawing gap* (see chapter 3) and the learning difficulties seen in cases of high school and university students. These two problems are usually approached and explained separately from one and the other. This chapter, however, will try to find connection between these problems/phenomena and will try to suggest, by examining it from the perspective of NVC (see chapter 4) , that we actually might be considering one problem. That will help us understand what might be the obstacles in the process of learning visual arts and it will shed some light on the elements that can make that process easier and more successful.

5.1. *Understanding the Efficiency of Betty Edwards Method*

When the theory of Betty Edwards was originally published in 1979, it was immediately considered scientifically inaccurate. (see 3.1.) The theory received numerous criticisms as being pseudo scientific and simplifying art education to the methods of realistic depiction. (*Arenhouse in i.s. 65; i.s.64*) Regardless of strong criticism of the theory, Edward's book has enjoyed great popularity and an international success, since its first edition to the present. A large number of art teachers and researchers have been reporting a success in teaching by implementing Edwards's method. (*Youngblood, 1981; Nutter, 1983; Jones, 199; Mize, 2008 in i.s.66*) They claim that the exercises Edwards suggests in her book are actually effective for teaching drawing. "...it is important to emphasize that this theoretical flow in no way limits the practicality of the drawing methods prescribed. In fact, they seem to be effective and efficient techniques for teaching beginning students to draw representationally. Moreover, they rank along with methods prescribed by Nicolaides (1941) and McKim (1971) as among the most interesting and exciting valuable to art practitioners" (*Youngblood, 1981*).

p.65) In my interview with Erika Pécsi (2009), a Hungarian trainer of the Betty Edwards method, I learned that almost all the students who had attended her 4 day long intensive courses and who continued their studies in some field of arts, claimed that the exercises learned in the course had been extremely helpful for their future learning of drawing. Erika Pécsi considers Edwards's exercises to be very helpful to those beginning to learn representational drawing. However, she also considers it necessary that a student who takes a course with her, to continue to practice and learn drawing in order to achieve high results and professional skills and routine. (*Gutman, 2009*)

Edwards' exercises proved to be helpful in the drawing lessons I held in a vocational secondary school of arts in Hungary. I incorporated Edwards' drawing tasks into the more regular, traditional ones. Some of the exercises, such as drawing a hand without looking at the paper or the negative space exercises³⁹ turned to be extremely beneficial in helping students learn strategies for better, more precise observing, developing visual thinking as well as for relieving tension. Beside this, after completing Edwards exercises, students were able to incorporate the experiences into solving different, more complex tasks. In my opinion, even though Edwards' method on its own is not sufficient for acquiring professional knowledge and experience in representational drawing, it certainly can serve as an efficient and valuable complementary method for teaching drawing.

Since Edwards' theory proved to be false (see 3.1.) different attempts have been made to give explanation for the success of her method. Jean Ellen Jones claims that the popularity of Edwards' book is due to techniques designed to build student's self-confidence. (*Jones, 1997*). Chambliss and Hartl suggest that "the possibility that much of the improvement attributed to Edwards' specific training techniques is in fact due to changes in anxiety, perceived ability, and heighten motivation". (*Chambliss and Hartl, 1984. p.152*) Their conclusion is based on their experiment made on 53 randomly chosen volunteers divided into 3 groups: a group which received Edwards' training, a placebo (sham method) group, and a control group that did not receive any training. It was shown that the students in the group which received Edwards' training had the same level of improvement in their drawings as the students from the group which received a sham training⁴⁰. It was also shown that students in both Edwards' and the sham training group showed more improvement than students from the group with no training. (*Chambliss and Hartl, 1984. p.149-153*)

I found a rather large resemblance between Edwards' description of the right mode (see 3.1.) and the Csikszentmihály's explanation of the phenomena of flow (see 1.2.). Summarizing the characteristics of the right mode Edwards states:

³⁹ Betty Edwards' exercises are described more detailedly in chapter 6

⁴⁰ The group which received sham training was made to believe relaxation technique and hand warmth will optimize their drawing performance

“ First there is a seeming suspension of time. You are not aware of time in the sense of making time. Second, you pay no attention to spoken word. You may hear the sounds of speech, but you do not decode the sounds into meaningful words. If someone speaks to you, it seems as though it would take a great effort to cross back, think again in words, and answer. Furthermore, whatever you are doing seems immensely interesting. You are attentive and concentrated and feel “at one” with the things you are concentrating on. You feel energized but calm, active without anxiety. You feel self – confident and capable of doing the task as hand...The state is very pleasurable. On leaving it, you do not feel tired, but refreshed.” (Edwards, 1979. p.78-79)

Similar to this, Csikszentmihályi talks about *nine repeating elements* in flow, stating that in the state of flow the following elements are present: a clarity of the aims in every single step, immediate reflection about the action performed, harmony between the task and the ability are in harmony, action and the consciousness blend together, factors which may be disruptive are closed out from consciousness, there is no fear of failure, the consciousness about self disappears the sense of time is distorted; the action becomes autotelic. (Csikszentmihályi, 2008. p.119-121)

Betty Edwards' right mode	Csikszentmihályi's nine repeating elements of flow
<i>Seeming suspension of time. Not being aware of time</i>	<i>Distortion of time. In flow, a person is usually unaware time. Hours may pass while it may feel like a few minutes.</i>
<i>Not paying attention to spoken words. The sounds of speech might be heard, but they are not decoded into words; one is attentive and concentrated.</i>	<i>Factors that may be disruptive are closed out from consciousness. Attention paid only to here and now and to the action performed. One is absorbed in what he does.</i>
<i>Action performed is experienced as interesting; the state is very pleasurable; After it one feels refreshed, not tired</i>	<i>Action performed is autotelic; it is experienced as meaningful and fulfilling</i>
<i>One is attentive, concentrated and feels as “being one” with the things he is concentrated at</i>	<i>The action and the consciousness melt together; One is so immersed into the action, that the consciousness about self disappears (a musician might feel being in harmony with the universe, a sportsman might feel that he is moving as one with the team, etc.)</i>
<i>There is a feeling of being energized, active and at the same time calm, and without anxiety</i>	<i>Flow appears when certain amount of arousal is present . It cannot appear if there is anxiety, worry, apathy or boredom. Person in flow is relaxed.</i>
<i>There is a feeling of self-confidence and capability to do the task</i>	<i>Flow appears when there is confidence that the task can be solved (personal control over the action) and when the task matches the capability of the person</i>

table 4. - *Comparison of Betty Edwards' description of the right mode and Mihály Csikszentmihály's description of the phenomena of flow*

When we compare Edwards' description of the right mode, to Csikszentmihály's explanation of flow and its nine elements, the concurrence is evident. (see table 4) Each defining element of the Edward's right mode seem to find a match in the description of the flow experience. For example, Edwards describes one of the characteristics of the right more experience as: "Seeming suspension of time, not being aware of time" (*Edwards, 1979*) , while Csikszentmihályi reports that "In flow a person usually forgets about time. Hours may pass while it feels like a few minutes" (*Csikszentmihályi, 2008*) Talking about concentration and feeling of unity Edwards says: "One is attentive, concentrated and feels as "being one" with the things he is concentrated on" (*Edwards, 1979*) while Csikszentmihályi claims that in the state of flow one is so absorbed with the action and that the consciousness and action

blend together. (*Csikszentmihályi, 2008*). In the table 4 all nine elements of flow are compared with Edwards' right mode , showing the correlation between each of them.

I would like to suggest that the most likely major reason Betty Edwards' method turned to be successful in spite of the inaccurate theory behind it, are the exercises which help the students get into the state of flow more easily. Explaining Edwards' right mode as the flow, does not contradict Jones' explanation that the method is efficient because it helps students get more self confidence, nor Chamblis' and Hartl's explanation that it is due to the reduction in anxiety and elevation in perceived ability and motivation. It rather embraces these researches and gives a wider understanding of the problem.

5.2. Judging and Difficulties in Learning to Draw

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged" (*Bible, Matthew. 7:1*)

The way how we perceive the world around us and how we feel in it, is strongly influenced by our pattern of thinking (*Dispenza, 2007*) and the language we use. (*Bugariski, 1996*) The impact of the usage of language, the vocabulary that exists or does not exist in a language or our active vocabulary, the grammar and sentence construction to our communication, the way of thinking and the way we understand the world and ourselves, was partly elaborated in the previous chapter.

Linguistically speaking it is the language, the vocabulary and the sentence structure, which influences, to a great extent, our way of thinking and the perception of the world around us (*Bugariski, 1996*) and vice versa: the way we think, creates a language which serves as a tool for expressing these thoughts. (*Rosenberg, i.s. 44*) Sociolinguistics and sociology of

linguistics study the connection between the society, cultural norms and language. The correlation between the linguistic structure and the society is similar to the hen and the egg one, because language is usually formed in a way that serves the needs of the society while, at the same time, language can influence the way the world is perceived, their sensitivity in perception “Grammatical categories will play a key role in structuring cognitive categories and social fields by constraining the ontology that is taken for granted by the speakers.” (*Hill and Mannliem, 1992. p.387*) For example, Eskimo language uses several different words for snow, each expressing snow of different quality, (*Bugariski, 1996*) while English, on the other hand, uses only one word for snow of all qualities (dry, wet, icy, etc.). Deriving from this linguistic difference, an Eskimo is more likely to pay attention and be aware of the varieties of snow than a person who is a native English speaker. Logically, Eskimos developed such a wide vocabulary for snow, because their everyday activities and life are tightly connected to it, (*Bugariski, 1996*) while this is not the case with inhabitants of Great Britain.

We have also seen how cultural, social and biological changes in the society can affect the structure and grammar of a language (see chapter 4) and how the mental model of students may affect the progress in learning to draw. (see 1.5.2.)

This subchapter will attempt to explain range of difficulties connected to the developing, learning and expressing oneself in a visual way. All will be examined from the angle of NVC and its way of understanding what judging is and how it affects people.

5.2.1. Judging Seen From the Perspective of NVC

*“Out beyond ideas of wrong-doing and
right-doing, there is a field. I’ll meet you there,”
(Rumi)*

*“Observation without evaluation is the highest form of intelligence”
(Krishnamurti)*

The state of compassion, according to Marshall B. Rosenberg, is a natural state of every human being. He claims that “certain ways of communication alienate us from our natural state of compassion” (*Rosenberg, 2003a. p.15*), and one of these is judging. Outside of the language of jurisdiction, verb “to judge” is most commonly used to express formation of a negative opinion about someone. However, NVC has a broader understanding of this term. According to Rosenberg, judging does not include only giving negative opinion about something or someone, but also any kind of generalized classification, labeling or graduation. Rosenberg stresses: “Unfortunately the language we have learned has taught us to judge our own actions and the actions of others in terms of moralistic categories such as “right/wrong,” “correct/incorrect,” “good/bad,” “normal/abnormal,” “appropriate/inappropriate.” (*Rosenberg,*

2003a. p.11), Hence, according to NVC, saying that a book is good, that David is handsome or that Patrick is more intelligent than John, are all considered judgments, equally so as any negative statement (The book is a bad; David is ugly; Patrick is more stupid than John.) would be. According to NVC it is believed that “any label using the verb “to be” dehumanizes people. Any time you think of yourself, what you are, or what someone else is, ... you lose the beauty; (Rosenberg in i.s. 44) of seeing someone as a human being. Similar to this, Thomas Gordon talks about twelve roadblocks to communication, which enable two people to effectively solve a problem. Among these twelve he lists the following: “ 6. Judging, criticizing, disagreeing, blaming.....7. Name-calling, stereotyping, blaming.....8. Interpreting, analyzing, diagnosing”, but also “ 9. praising, agreeing, giving positive evaluations.” (Gordon, 1974. p.48-49).

According to NVC, when a personal opinion is expressed as a general, universal truth, it is considered a judgment.(e.g.: “This is a bad book.”, “She is pretty.”) When a person expresses his views and opinions only as personal one (e.g.: “I think that this book is bad”, “I find her pretty”) according to NVC, it is *not* considered a judgment as it clearly indicates that the opinion is only personal and hence, it allows space for a possibility that a different person might think differently about the same subject.

From a very early age, we have been used to use a language and a way of thinking which uses moralistic categorizing to express thoughts and feelings. As mentioned above, it is also common that we are not aware of the impact our language has on our way of thinking and, (Hill and Mannliem, 1992. p.387) we might even be unaware that a paradigm and ways of using language, different from those we know, might actually exist. I find it important to stress that some cultures created a less judgmental languages and are hence accompanied with a different mental models from what we are familiar with in the West. A good example for this is Semai language of Orang Asli people in Malaya. Not only is violence a taboo in their society but it seems to be supported by the their language too (Rosenberg, i.s. 45). In his interview with Paula Gloria, Marshall B. Rosenberg speaks about his experience of visiting a Malayan tribe. Talking to the translator, before a lecture he was asked to give to the tribe, Rosenberg was told that if he would use verb “to be” , it would hard translate, since it did not exist in the language of that tribe. (Rosenberg, i.s. 45). Rosenberg continues telling about the dialogue with the translator:

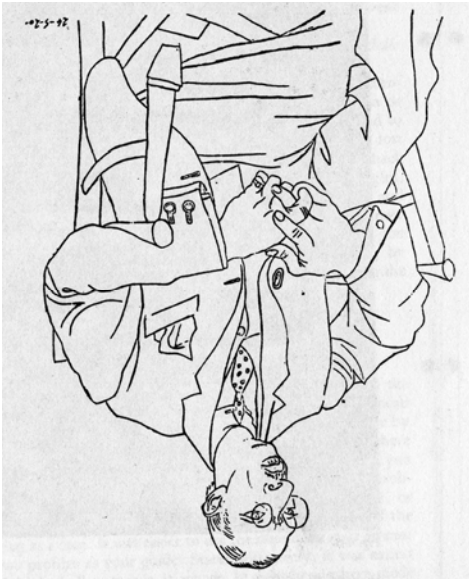
“ I thought about that for a moment, ...I said to him: “Well, how can I communicate today... What if I want to say to somebody: “you are selfish?” And he said: “Marshall we just don’t think that way. That would be a real challenge for me.” And I said: “ But, what would you do if I did call somebody selfish?”. Then he said: ” In our language. Marshall, I would translate it this way... I would say: Marshall says he sees you taking

care of your own needs but not the needs of others. He would like you to take care of their needs too.” (Rosenberg, i.s. 45)

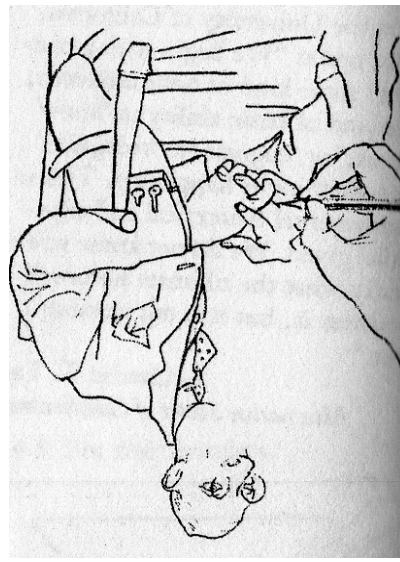
Rosenberg also speaks about difference between moralistic judgment and the judgments of values: “All of us make value judgments as to the qualities we value in life: for example, we might value honesty, freedom, or peace. Value judgments reflect our belief of how life can be served. We make moralistic judgments of people and behaviors that fail to support our value judgments...” (Rosenberg, 2003a. p.17) In a nutshell, Rosenberg claims that whenever we judge in a moralistic way, there is a need (or a value) behind it which aches to be met, and vice versa, whenever another person judges himself or someone else, below the surface he is actually expressing that a value/need of his is not being met. According to NVC, becoming *conscious* of what that need is, might be a solution for preventing moralistic judgments. Non-judgmental way of thinking, according to NVC, is a state of awareness that the way we and other people feel, speak and act is due to our needs being met or unmet.

It seems that much of the educational system is also influenced by this judgmental paradigm. The results in education are usually evaluated through judgments: giving grades or opinions about students and their work, comparing them, etc. Work of students is usually measured and evaluated according to a predetermined scale. In art education, judgmental thinking and self expression is even more present, as giving personal opinion and evaluating someone’s work is the most-accepted teaching method. Being trapped in the linguistically and culturally determined language-thinking pattern and not being aware of the existence of other possible thinking patterns, both teachers and students do not know other means of transferring knowledge and communication. This all creates schools based on judging and evaluating.

I would like to stress my opinion, that using judgmental language in art education can cause harm, as it is also contradicting the accentuated subjective nature of the art as a subject, particularly in the constantly changing tendency of contemporary arts. It is well known that what is considered good and right or bad and wrong are very fragile categories in arts and that they may change from person to person or over time and as new points of view arise and are generally accepted. Another problem connected to judgmental language and judgmental paradigm in art education, is that it directly affects students ability to learn which was partly elaborated in 5.2. Students categorizing, comparing and evaluating themselves and their work (either positively or negatively) can have paralyzing effect on their development in the subject and their creative capacities. On the other hand, creating a non judgmental learning environment for learning, can liberate their learning and creative potentials. This will partly be elaborated in chapter 6.



a.

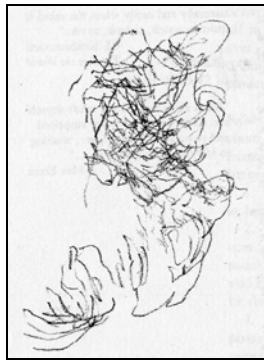


b.

fig. 10 - a) Picasso's drawing of Igor Stravinsky, b) coping the drawing upside down



a.



b.

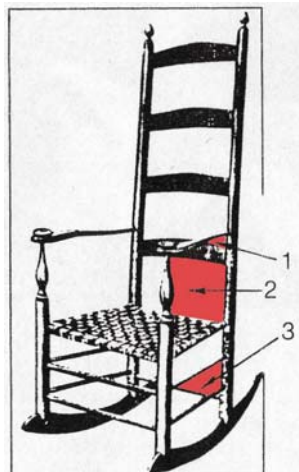


c.

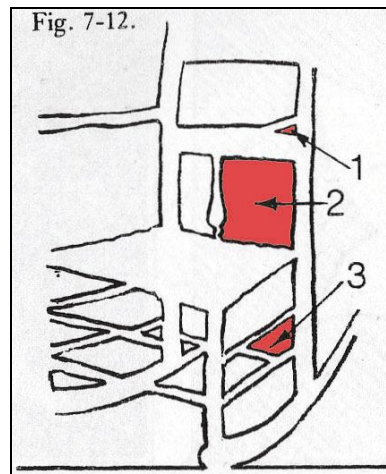


d.

fig. 11- a) Doing the Nicolaides' drawing exercise; b-d) Drawings after the exercise completed



a.



b.

fig. 12- negative space exercise – three examples of the negative space shapes are marked in red

5.2.2. Understanding the Efficiency of Betty Edwards' Exercises

In 5.1. I tried to give an explanation for the methods of Betty Edwards' being reported as successful by many art teachers, despite her theory, which proved to be inaccurate. (see 3.1.). I suggested that the psychological condition which Edwards describes as the right mode might actually be the experience of flow⁴¹. In this subchapter, I would like to take this idea further, and offer some explanations about what might be the reasons why Betty Edwards' drawing exercises seem to be helping students to reach the condition of flow faster and easier than what the more traditional drawing exercises seem to be able to.

I would first like to give a short overview of the drawing exercises of Betty Edwards, and the theoretical explanations she gives for them. Most of her drawing exercises are designed, as Edwards claims, to liberate the right brain hemisphere from the dominance of the left one. She suggests that "...an effective way to "turn off" your dominant left hemisphere, with its verbal, symbolic style of working, and to "turn on" your non dominant right brain, with its spatial relational style, is to present your brain with a task that the left brain either can't or won't work at." (*Edwards, 1979. p.82*) This, in essence, means that according to her explanation, the exercises she suggests suppress the left hemisphere functions and elevate the right hemisphere ones. For example, in her exercise of copying the upside down drawing of Picasso's Igor Stravinsky (see fig. 10), she stresses that the left hemisphere gets confused by seeing the upside down image, and is unable to *name* and symbolize in a way it usually does. (*Edwards, 1979. p.55*) In another one, she adopts an exercise by Nicolaidis, where students are asked to draw their hand (one not used for drawing) for 20 minutes, very slowly and without being allowed to look at the paper while drawing. (see fig. 11) The aim of the exercise, according to Edwards, is to develop sight and help the shift into right-mode, while the results, the final product of the exercise, are not considered important. "Cut off from the drawing – from visual input that would allow naming, symbolizing, categorizing – and forced to focus on what is considered too much information, the left mode is turned down and the right mode takes over the job." (*Edwards, 1979. p.87*) In Edwards' negative space exercise, students are asked not to draw a chair placed in front of them, but the shapes of the background space. Hence the attention is taken away from the object itself and the focus is paid to the abstract forms of the empty space seen between the legs and the cross-bars of the chair. (see fig. 12) Edwards claims that "the left brain, having no equivalent name or category for a negative space, stops intruding what it *knows* about chairs, and lets the right brain take over" (*Edwards, 1979. p.106*), or more exactly she claims that the brain simply sees a shape that needs to be drawn, but since it is not similar to forms which can be named or categorized by the left hemisphere,

⁴¹ phenomenon of flow was elaborated in 1.2

the right hemisphere takes over. After completing introductory exercises of this kind, and after students are taught how to shift from the left to the right mode when drawing, exercises suggested by Edwards start mostly to focus on representational drawing of objects, interior and portrait which are rather similar to the drawing exercises given in more traditional drawing lessons. (*Edwards, 1979.*) Hence when talking about Edwards' exercises, we mostly talk about these introductory exercises given in the beginning of her book. Observing the above-mentioned introductory exercises of Betty Edwards, it seems that the basic idea behind them is to form tasks which will try to incapacitate the language usage while drawing. This seems to prevent a student from any kind of naming, analysing, criticising or evaluating during the process of drawing. Examined from the perspective of NVC, this could also mean that Edwards' exercises are a way to help students create a non-judgmental (not evaluating, naming, criticising, analysing) state of mind in order to achieve better results in drawing. It seems that thanks to this non-judgmental mode students are able to reach a mental mode in which, drawing is performed with ease, it is more accurate, and the improvement and learning is usually faster than the more traditional ways of teaching drawing. Beside this, in 1.6. I reported about my own classroom experience where I was able to help students draw better, having helped them reframe their set of negative thoughts into more positive, often non judgmental ones. Observing these, I dare to suggest that the non-judgmental state of mind might be directly connected with the ability to reach better results in drawing and with ease.

Further more, in 5.1. it was suggested that the way Edwards' explains the right-mode seems to be identical to Csikszentmihályi's explanation of flow. In 2.2. it was mentioned that the state of flow is both neurologically and psychologically the most favourable state of mind both for learning and performing any mental or physical activity. Beside this, we have seen that for creating the state of flow certain conditions need to be fulfilled: a person needs to be *relaxed* and worry free, he needs to be *confident* about his ability to make the task and there needs to be a certain amount of *arousal* and feeling of *control* over the situation. Also, the task needs to *match person's abilities* and be neither too easy nor too difficult for that person (see 1.2.). Hence, it might be that by not-allowing judgmental thinking while drawing, Edwards' exercises also create an environment where usual impediments for the appearance of flow are eliminated. Edwards' exercises focus on development of sight and the learning process of drawing, while the final result of the drawing is *not* the primary aim of the exercise. This in itself can take away lots of tension and worry from the person doing the exercise: he is not pressured to achieve certain results, hence he can be more relaxed and confident about successfully fulfilling the task and less tempted to want to evaluate the drawing while creating it. Beside this, the exercises are designed to be simple but different from the usually way of drawing, hence arousal is more likely to occur, while, regardless of

their previous knowledge and drawing skills, the level of difficulties matches the drawing ability of every person. Hence, it might be that the faster and easier experience of flow while drawing occurs as a product of non-judgmental state of mind. As mentioned earlier (in 1.1.), when a person is experiencing flow, any activity and learning (including drawing) is performed with ease, success and mistake free and it is hence considered the optimal psychological state for performing any action. In this way, learning how to reach the non-judgmental mental model might be beneficial to achieving flow and therefore also beneficial for the better, faster and easier results in drawing. This is most probably equally valid, in other forms of visual expression, as well.

I would suggest that the success of Betty Edwards exercises lies in the *judgment free learning* and in the kind of exercises, which reduce the possibility for students to judge themselves and their drawings while doing the exercise. This non-judgmental and non result-centered type of exercise might liberate students from the paralyzing effects of their thinking pattern they have been absorbing through language, culture, family, and school. Besides this, as the exercises seem to take away the usual pressure, the state of flow, the optimal condition for learning and performing an activity, is achieved much easier which again speeds the development and increases success in drawing.

5.2.3. Zsuzsa Gerő's and Andrea Kárpáti's Theories Seen From the Perspective of NVC

As we have seen in 3.2., Zsuzsa Gerő explains the phenomenon of the drawing gap in connection to the cognitive shift children usually undergo by the age of 9. In the same subchapter, we have seen Kárpáti Andrea's continuation of Gerő's theory, stressing that children between the age of 10 and 12 are aware that their drawings do not meet the cultural expectations for realistic depiction, and that since abilities of most of the children are not good enough to meet these cultural standards they shift into other forms of visual expression. (*Kárpáti, 2005. p. 24-26*) In this subchapter, I would like to examine these two theories from the perspective of the NVC (see chapter 4), or more precisely, from the NVC way of understanding judging (see 5.1.) and see how they can be relevant to understanding problems students face while studying visual arts.

According to Zsuzsa Gerő, by the age of nine, children make a shift from the syncretic way of thinking and perceiving the world towards a more logical and rational thinking pattern of adults. They also start to become more aware of the cultural expectations and the value system of the society. Criteria of "beautiful" becomes very important for them and making a "beautiful" drawing is their primary preoccupation in visual expression. (*Gerő, 1974. p.156 - 165*). (see 3.2.) When observed from the NVC perspective, this means that around the age of

9 children probably start to think in a more judgmental way. By becoming verbally stronger, their thinking pattern might also be more influenced and shaped by the reasoning of adults. It probably starts to transform into a way of thinking based on moralistic judgments such as right/wrong, good/bad, beautiful/ugly, etc. This is also reflected in their strong focus to make their drawings beautiful, and in losing interest in most other aspects of visual expression. Hence through adopting and strengthening the language structures and the thinking pattern of their culture, children undergo a psychological change and start to view the world and their own activities (including visual expression) through glasses of evaluation, comparison and judging. This most probably shapes their attitude towards their own visual expression as well.

I would like to mention two studies in which, art students and students from non-art disciplines were compared. The art students were attending a school with very demanding entrance examination, which meant that in spite of the fact that they were genuinely talented, their choice of majoring in arts was also not a compensation for failure in the conventional academic fields. Results of both studies showed that art students, generally speaking, had significantly poorer phonological skills and significantly more signs of dyslexia than what was the case with non-art students. (*Wolff, 2002*) This may imply a correlation between language dysfunctions and strong need or desire for visual expression. Speculatively speaking, it might be that that difficulties in verbal expression, in other words not having very strong thinking pattern based on language structure, might be responsible for preserving, at least partly, the ability to shift to a more syncretic mental model even after the age of 9. This also might mean that student who have phonological disorder or dyslexia, are less likely to be using mental model based on socio-linguistic thinking patterns while creatively expressing themselves.

Continuing Gerő's theory, Andrea Kárpáti stresses that if children are pleased with the results of their drawings they are most likely to continue expressing themselves through drawing. However, if they do not meet their own expectations, they are more likely to quit drawing and find other forms of visual expression where they experience success. (*Kárpáti, 2005. p.24-26*) Seen from the perspective of NVC, this could be understood that together with a cognitive shift, due to the cultural environment and the language structure, children 9–12 start acquiring a judgmental thinking pattern. They evaluate themselves as good or bad, successful or unsuccessful compared to some kind of an ideal.

Criteria for the evaluation is mostly determined by the values and expectations of the child's environment. (see 3.2.) Since Western cultural expectations seem to be largely appreciating realistic artistic representation and since most of the children have difficulties reaching that criterion in their drawings, (*Kárpáti, 2005. p.24-26*) It is possible that ability to compare but inability to meet the standards one sets in their mental frame, might result in

painful disappointment with the whole process of drawing. What has once been an autotelic activity, now is turned to a feeling of dissatisfaction and helplessness.

Children who evaluate their drawings negatively, build a negative mental model towards visual expression. We have seen that a negative thinking pattern can cause difficulties in the learning progress (see 1.2. and 1.5.2.). Hence when a child evaluates his drawing through comparison it to an idea or a goal he is not likely to reach, particularly if there is a repetition of negative evaluation, it can lead to a situation where he acquires a negative mental model about his drawing abilities. This negative mental model can consequently inhibit him and his progress in his drawing skills. We can notice a dynamics of a vicious circle, as the negative, critical mental model inhibits child's progress in drawing while not seeing progress in his drawing blended with a judgmental thinking pattern strengthens child's negative mental model. Due to the way he observes and thinks about the world, he can neither make a progress in his drawing which he would like to achieve, nor can he enjoy the process of making a drawing as he did in his earlier years when he was thinking in a more syncretic and less judgmental way. Also as his standards and goals are set too high comparing to his abilities, he can no longer experience flow while creatively expressing himself. Repetition of failure to meet the expectations, inability to reach flow and negative mental model together may lead to a natural choice of giving up on drawing and finding other ways for meeting the need for self-expression.

I would suggest that when facing difficulty in learning arts or expressing themselves creatively, similar psychological processes appear with art students as with children before appearance of the drawing gap. Even though, unlike most children, art students or artists do not abandon drawing, art or visual expression and even though they experience more success in making arts, their progress in learning arts is also greatly influenced by the way they think and relate to their works. Similar to children who suffered the drawing gap, in times when they face difficulties in their visual expression, they might be undergoing the similar range of judgmental thoughts, comparisons and self evaluations as younger children do, which may result in difficulties to express themselves and find creative solutions. Even though they deal with this problem differently (they do not abandon making arts when facing these kind of difficulties) art students and artists still may be struggling with same kind of crisis having its roots judgmental mental model and evaluations and comparisons they make. Creating a shift in this kind of model, and helping them regain ability for the state of flow or some kind of syncretism, may be a solution for overcoming these crisis.

5.3. *Three Elements Beneficial for the Development in Drawing*

This subchapter would like to sum up some of the topics we dealt with in chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5. I would like to drive conclusions relevant to the understanding of what the elements are that are supporting easy and successful studying of visual arts and creative expression.

When talking about Zsuzsa Gerő's theory of the drawing gap (see 3.2. and 5.3.1.) it was mentioned that children before the age of 9 have a *syncretic* way of understanding the world. According to her, syncretism is in relation to the children's inability to express themselves verbally well enough and their preference for visual means of expression over the verbal ones. Syncretism is usually lost once children's verbal skills improve and an analytical and more judgmental thinking pattern - typical for adults - occur. (Gegő, 1974. p.156 - 165) Beside this, it was suggested, that difficulties in verbal expression, as in the cases of art students with poor phonological skills or dyslexia, may lead to partial preservation of syncretism and continuation of visual expression preference.

In parts 1.2. we have seen that the state of flow is psychologically and neurologically the most optimal state for learning or performing an activity. We have also seen the conditions for appearance of flow as well as an example of a set of drawing exercises which are probably designed in a way that helps students achieve flow faster and more easily (see 1.2. and 5.2.). Beside this, in parts 5.1. and 5.3. it was shown that judgmental mental mode may cause obstacles for learning how to draw and that acquiring a non-judgmental thinking pattern might be beneficial for overcoming some of the learning obstacles in drawing as well as for an easier and faster development in learning how to draw.

We can thus speak about the three elements which can be of a beneficial influence to the development of drawing: *syncretism*, *flow* and *non-judgmental attitude*. Even though these three elements are separate, we have seen in the pervious parts of this chapter that there are rather meaningful connections and overlaps between them (see fig. 13)

All three of them seem to be connected to *language*. Syncretism seems to be usually lost around the time when a child becomes more verbally skilled. Beside this, in the cases of the flow experience while creating art, the attention is not paid to speech or decoding the words even when they are heard, as they are not relevant for the action performed. Finally, cognitive pattern influenced by our culture and language structures leads to a judgmental way of thinking, while different thinking pattern and usage of language can result in non judgmental thinking, which we have seen in case on NVC and a Malayan tribe.

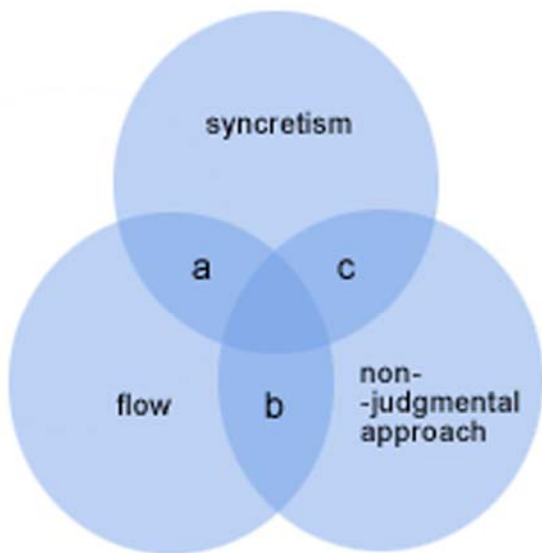


fig.13 -Three elements beneficial for the development in drawing

Syncretism, flow and non-judgmental attitude are also connected to *cognitive changes*. Loss of syncretism happens because of the cognitive development (a child undergoes a change in his thinking and reasoning of the world around him), while the experience of flow is always a temporarily cognitive shift - from a usual state of mind to an elevated and very present and focused one. Beside this, due to the language and culture we belong to, achieving a non judgmental attitude may require a deliberate effort in order to be

able to change the thinking pattern, as in the cases of people who are trying to use NVC in their communication and reasoning.

Apart from the connection of the three elements to language and cognitive change, some *overlaps* can be noticed as well. We have seen in this chapter that achieving both states of syncretism and flow might be in relation with non-judgmental approach in drawing (see *b* and *c* in fig.13) The improvement of children's verbal skills is probably tightly connected to acquiring the reasoning and the thinking patterns of adults . Beside other things, this thinking pattern also includes moralistic judgments such as good/bad, beautiful/ugly, right/wrong, etc. which, as it was shown in 5.2. may be leading to a qualitative decline in visual expression and loss of syncretism. Finally, in 5.4. we have seen that a shift to non-judgmental thinking can help improvement of drawing skills , while in 5.2.2. it was shown that the state of flow might be achieved more easily if judgmental reasoning and evaluation is excluded form the process of drawing .

There are also similarities between syncretism and the state of flow. (see *a* in fig.13). Syncretic thinking pattern is a way of reconciling contrary and disparate beliefs or principles, and it shows tendency to unite different, even opposing elements and to create a more holistic picture out of them. Similar to this, the state of flow is a strong experience of union: a person might experience the blending of the consciousness and the action, or an experience of unity and harmony with the action performed, with other people or with the universe. Everything connected to the action performed is experienced as going smoothly and flowing, and no space is given to awareness of possible oppositions, paradoxes or mistakes in the experience.

All of the three elements seem to be very beneficial and important for the developmental acceleration when learning visual arts or trying to creatively express oneself. When one or

more of them are missing, that might create difficulties. I would like to stress that artistic expression and studying arts is not dependant on these three elements and that it is possible to engage in the process of creating or learning arts even if all three of them are missing. However, presence of these three elements can ease and accelerate these processes, and it is certainly responsible for making them autotelic. Incorporating them and creating possibilities for their presence in art lessons, should, in my opinion, be an essential goal of art education.

5.4. Chapter Conclusion

It has been a general world tendency in the past two decades, that there is an awareness that education needs to change. Every few years we witness educational authorities initiating some kind of change. However, the problems seem to remain the same; the academic success of a students has little relevance to their professional success in life, receiving higher education no longer means higher income, students are bored in schools and dislike learning while teachers make enormous efforts to motivate them and make them learn. Furthermore, the school's structures are less and less fit to cope with the influence of the internet on education. In art education, where one can talk about a great number of approaches, opinions and truths, confusion remains concerning the question of how to prepare the students of today for the art scene of tomorrow in such a rapidly changing world? How to provide them with knowledge, skills, experiences which will help them become independent and successful professional artists and designers?

In my opinion, a thorough change is needed – not only in the way we teach today or how schools are organized, but primarily in the way we *think* about education, what we think education is and should be. The Diamond Model and the NVC paradigm in art education offer remedies for the natural love of learning, development and self-expression, which are put to sleep by the current education system. I believe that the task of the educators of the future is to awaken, support and nurture these natural human potentials in a learning environment which is free, supportive and compassionate and whose aim is to serve students' need for learning instead of standardizing knowledge. I believe that if the attitude and the environment are right, the natural human potentials will start to grow and blossom on their own.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter compares the difficulties students in art schools face in their drawing lessons, and the drawing gap. These two problems are examined from the NVC point of view and its understanding of judgement. It is shown that the judgmental mental model may be the potential cause of difficulties in progressing in drawing, both for children aged 10-12 and art students (ages 14 and above), and that it may mean that we are talking about one problem. The efficiency of Betty Edwards' exercises is explained, with the creation of non-judgmental thinking patterns in students which leads to the state of flow. Finally, three elements; syncretism, flow and non-judgmental approach; are suggested to be the basic elements of problem-free development and self-expression in drawing.

6. A Teaching - Learning Model for Visual Art Education

The aim of education has always been to equip students with knowledge skills and values that are deemed useful for the future of an individual and the society he belongs to. However, since the world has undergone multiple changes in the past 100 years and since it is hard to know what it might look like in only 10 or 30 years from now, the education and educators of today are put in a rather peculiar position: they need to prepare students for a life in the world, about which they can only guess what it might look like. (Robinson, 2006, i.s. 59) Despite the unknown, some directions of the changes our world had undergone in the last century, as well as the current tendencies, can still be outlined .

In this chapter, the *diamond model* of education will be proposed (with a hope to offer more flexibility and openness to educational system than the currently used models can. Diamond model will be suggested as a more suitable model for the needs of students, teachers, communities and societies of the rapidly changing world. This model could particularly be applicable in the art education, where knowledge is usually more organic, dynamic and subjective than in most of other fields of science and where sometimes multiple approaches and opinions need to be embraced.

6.1 Changes in the 20th and the 21st Century Relevant to Education

„Children starting school this year, will be retiring in 2065. Nobody has a clue...what the world will look like in 5 years time. And yet, we are meant to be educating them for it.”
(Robinson, 2006, i.s. 59)

Besides the accelerating progress of science and technology, throughout the 20th and the beginning of 21st century, we have witnessed radical changes within the society and the value system of the Western world. Gender roles started to equalize in their rights and possibilities, the problem of racism and child labor started to be addressed, society started to be mostly secular, health care improved with life expectancy becoming longer, communicating and commuting from one geographic point to an other one started to be easier and faster, while documenting and spreading the news reached global scale. Furthermore , a dramatic rise in the educational level of people has occurred in this period of time. For example, before the 1940's less than 50 % of United States population would receive a high

school diploma, which grew to 80% by 1990's, while college graduates grew from 5% to 12% during the same period (*i.s.* 53). However, the growth in the general educational level of people has brought another change: receiving higher education nowadays does not necessarily correlate with finding a job which pays more. People are better educated, but the importance of receiving more education has started to change in our society, which consequently affects the motivation of the students to learn (*Robinson, i.s.61*)

6.1.1. Influence of the Internet on the General Education

One of the most recent global changes – the internet, has brought a revolution in the speed of communication and information access in the last 20 years. In 2010, about 58% of Europe's population and 77% of Northern American population had access to the internet. Continents like Africa, Asia and Latin America, who had a bit later start with the wider internet usage, are now catching up,

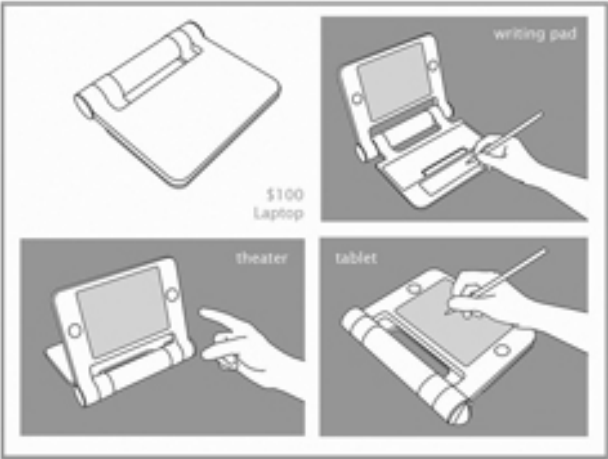


fig.15 - OLPC XO-1 original design proposal

having 1000 – 2000 % growth of internet users in the period between year 2000 and 2010. About 29% of the whole world's population has used internet in 2010. The growth of 440% in the global internet usage seen in past 10 years is expected to rise even more, (*i.s.54*) particularly as one laptop per child (OLPC XO-1) program in the undeveloped countries is starting to see its first successes (*i.s* 56). and as efforts are being made to create a 100 dollars computer (*i.s.57*), available to a large number of people.

We seem to be living in historic times. In the past 20 years, since the use of computers and the internet has rapidly grown, the world started to undergo changes it has never seen before in the entire history of mankind. The ways how we meet our two basic human needs: the *need for learning* (obtaining information) and the *need for connection* (communication) with other people, are in many aspects starting to be influenced by and even dependant on the cyber world. Obtaining information does not require the amount of time and effort it required before. Opposite from what it was the case before, we often do not need to leave the comforts of our homes and go to libraries, data bases, and information desks or try to find experts in a particular area in order to learn about certain subjects. So much information is already at a click of a button, and we do not have to be in a particular place, at a particular time with a

particular source of information. For example, while making tests for my recent art installation, I learned how to make hard-candies by watching an instructional video on you tube at 11 PM on a remote little island in Croatia. Without the internet, I would have probably had to travel to a city, try to find a candy maker or a candy factory, and hope that I will able to negotiate with them and win them over to teach me how candies are made.

Beside this, the internet has started to influence the dynamics of the way we interact and with whom we interact. There is a variety of social sites, blogs, forums, and mailing groups as well possibilities for emailing, chatting, voice and video calls, and much more. We are now living in the world where more and more people are given the possibility to interact with each other, people who otherwise would probably have never had a chance to meet or connect in their lifetime. To illustrate this, let me use an example of an IT engineer, a friend of mine who lives in India. Thanks to the internet connection and software we both downloaded from the internet, he is able to enter into my computer in Hungary and fix it, while sitting in front of his computer in India.

As the percentage of the internet users around the world shows a tendency of rapid growth, we may soon expect a global situation where “*almost everyone can affect almost anyone.*”⁴² The *speed of communication, the flow of information* and the *globalization of human interaction* has already started to reshape our lives and our society: the way we work, the way we plan our time and activities, the way we organize and deal with our free time, the way we socialize and communicate with each other, etc.

What is so radical about this is that the above mentioned situation challenges the concept of education and knowledge that have been dominant for thousands of years: a concept according to which a teacher is considered an authority because he or she has more knowledge and experience than a student can have (see 2.2.) and a concept according to which knowledge taught in schools is usually not considered as something organic, dynamic and constantly being renewed, but something where only one thing can be true while the rest is false. The past 20 years shook these two concepts and brought a contingency of a need for a thorough change in the way students are educated. Beside the changes in the technical equipment such as interactive blackboards, projectors and computers, the educational authorities may also need to reconsider their values and ideas of authority, how the learning-teaching process is organized and how the learning needs of today’s and future students can be met the best.

It seems that the students of today are very different from those of only 10 or 20 years ago. Even though phases in their physical and psychological development remained almost

⁴² from Niclas Ronnstrome’s lecture held at NVC in Education Conference 2010, in Montolieu, France

the same, today's students live surrounded with unprecedented possibilities for learning and interacting. Unlike a100 years ago, when our concept of schools was made, nowadays increasingly the students arrive to school lessons already knowing quite familiar with the subject they will study. Sometimes, they may even know things that are different, broader, deeper or more up to date and even contradictory to what their teachers and the textbooks provide. In some subjects, like programming for example, it is not a that rare that a student knows even more than his teacher. In arts, where the knowledge is less exact than in mathematics, and where a diversity of approaches exists, a student may have a completely opposite idea from his teacher, about what can be considered art or what is the best way to express himself. This situation has evolved slowly throughout the 20th century due to the rise of the educational level of people, changes in the society and the development of media and communication, but it is only in the last 10 –20 years, coinciding with the widespread use of the internet, that the speed of these changes has increased enormously. The global scale and the ever-increasing tendency of these changes are starting to create a situation; completely different to anything we have known in the history.

Having observed students I taught in the past several years and comparing them to my generation of 20 years ago, I would like to suggest that these changes in the education have already started to happen. Surprisingly, and contrary to the evidence from the history of education, these changes have not been initiated from above, by the educational authorities choosing to apply something new which they considered beneficial for the students. These changes have started to happen from the bottom up, initiated by the students whose personalities and world views have been shaped by the huge change our world has seen in the past decade and particularly by the use of the internet.

6.1.2. The Influence of the Internet on the Hierarchical Organizational Structures and Standardized Curricula

One of the interesting shifts that the communication devices, digitalized media and the internet have started to bring into our lives, is the possibility for the decentralization of power hierarchy structures within the society. It allows for the people low on the hierarchy ladder to connect and organize into groups, to interact and act and by this to initiate changes. A good example for this is China, a country with probably most successful internet censorship in the world. In 2008 a big earthquake happened in the province of Sechuan. It was during the earthquake that people started making phone calls, sending text messages, shooting videos and pictures with their cell phones. The earthquake was reported to online services, social sites, and people inside and outside China faster than any official media could possibly do it.

For example, BBC first found out about the earthquake from Tweeter. In comparison to the previous earthquake of similar scale in China, when it took Chinese government 3 months to publicly acknowledge it happened, the 2008 event, due to the technical devices and internet, was completely out of their control. (*Shirky, 2009, i.s. 62*)

The example of China clearly shows the influence internet is starting to play in shifting the old concepts and ideas based on power hierarchy (see part 2.2.) in the society. It also shows that the internet opens a possibility for a new kind of gathering and organizing people. Internet has not only started to influence the society and the media, but it has also started to challenge the structure and concepts of education. Today's schools still practice the same form of the organization learning and the vision for the education that was tailored in a fashion which strongly resembles the organization of work in the factories. The similarity is probably not accidental, since the concept was created during industrial revolution with the introduction of free public education which was meant to meet the needs for a new kind of human resources in the industrializing world. Eventually the aim of this educational model was to serve the needs of the market and the growing economics of the time, and not truly to focus on the development of human potentials (*Robinson, i.s. 61*) which is reflected in the curricula that primarily focuses on languages and mathematical skills, while neglecting or marginalizing many aspects of human potential, not explicitly important for the technical and economical development, such as music or visual arts. Even though ideas about how humans learn have not changed much inside the educational systems, researches and experiences accumulated in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, neurology, sociology, anthropology etc throughout the whole 20th and the beginning of the 21st century (see chapters 1-5), show evidence that biologically, psychologically and neurologically speaking our whole global society as well as each individual, could profit much more from an educational approach which focuses on the development of human potentials in a more natural and efficient way.

The beginning of the internet era has been affecting the education as well. Internet allows people to skip the standardization and mass produced quality of learning which they are familiar with from schools, and it gives them an opportunity to learn out of their free choice. Knowledge obtained from the internet is not divided into special subjects or units scored on the tests, but is more organic and with fewer borders between fields. It allows people to learn things because they are truly interested in them, when they are interested, and in the way it suits them. It is not an outer authority that tells them what to do, but out of self motivation. Internet has started to change our educational system more than any research in the past, or the experience in the field of pedagogy, psychology and neurology in the past 100 years. The reason for this lies in the fact that the change has not started from above, from an educational authority, but from below, out of numerous awakening needs of the students. Internet has

succeeded doing something that schools have mostly failed to do: *decentralizing and personalizing* learning with free possibility to create and gather in *groups of shared specific interests*. In addition, learning via the internet is practically free, it can happen at our convenience, , and it is not evaluated in grades and tests. The internet simply nourishes the natural human need for learning and allows for more organic, holistic and personally tailored education which is experienced as autotelic.

As it was mentioned in 2.a humans naturally like to learn until they are thought that learning is something hard and tiring. It is mostly the experience of school studies that teaches students to dislike the learning. The internet, on the other hand, seems to provide an opportunity for nursing the core human nature that loves to learn and develop, and as such, it can be an inspiration for the direction of the changes needed in the educational system – direction towards more meaningful and personally fulfilling learning. The students we are educating nowadays, are growing up used to the everyday use of the internet and are already having an opportunity to experience what a meaningful learning feels like. In my opinion, *this* is what makes them so much different from the generations only 10 years ago, as well as one of the reasons why they show so little interest in what they learn in schools. The students of today, have experienced how much joy and fulfillment learning can bring, how knowledge can flow in a non linear way and they know that learning does not require authoritarian hierarchical structure in order to be efficient. Unfortunately, they also know all this does not happen in schools. This create a situation educational authorities will need to address soon, the one which will probably initiate a deep change of the concept of education. It makes us rethink what the purpose and the aim of education is, and how life skills and knowledge should be taught in schools.

The change education will need to face will not mean that the schools transfer to only digitalized learning-teaching. In my opinion, digitalized media and internet became popular simply because they turned to be a good strategy for meeting the universal human need for learning, more precisely the need for meaningful and fulfilling learning (see 2.1, and 4.). As schools fail to meet this need adequately, due to their conditions of teaching-learning. Thus, the internet serves not only as a good source of information and learning possibilities, but also as a substitute for fulfilling the needs people have no other way of fulfilling. I believe, that the human nature, that has been shaped trough thousands of years cannot be changed in a decade. If a student were given an opportunity to choose to learn from the internet and the computer or from another human being, and if the conditions for learning were the same – that is, if a student could learn what he wants, when he wants and how he wants, if that learning was happening out of his free will and not because an upper authority thinks it is good for him, if learning was meaningful to him, I believe the student would prefer to learn from another

person rather than through a mechanical device. My assumption is based on our knowledge of how humans are biologically, physically and psychologically designed: on the fact that we are social beings who love learning and interacting with each other, and that we are designed to be most sensitive to stimuli received from another human being (see 1.6.), that the emotions which occur when we interact help us learn more efficiently (see 1.2.). This need to connect with other people is so strong, that even biologically speaking our survival is dependent on our ability to connect to other human beings, more precisely, on the ability to receive and decode stimuli and interact with and learn from each other. Hence I believe that in spite of all the changes internet has brought into our lives and learning, it does not change our basic human nature: our need to socialize and interact with other people in real life situations. Schools, however, could change and become places where true and meaningful learning happens.

6.2. Changes in the Art During the 20th Century Relevant to Contemporary Art Education

Parallel with the changes in the fields of science, technology, economy etc, visual arts underwent dramatic changes the 20th century. Among numerous events, artists and people who shaped the art scene of the 20th century, I would like to point out one which completely shook the understanding of what visual art was. Following a several other ready-mades, in 1917 Duchamp exhibited „Fountain”, an industrially manufactured urinal signed with the pseudonym "R. Mutt". This piece shocked the audience at the time, not only because of its triviality, but also because it was an industrially manufactured piece and identical to thousands of other urinals. By exhibiting such an object in a gallery, Duchamp challenged the beliefs and taboos about the art present at the time and poses questions like: if art work must be an object which is hand made by an artist with the purpose of making art, if its value lies in its uniqueness, that there is only one or in some cases limited number pieces which are considered originals, etc. As he says in his own words: “A ready made comes in as a sort of irony, because it



fig. 15 - Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain* (1917)

says: here it is, the thing his I call art and I haven't even made it myself. “ (*Duchamp in Jakobs, 1969. i. s. 63*) “Fountain” also raises the question of what exactly is art, and what makes the difference between a plain object of everyday use and a work of art? Duchamp offers a shift in understanding these questions and suggests that it is not the object itself, nor the fact that it was made by an artists or out of specific materials, which entitles an object to be an art work, but that it is the *artist who determines what is to be considered art.* (*Danto,1997*). Duchamp “liberates” art from being material object and elevates it to the level of decision or a thought. In this way art became less bound to the material objects becomes more a philosophical category.

(*Danto,1997*)

The significance of Duchamp's „Fountain” lies in the influence it had on the development of visual arts in the decades that followed. Liberation of arts form being understood as objects in traditional art materials and being elevated to the level of philosophy, resulted in the birth of many new ways of artistic expression throughout the 20th



fig.16. - *Joseph Beuys, "Ausfegen (Sweeping Up)" (1972)*

and the 21st century, such as: conceptual art, performance, action art, installation, video art, etc. This new understanding of arts allowed for the freedom that, anything, even a routine everyday activity such as sweeping up a square, can become an artistic expression if the artists chose so. The art of the 20th and the 21st century has been marked by the cognitive shift initiated by Duchamp in 1917.

Naturally, the role of the other artists, curators, art critiques and art historians in recognizing Duchamp's “Fountain” as an art work with a new art paradigm, should not be diminished. Without their reaction, Duchmp's “Fountain” would have probably passed unnoticed, and maybe never have influenced the art scene in the way it had. I would hence suggest that both the artists and the art related professionals, together weave and contribute to the creation of the art scene.

6.3. Understanding the Flow of Information in Some Educational Models used in the 20th Century Until the Present

As described in the second chapter, the changes in the social structure that had started in the Neolithic period, brought a new, power based hierarchical paradigm, into the organization of the society. It was also mentioned that the educational systems often mirrored the political and economical structures, (*Fromm in Neill, 1960. p. IX-XI; Robinson, 2006. i.s. 59*) and that they affected the way people relate to and organize the learning-teaching process in schools (*Palmer, 1998; Robinson, i.s.*).

The paradigm based on the idea that knowledge and information should be transferred in a linear way, has its analogy in the classroom furniture arrangement, in the teacher student relationship and in the way the students are taught. In the traditional educational model, students (S) are expected to be the receivers of knowledge which is provided by the teacher (T). (see fig.17) The flow of information and communication in this teaching-learning model is strictly hierarchical: it is primarily going in one direction: from the teacher towards the students; flow from a student to the teacher is allowed only when the student is answering teacher's question or is being examined, and interaction between students during the lesson is not considered a desirable behavior and is often sanctioned.

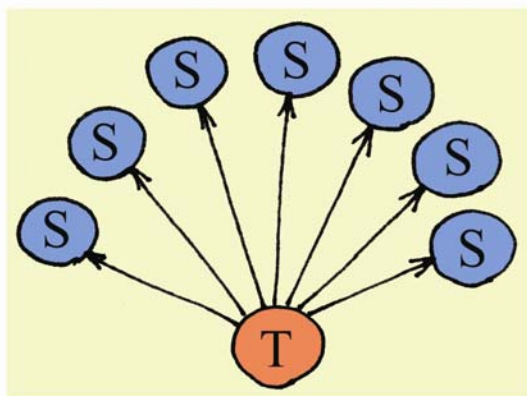


fig.17 - Educational model, students (S) are expected to be the receivers of knowledge provided by the teacher (T)

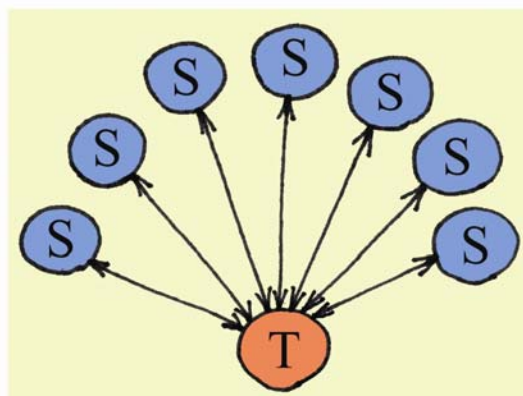


fig.18 - Educational model where students are encouraged to active participation in the teaching-learning process

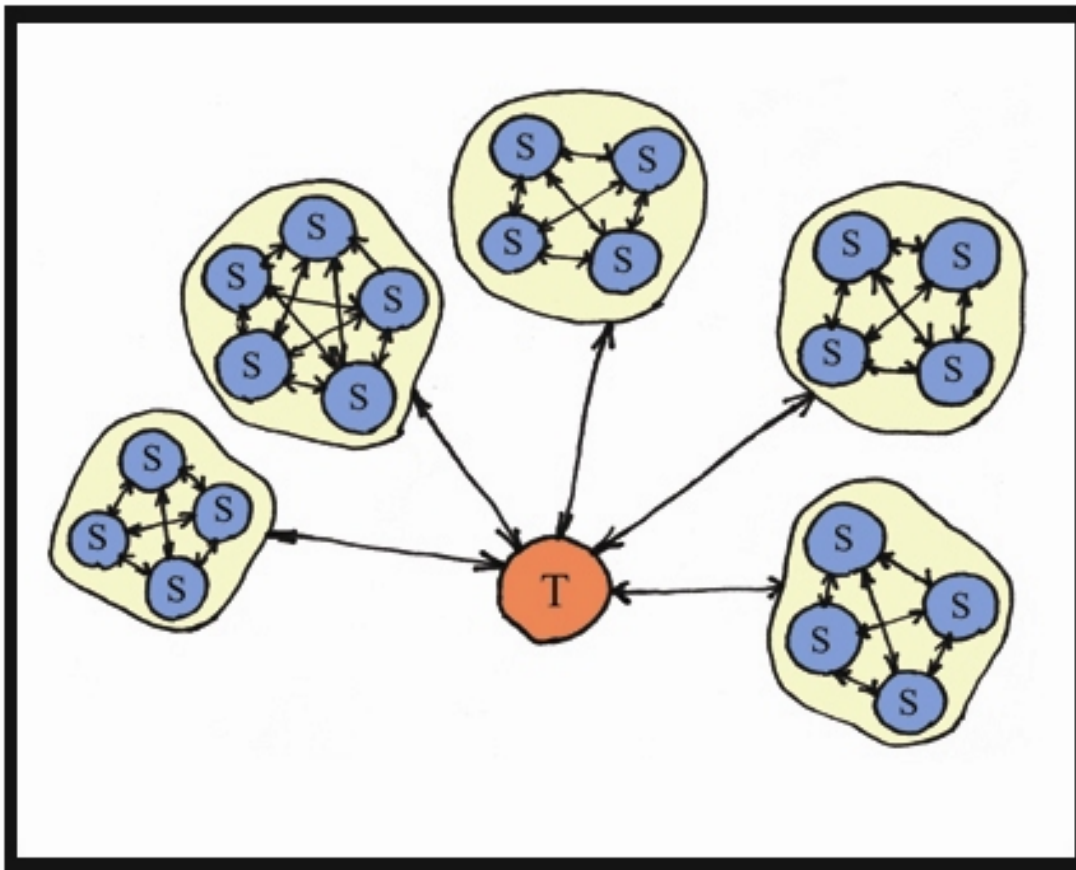


fig. 19 - Cooperative educational model

Seeking solutions for a more efficient education, efforts have been made to encourage students active participation in the teaching- learning process. (see fig. 18) Students were primarily encouraged to ask or answer the questions or engage in the dialogue with the teacher while completing the tasks.. Even though the flow of information is more mutual, the flow of knowledge is still mostly coming from the teacher to the student. The teacher is still the central figure and interaction between the teacher and the students in this model is used as a sugar pill, to make students more willing to do and learn what their teacher or the upper educational authority believe is good for them.

In the *Cooperative educational* model an effort is made to bridge the gap between the school knowledge and its application in real life. (i.s. 52; Bádosi, Dudas, Pethőné, Priskinné-Rizner, 2002) It is mainly structured around small groups of 4 or 5 students who need to work as a team in order to solve a task. (see fig.19) In cooperative education teacher is no longer the primary source of information and knowledge, and the students are encouraged to use a variety of sources such as: other textbooks, magazines, internet, films, maps, interviews, etc. Beside the academic learning, this method helps them learn how to organize work in a group and develop their social skills. The flow of information in the cooperative educational model runs interactively between students and teacher, as well as among the

students inside a group. Beside this, in the end of each lesson, it also flows from the group of students presenting their work/learning to the rest of the class. Teacher's task in this model is more decentralized comparing to the previous two ones, and he is expected to follow the curriculum, to prepare learning materials, to help students to use the variety of information sources, and to facilitate students' work in groups. (i.s. 52; Bádosi, Dudas, Pethőné, Priskinné-Rizner, 2002; Vidovic, Vlahovec-Stetic, Rajavec, Miljkovic, 2003). Despite the decentralized placement of the teacher in the flow of information, we can still notice the inequality between the teacher and the students in terms of power, as the teacher is a separated figure and is enjoying more rights and freedom in the classroom than the students.

6.3. Towards a Different Approach to Schools - A New Teaching-Learning Model

As described above, the present times are bringing deep changes and challenges into our society, into our way of living and the way we interact with one another. We have also seen that the internet has brought a possibility for a new kind of organizing and connecting between people and successful management of larger groups of people without power hierarchy structures⁴³. This has not only affected our society but our educational system as well. We have seen in 1.6. and 2.1 that socializing and learning are basic human needs and are most likely to be willingly self initiated as a meaningful activity if an individual is not pushed or obliged to do it. We have also seen in 1.4. and 1.6 that the quality of the student-student and student-teacher relationship as well as the emotional investment are the factors that can - support (if positive) or hinder (if negative) the learning. In the chapter 4, the connection and understanding between people occurring on the level of needs was elaborated. It was shown that hearing and accepting new information was much easier if a connection between person who wanted to give and the person who wanted to receive was established first.

Taking into consideration all this, I would like to suggest an educational model which I would call the *diamond model*, a term adopted from Eva Hava Jónai, a NVC trainer. My hope is that this educational model will respond to the real learning needs of students in a more successful and more meaningful way than other currently used educational models have done so far. I also hope that it is in the same line with the direction and the tendencies of the changes which have started to effect our society and educational institutions (see 6.1.) in the

⁴³ Power hierarchy was elaborated in 2.2.

past decade. The diamond model, could particularly be suitable for embracing the vibrant diversity of contemporary arts, which will be elaborated in 6.5.

6.4.1. The Diamond Model

The foundation of the *Diamond model* is inspired by the NVC paradigm⁴⁴ and its method for group management as well decades of the experience in educational models with flat hierarchies.⁴⁵ According to the NVC, the base for harmonious functioning of groups is achieved when a connection with every member of the group is made and when their needs are either met or given appropriate empathetic attention. The NVC also provides the technical tools needed for the practical manifestation of the paradigm, such as the technique of giving and receiving empathy, which helps to create a connection between the members in the group, and clarity regarding the best time and the best way for the transfer of information, opinions, requests etc. to others (see 4.2.).

In the NVC, the needs of every group member - regardless of his/her age, gender, position or the tasks he/she fulfills inside the group - are considered equally important. This means that his/her needs are not expected to be subordinate to the will and the needs of others nor to that of the democratic majority. An effort is made to find a solution which can be agreed to by *all* members of a group. The needs of the minority or even one individual, are equally respected and considered. Paying attention to the needs of each individual in a group is essential for the functioning of a group as a whole. The group management in the Diamond model differs from the management based on democracy. It is not the voice, the needs or the opinions of the majority which gives direction to the whole group, but a mutually accepted consensus. (see 2.2.2). Furthermore, in the Diamond model it is not one person or a small group of people who lead and decide for the rest, members of the group are not expected to follow and obey blindly. Instead, in the Diamond model each member of the group can actively and equally contribute to the management of the group as a whole, and the person who facilitates the group is chosen by mutual agreement.

Transferring the Diamond model to the

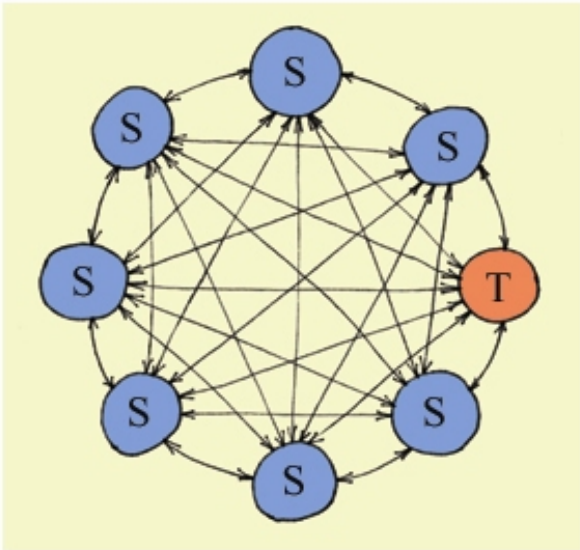


fig. 20 - Diamond Model

⁴⁴ NVC ws elaborated in chapter 4
⁴⁵ Flat (

educational settings will mean that teacher and students enjoy certain equalities in terms of power and responsibility for learning. Compared to the education models mentioned in 6.3 the lines between who teaches and who learns in the Diamond model are blurred. Knowledge and information are allowed to flow in all directions between all participants (see fig. 20) and hence this flow can be much more personal, dynamic and interactive. The teacher no longer holds a position which is separate or elevated from the students. Instead, the flat hierarchy of the Diamond model opens a space where the teacher is no longer the only one who can teach, but where everyone can learn from anyone and vice versa. This resembles the interaction and the way of learning happening with the help of internet elaborated on in 6.1.2. In the Diamond model, both students and teachers, regardless of their knowledge, experience, age, gender, title, etc. can actively contribute to the teaching-learning process. In our interview, Éva Hava Jónai stresses on this point saying: “I believe that there is no teaching without learning, nor learning without teaching., and while teachers, trainers, and facilitators must assume responsibility for a learning process to take place in a group, this becomes a learning process for them too. If they are open to all learning opportunities, and if they value/honor what they can receive from members of the group, learning then becomes a creative, living process that facilitates growth in each member of the group including the teacher/trainer himself/herself.” (Gutman, 2006)

Equality in the Diamond model is primarily that of power and not necessarily the amount of knowledge and experience someone has. It is quite likely (but not necessarily) that a teacher possesses more knowledge and experience in certain subjects than the students do. However, in the Diamond model, the teachers power is not a function of their knowledge and it does not separate him/her from the students. Knowledge is considered as something organic, dynamic and life serving. The Diamond model creates an environment where the teaching-learning process that is based on a power hierarchy can be replaced with the functional hierarchy. The teacher is not leading or directing learning but rather facilitating it. By flattening the power hierarchy, the teacher can be a true authority because of his/her contribution to student’s learning, and not an authority per se, based on his or her position in the school. Having his/her needs given equal importance as those of the students, he/she can be free from playing the role of teacher and can simply be who he/she is, (see 1.3.) genuinely present to the process of teaching-learning with his or her complete personality. This affords the teacher the opportunity to build a good teacher-student relationship based on a genuine connection. Students, on the other side, not having a dominant authority who makes decisions on their behalf, and being in an environment where their needs matter and receive attention, are more likely to be relaxed and hence more motivated learners. (see 1.2. and 2.1.) Furthermore, they can actively engage in the teaching-learning process. They are able to

shape learning in a way which meets their personal need for learning and hence making learning more meaningful to them. As knowledge can flow freely between all, students can share knowledge and experience which may be novel to their teacher, presenting the teacher with a learning opportunity as well.

The *aim of the Diamond model* is to create an effective learning environment based on genuine human connection which nourishes the natural human capacity for learning. Creation of an NVC kind of empathic connection between all participants of is considered a precondition to efficient learning. In contrast with the teaching-learning models mentioned in 6.3, the teacher's primary responsibility in the Diamond Model is not to lead the whole process nor to be the principle provider of knowledge to students, rather their role is to *facilitate and coordinate communication of knowledge* between himself/herself and the students and amongst students themselves. Respect for the teachers authority is not based on titles, status in a hierarchical structure or social norms, but given as matter of free choice by the students, because the students value the knowledge, experience and human values which they are receiving from the teacher and which is contributing to their well being and fulfilling their need for learning and development. The Diamond Model gives freedom both to students and teachers. A teacher is free from uncomfortable and sometimes stressful social roles and labels. He does not need to play the role of an authority figure that has answers to all questions. He/she can be himself or herself, a human being with needs, feelings and ideas. This holds true for the students as well: free from the role of those who are supposed only to obey and accept an authority, students can be themselves and actively participate in the teaching-learning process and hence absorb knowledge and more easily develop their critical thinking skills. In the learning environment of the Diamond Model, it is more likely to expect that the knowledge received will meet personal leaning needs and hence effect and initiate changes in it the whole personality of a learner. The Diamond Model creates the possibility of exchanging knowledge, experience and information in a way which allows students and teachers to be actively and personally engaged in the process of meaningful leaning. As neither teaching nor learning an obligation nor used for fulfilling social status or role, receiving and giving knowledge can turn into a joyful and self-motivating activity which serves and nourishes life. Knowledge can then be approached more holistically and in connection to the personality and personal needs and interests of each of the participants. As the whole group is involved, awareness develops that knowledge in a cooperative community is broader than when only an individual is involved.

6.4.2. Relevance of the Diamond Model to the Current Situation in Education

A cross examination of the changes which occurred in the 20th and the 21st century (see 6.1. and 6.2.) in relation to the Diamond Model will show how this model could resonate with needs and the problems facing the current education system.

The model for the current education system was created in the time of industrialization, when the first public schools were founded to support the needs of economy. From then on and until recently, having a degree in higher education meant having a better job. However, this situation has started to change in the past few decades, creating a situation where years invested into learning do not always result in better earnings and standard of living. Today's students are quite aware of this and it is reflected in the consequent decrease in *motivation for school learning* and boredom. (Robinson, *i.s.*61). As we have seen in 1.2., boredom can result when the capacity of a person is not in correlation with the difficulty of a task, and low motivation can occur when learning is not approached as a natural need but an obligation (see 2.1). Schools are not tailoring themselves to the real learning needs of students, rather, they are expecting students to tailor themselves to the prescribed standards seen as beneficial for them. Schools which do not take into consideration the real needs of students, cannot expect to be found interesting by the student. The Diamond model, however, makes an effort to shift the attitude about education from the one tailored by educational authorities to meet the needs of economic development into education which is more personal and autotelic. In the Diamond model the needs of every participant are taken into consideration which creates a strong foundation for dealing with the diversity of pre-knowledge, learning needs and the abilities of students. Learning which is personal and which nourishes the natural need for learning, is a meaningful and fulfilling activity in itself.

Rise in the general level of education, creates a new challenge 6.1. It is observed that students growing up in families with higher levels of education are more likely to have a better start in school and learn easier. Due to both their family background and the access to information through the media and the internet, students arriving to schools nowadays may possess knowledge about a certain subjects that is different to what their teacher might possess. For example a student who traveled to London and visited Tate Modern in the summer holiday, may be familiar with the work of a contemporary artists which is unknown to his Art teacher or the rest of the students in his class. However, if learning is organized according to the Diamond Model, this students may ask the group if they would be interested to know about his/her experience and knowledge and in this way, he/she can contribute to a more dynamic and personal teaching-learning process.

Globalization and the wide spread use of internet has created another challenge for

current education system. As referenced in 6.internet usage affords easy and fast access to information as well as a growing tendency to organizing in a flat hierarchy, in which everyone can affect anyone. This influences the way people can gather, interact and learn. We have also seen in 6.1 that this tendency is expected to grow as the usage of internet expands in the world. The Diamond Model can provide a structure and the tools which could complement the changing tendencies of group management and learning in groups with a flat hierarchy. Similar to what is happening in groups organized on the internet, in the Diamond model every member of the group can learn, influence and teach other members of the group with a more personal and human approach. It also provides space for a different understanding of education, where learning does not happen due to a leader or a small group of experts, in the classroom or in the time which is determined by a school schedule, but through interaction and communication between the members of the group, through the possibility of free exchange of knowledge between them and facilitation of the group inside or outside the classroom and in the time a person finds most suitable for themselves.

6.4.3. – 11 Pillars of the Diamond Model

- 1) First connection, then education - Prior to learning, connection on the level of needs is made.
- 2) Needs of all the participants (teachers, students, etc.) are equally important.
- 3) An effort is made so that the needs of all participants are considered, even though they cannot always be met. Attention is given using the NVC technique of empathy.
- 4) All the participants in the education process are considered equal in power (flat, functional hierarchy)
- 5) Being genuinely present (being oneself) in the process of teaching-learning is considered a value and forms a base for connection between participants.
- 6) An atmosphere of acceptance is created in order to embrace the diversity of needs, values, opinions, world views, etc.
- 7) There is a possibility that all the participants in education teach one another and learn from one another.
- 8) Meaningful learning happens when it is personal, fulfilling real needs and happening out of personal choice.
- 9) Learning - teaching process is a process of communication, sharing and cooperation
- 10) The teacher's task is to facilitate the learning
- 11) Both students and teachers are responsible for learning and the flow of knowledge

6.5. Contemporary Art Education and the Diamond Model

In 6.4, the advantages of the Diamond Model in comparison with the current tendencies and changes in general education were examined. This subchapter would like to focus specifically on the additional benefits of the Diamond model to the contemporary art education.

6.5.1. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Art Education

As shown in 6.2, one of the things that has marked the art of the 20th and the 21st century was the cognitive shift initiated by Duchamp in 1917. Hoping to meet the requirements of the new art scene of the time, art schools in the Western world made efforts to change the way art is taught. In some cases, this change meant preserving more traditional (modernist) educational models and more academic artistic training while adding moderate or less moderate freedom of expression towards the final years of studies. Art schools in Hungary or the former Yugoslavia are a good example for this. However, in other cases, such as postmodern art schools in the United States, United Kingdom, Israel or Finland, this meant core changes in the way art education is understood and organized. Postmodern art educational system has tried to offer more flexible frames for learning in the world of constant diversity and changes. In order to prepare students for becoming successful independent artists, the division between 3 basic disciplines: sculpting, painting and graphics has become blurred and has expanded with new additional disciplines such as performance, video art, installation, photography, etc. as well as with theoretical courses beneficial for the cognitive development of art students. Students were allowed to take any course which appeals to their interests, even if it included taking it in a completely different, non-art related department. The pre-postmodernist idea of unifying and standardizing the knowledge taught in schools was changed to a diversity of opportunities and choices for learning. A possibility for a greater diversity of subjects was introduced, allowing for a focus on the knowledge, experiences and materials which educational institutions would previously have considered marginal or inappropriate for artistic training or expression. Besides the obligatory courses, students were given opportunity to choose between a number of optional courses, which created a possibility for more personally tailored learning. The knowledge and experience of one teacher was no long considered sufficient for preparing a student for the hectic world of arts, hence the traditional model where students gather around a single master was replaced with a possibility to attend a number of courses with different teachers. Thus a student

became not only exposed to a variety of subjects but also to different approaches and world views about arts.

Besides the obvious benefits of the postmodern art education and its efforts to adjust the artistic training to the needs of the professional art world, some weaknesses could be noticed, as well. The efforts to bring more diversity and personal choice in subjects learned, resulted in a situation where one student can attend a number of courses given by a number of teachers. This also means that the time spent with one teacher is usually limited to 3-4 hours a week during one semester. Compared to the more traditional educational model, where students gather around one master usually from the beginning to the end of their studies for 2-5 days a week, it is obvious why it is much harder to create a deep and stable teacher-student relationship in the postmodern setting. Students moving from one course to another and teachers having only half a day a week teaching one group, do not usually have the time needed for the development of a more personal student-teacher relationship. Beside this, the personalization of learning and students choosing the majority of courses they attend, creates a situation where a new group of students is formed for each course given. In one way, students can benefit from mixing with different years of study and the different pre-knowledge and experience, while on the other hand it does not create ground for the formation of stable and lasting groups and deeper, codependent student-student relationship. This is particularly true in schools with a large number of students and teachers. Even though, postmodern art education allows a vibrant learning atmosphere in terms of subjects and possibilities for more personal learning, it does not pay much attention to supporting and building connection between participants in education or in creation of psychologically beneficial learning environment. Since the group dynamics, teacher-student and student-student relationship (see 1.4. and 1.6.) are not much nurtured in the postmodern education, they are left to be developed on their own, or simply not develop as it is often the case. Hence, it not surprising that the wide diversity in subjects and freedom of choice combined with the lack of strong human connections or belonging to a stable, supportive group often results in students losing their orientation or motivation in learning – a problem postmodern art education has been facing for a while.

6.5.2. Relevance of the Diamond Model to the Contemporary Art Education

In the contemporary visual Arts, probably more than in another subject, it is a very slippery slope to speak about the right or the wrong way of doing or the correct or the incorrect way of thinking, as well as about the one truth which should be accepted by everyone. In the post Duchamp era, when almost anything is possible in arts, and where

almost everything can be art (6.2), a number of possibilities, opinions, attitudes, ways of expression and even truths can be as large as the number of artists making art. Art schools are facing a rather challenging situation as besides teaching technical skills, their primary task is to organize the transfer of knowledge and experience in the world of art where subjects, styles, knowledge and experience are mainly personal and extremely diverse. Postmodern art education has managed to address this diversity, and to create partly individually tailored learning. However, we have seen that as its primary focus was on creating a variety of subjects, on *what* is taught, it neglected the socio-psychological factors of learning. (see 6.5.1.)

The Diamond Model, together with the NVC paradigm, offers openness and technical tools for handling the diversity of opinions, ideas and needs, while it uses communication and connection between people to create a dynamic exchange of information, opinion, etc. or more precisely to initiate learning. It also offers organizational and methodological structure, which can embrace different, even opposite approaches and opinions on art. Further more through its non judgmental approach, it not only allows space for a diversity of ideas, approaches and attitudes, but is actually strengthened by it, because it provides a space for the needs of each member of the group and for genuine self expression. The NVC paradigm supports the diversity of approaches and individuality. The acceptance of differences and personal learning abilities and needs is valued, as well as the contribution to the harmonious connection between participants in the education process. This allows for the tasks to be more personally tailored according to students abilities, for the atmosphere to be simulative and supportive while at the same time relaxed. This all indicates that the Diamond Model is more likely to support and encourage the appearance of flow (see 1.2), since the conditions for it are more easily fulfilled. And as we have already seen earlier, flow is considered the prime state of mind for learning and engaging in creative expression.

The Diamond Model allows for the creation of learning through interacting with others in an inclusive learning community. In this model, it is believed that the social factors (connection between participants of education) represent a basis for creating a genuine and stimulating learning environment, and that lack of it brings difficulties in the learning and explicit and non-explicit violence. The NVC method, on the other hand, provides the necessary tools for understanding interaction between members of education and creating a more non-judgmental attitude, which, as it was shown in chapter 5, is beneficial for learning arts and a freer self-expression. Furthermore, once the connection between the participants in education (group members) is established, its intensity, depth and genuine quality might also be present during the lessons when the time is short and focus is on other activities. For example, if the connection between the students is established at the beginning of a course,

they are more likely to be cooperating and helping each other while working on their final projects. Even though the time when they work on their final projects might not allow for the space and time to connect, the connection they established earlier might be enough to support the cooperation.

In the Diamond Model, *how* something is taught together with the quality of relations between participants in education, receives as much importance as *what* is taught. It connects interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence to the subject of learning. This can be particularly important in art education, as on top of the regular process of learning, the process of self-expression is tightly connected to emotional intelligence. As we have seen earlier in the chapter 1, paying attention to the social factors and group dynamics in education, is beneficial for the development of social intelligences. We have also seen in 1.1. that interpersonal intelligence plays an important role in post academic success in life. Beside this, since the process of creating arts nowadays often requires cooperation and interaction with the experts in different, usually non-artistic fields, development of cooperative skills can be helpful for the successful artistic career. Intrapersonal intelligence, on the other hand, is supporting the process of self-expression through the awareness of one's own feelings, needs, thoughts and ideas that are usually the starting point for creative expression. Beside this, the development of self-awareness encourages the development of personal maturity (see 1.2.), which is usually reflected in the maturity of the finished art work.

Since one of the primary values of the NVC is a *genuine connection and presence* with the others and ourselves it can be said that the Diamond Model also supports genuine presence and authenticity of all the participants in the education process. Since the hierarchy is flat, and all the feelings and needs of the participants in education are accepted, there is no need to play roles or try to adjust to a preconceived ideal. Both the teachers and the students can simply be who they truly are. This genuine acceptance of all the participants in the education process, together with their different needs and feelings, is, in my opinion, essentially important for supporting the creative artistic expression. In my opinion, artistic expression is more likely to touch others and be meaningful and deep, if the person expressing himself can be completely frank and fully present with what is alive in him/her. The Diamond Model offers the frame and the tools for helping an art student connect to what he is feeling or thinking, it creates an environment which supports genuine expression as well as the interaction of the group, needed for support and learning.

The Diamond Model offers a paradigm of art education, different from those currently used in the art educational institutions. It tries to cherish the social factors which partly existed in the modernist educational structure, but abolishes linear understanding of learning

and the dynamics of the power hierarchy dominance. At the same time, it offers an open and dynamic structure, which allows for the coordination of the diversity of approaches in contemporary arts as well as the need to be both individual and part of a group. Hence I dare to conclude that the Diamond Model succeeds in unifying the demands of contemporary art scene with the benefit of the knowledge we have in the field of biology and psychology.

6.5.3. The Diamond in a Real School Situation – My Personal Experience

I would like to share my experience I had with a class of 13 students whom I used to teach drawing in the Vocational Secondary school of Arts in Hungary. Their age was 14-15, with approximately equal number of boys and girls in the group. For one and a half year, I would meet with the group once a week and have 6 drawing lessons of 45 minutes consecutively. The school curriculum was rather strictly prescribed, and as a teacher I enjoyed little freedom in changing it. However, I chose to apply the Diamond model as much as situation allowed. I could not change what I was teaching, but I did change the way I did it.

The very first lesson, I dedicated to creating connection between me and the students and between the students themselves. For the whole first lesson we set in a circle and talked. My aim was to create a space where students feel comfortable and accepted with me and the group. I did not want to give them a lecture about flat hierarchy, but instead I talked, and related to them in a way that they could personally experience. Wishing to create connection the best I could, while talking to them, I used the technique of the NVC. I particularly paid attention to stay accepting and non judgmental, which slowly turned to be the attitude of the whole group. By the end of the lesson all students were able to openly and freely express their thoughts and feelings.

Investing the time to create connection between all members of the group showed to be very helpful for the rest of the time we worked together. Students were very cooperative, they were very empathetic and helpful to each other (something not very typical for their school), there were no significant disciplinary problems, the atmosphere was usually peaceful and harmonious, they felt comfortable asking questions when they did not understand something, or expressing how they felt and they progressed well in drawing.

A drawing lesson would generally be divided into 3 major parts: Tuning up, drawing and closing the lesson. Tuning up time would generally take 20 minutes, except for the days when the students had a stressful event (an exam or a conflict at school for example) when tuning up time would take a bit longer. We would start by sitting in a circle, throwing a little ball to each other saying the names. This simple game would help the students clear the previous lesson and get present to the drawing lesson and through an element of playfulness and fun it

would often cheer up the atmosphere. After a minute or two of playing this game, the second part of the tuning up would start, where each one of us (including me) would express in a few sentences how he or she felt at that moment. In order to help my students have a more active vocabulary I put a list of feelings (from Marshall B. Rosenberg's book) on the wall of the classroom and gave a copy to each student. This proved to be a useful tool helping them become aware of what feeling they started the lesson with. I would usually reflect (in the NVC way) to what they expressed. If a child needed some more empathy, I would try to give it to him, or try the technique of reframing (see chapter 6). After some time, I would also give them the list of needs and encouraged them to pair them with the feelings they felt. Naturally I was not able to teach them the whole process of NVC, but even this small effort to help them express how they were, showed to be very helpful.

There were several reasons for starting the class with the expression of feelings and needs alive in the students at that moment. Firstly, it would bring an awareness the feelings, needs and the mood present at the beginning of the lesson, it would strengthened the idea that each of the students matters and will receive attention if needed, it would help them connect to each other, it allowed me to quickly show them empathy and sometimes, trough connecting them to their needs it would create a shift into positive mood and positive thinking pattern. It also served as a test, that would help me detect if some students needed more attention and more empathy in order to be able to draw well in the lesson. This was also the time when the students would express their thoughts, questions, criticisms, ideas, feelings, etc. about the drawing lesson. I would try to listen to these empathetically and to respond to them.

After the tuning up session would end, and the self connection and connection to other members of the groups was present, the second, longest and practical, part of drawing lesson would start. The topics and the drawing problems to be addressed were determined by the school's curricula. They would mostly be aimed at drawing after a model, starting with still life towards portrait and finally figure. In this part of the lesson, students would sit around the still life (or some other model) which they were expected to draw and would work individually on their drawings. I would go occasionally from one student to the other and tried to give observations, remarks and explanations, which I thought might be beneficial in helping them, draw what they see. Ideally, trying to avoid having my corrections being heard as criticizing, I would express them as my personal opinion. I believe that , despite a proper NVC sentence I would express myself in, the corrections I would give would not be understood as criticizing and blaming mostly due to the connection created in the first part of the lesson. If the connection with the students had been missing, I suspect that even the most accurate NVC sentence would have had a high chance to be heard as blaming, judging or criticizing.

Occasionally, some students would face difficulties in progressing with their drawing. I noticed that majority of these problems were due to the student's mental model. These instances and the way I would address them and usually succeed in solving them, were described in chapter 5.

In the Hungarian art schools, the most common final part of a drawing lesson would include the students exhibiting the work they did during the lesson and teacher evaluating the drawings. I wanted to avoid the situation where I am a dominant figure evaluating the drawings as successful or unsuccessful. My view of this pattern was influenced by the NVC paradigm, but also by my awareness of how harmful it can be for students. Therefore, we would usually finish the lesson by sitting in the circle. We (the students and me) would first take some time to reflect on the whole lesson, to become aware of how we experienced it and what were the things we learned. After this, one by one, we would express these to the rest of the group. In this way, time and space was provided to connect to our feelings and needs, to express them and share them with the group, and to become aware of the process of learning that we underwent. In my experience, even if one student is not always aware and cannot list all the things he or she learned in a lesson, when the lists of all the members of the group are combined, they usually sum up the same things the teacher would point out to his students. In this way, the awareness of one student would contribute to the awareness of another. On the other hand, allowing the students to realize and become aware of what they learned instead of telling them the same as an upper authority, is much more meaningful for them. It also makes them more involved and engaged in the process of learning afterwards. Furthermore, creating the space for expressing feelings and thoughts, is similar to the opening circle, allowing each member of the group to be heard, to know they matter and to share his own experience.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

General level of education as well as the use of the internet and media for obtaining information has been increasing in the 20th and the 21st century, and with it started the tendency of decentralization of educations and the commencement of a spontaneous, less linear flow of information and communication. Duchamp's "Fountain" is discussed as the cause of a paradigm shift and the influence expanding diversity in Visual Arts. A new educational model, named the Diamond Model is proposed as a more suitable model for the needs of students, teachers, communities and societies in a rapidly changing world. This model is suggested as particularly applicable in art education, as it embraces the possibility of managing and benefiting from different values, ideas and attitudes in a group. Author's personal classroom experience with the Diamond Model is reported.

CONCLUSION

It has been a general world tendency in the past two decades, that there is an awareness that education needs to change. Every few years we witness educational authorities initiating some kind of change. However, the problems seem to remain the same; the academic success of a student has little relevance to their professional success in life, receiving higher education no longer means higher income, students are bored in schools and dislike learning while teachers make enormous efforts to motivate them and make them learn. Furthermore, the school's structures are less and less fit to cope with the influence of the internet on education. In art education, where one can talk about a great number of approaches, opinions and truths, confusion remains concerning the question of how to prepare the students of today for the art scene of tomorrow in such a rapidly changing world? How to provide them with knowledge, skills, experiences which will help them become independent and successful professional artists and designers?

In my opinion, a thorough change is needed – not only in the way we teach today or how schools are organized, but primarily in the way we think about education, what we think education is and should be. The Diamond Model and the NVC paradigm in art education offer remedies for the natural love of learning, development and self-expression, which are put to sleep by the current education system. I believe that the task of the educators of the future is to awaken, support and nurture these natural human potentials in a learning environment which is free, supportive and compassionate and whose aim is to serve students' need for learning instead of standardizing knowledge. I believe that if the attitude and the environment are right, the natural human potentials will start to grow and blossom on their own.

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2. Foundations: This Is Your Brain, lecture by Paul Blooms's Introduction to Psychology course, Open Yale Courses, Yale University, September 30, 2008
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19. What Happens When Things Go Wrong: Mental Illness, Part II, lecture by Paul Blooms's Introduction to Psychology course, Open Yale Courses, Yale University, September 30, 2008
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teaching experience:

- since 2011 *Contemporary Arts and Creativity development*, Art School in Budapest, Budapest, Hungary
- 2008 - 2009 *Creative Art (in English language)*, Secondary School for Fine and Applied Arts, Budapest, Hungary
- 2007 *Introduction to Contemporary Arts*, Visual Arts Department, Dar al-Kallima College, Bethlehem, Palestine
- 2007 *Papermaking*, Dar Annadwa, International Center Bethlehem, Bethlehem, Palestine
- 2006 - 2009 *Drawing, painting, Art history*, Art High School, Nyiregyháza, Hungary
- 2006 *Papermaking workshop*, Center for Visual Culture, Sibenik, Croatia
- 2005 *Painting technology*, University of Pécs, Faculty of Music and Visual Arts, Pécs, Hungary
- 2005 *Experimental drawing and painting*, University of Pécs, Faculty of Music and Visual Arts, Pécs, Hungary
- 2004 *Painting*, Oulu Polytechnic, Department of Media, Oulu, Finland
- 2004 *Papermaking*, University of Pécs, Faculty of Music and Visual Arts, Pécs, Hungary
- 2000 – 2002 *English language*, Helen Doron method, Jerusalem, Israel
- 2000 *Oil painting course*, Dar Annadwa, International Center Bethlehem, Bethlehem, Palestine
- 1998 – 1999 *Papermaking assistant*, Bezalel, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Jerusalem, Israel

education:

- 2005- 2009 *Nonviolent Communication(co-trainer course)*, Hungarian Center for Nonviolent Communication, Budapest, Hungary
- 2004 *Socrates-Erasmus students exchange program*, Oulu Polytechnic, Department of Media, Oulu, Finland
- from 2002 *Doctor of Liberal Arts* program in painting, University of Pécs, Faculty of Music and Visual Arts, Pécs, Hungary (Planned to be completed by summer 2010)
- 1999 *Students exchange program*, Kunstakademie, Düsseldorf, Germany
- 1996 – 2000 *BA in Fine Arts degree*, Bezalel, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Jerusalem, Israel
- 1993 – 1995 *Degree in Art education*, College of Fine and Applied Arts, Belgrade, Yugoslavia
- 1992 – 1995 *Drawing and painting lessons*, Sumatovacka Center for Visual Arts, Belgrade, Yugoslavia
- 1988- 1992 High School of Kragujevac, Kragujevac, Yugoslavia, *major in English language and translating*

- languages: ~ *Serbo-Croatian* (mother tongue level)
~ *English* (high level – reading/writing/speaking)
~ *Hungarian* (high level – reading/writing/speaking)
~ *Hebrew* (speaking: high level, reading/writing: medium level)

solo exhibitions:

- 2007 ~ ‘*Sincerely Barbara*’, installation of mail art project, Contemporary Art gallery, National Museum,
Kragujevac, Serbia
~ ‘*Movements of The Inner*’, Al-Kahf Gallery, Cultural Center Bethlehem, Bethlehem, Palestine
- 2006 ~ ‘*Inner Jerusalem*’, Jevrejska opstina, Novi Sad, Serbia
- 2005 ~ ‘*The Belly*’, installation, Dante Cafe, Arts and Gastronomy Festival, Pécs, Hungary
- 2004 ~ ‘*Sincerely Barbara*’, mail-art project installation, Al-Kahf Gallery, Internatioanl Center Bethlehem, Bethlehem, Palestine
- 2003 ~ ‘*Amnesia per Kilo*’, happening, Arts and Gastronomy Festival, Pécs, Hungary
~ ‘*90 Minutes on Childhood*’, installation in time, Pince Galléry, Gallery of Pécs, Pécs, Hungary
- 2001 ~ ‘*The Last Sculpture of Refugee Art*’, installation, Contemporary Art gallery, National Museum, Kragujevac, Serbia

group exhibitions (selection):

- 2008 ~ *Not Obligatory*, FKSE (Hungarian Association of Young Artists) New members, FKSE galéria, Budapest, Hungary
~ *50*, FKSE (Hungarian Association of Young Artists) FKSE galéria, Budapest, Hungary
~ *New Tendencies*, National Museum, Kragujevac, Serbia
- 2007 ~ *Paper Island*, International Symposium of Papermaker Artists, Pécsi Kis Galéria, Pécs, Hungary
- 2006 ~ *SoBaBu Art Association*, Városi Galéria, Kalocsa, Hungary
~ *Kalocsa art camp 2006*, Városi Galéria, Kalocsa, Hungary
~ *It is Mine*, Hattyúház Galéria, Pécs, Hungary
- 2005 ~ „*10 Years of DLA*”, Ernst Múzeum, Budapest, Hungary
~ „*Szemlétek*” (film festival), Pécs, Hungary
~ *DLA anual exhibtion*, Pécsi Galéria, Pécs, Hungary
~ *DLA diploma exhibtion*, Hattyúház Galéria, Pécs, Hungary
- 2004 ~ *Internationali Mail Art Biennále*, Nagyvárad, Romania
~ *New Members*, ULUS, Paviljon Cvjeta Zuzoric, Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro

~ **DLA, Barcsai Terem, Képzőművészeti Főiskola, Budapest, Hungary**

~ *Projections*, Vaszari Képtár, Kaposvár, Hungary

~ *DLA anual exhibiton*, Pécsi Galéria, Pécs, Hungary

~ *Krapanj 2004 Art Camp*, St. Krsevan gallery, Sibenik, Croatia

2003 ~ *Krapanj 2003*, St. Krsevan Gellery, Sibenik, Croatia

~ *DLA anual exhibition*, Pécsi Galéria, Pécs, Hungary

~ *Ilonának*, Art-Teria Gallery, Szentendre, Hungary

~ „*Keserü Ilona And Her Students*”, Pécsi Galéria, Pécs, Hungary

~ *Internatioal Mail Art Biennále*, Vaszari Képtár , Kaposvár , Hungary

2002 ~ *43. October Salon*, Belgrade, Szerbia and Montenegro

2000 ~ *Diploma kiállítás*, BezalelAcademy of Arts and Design, Jeruzalem, Israel

in collections:

Mendel Assiation, Jerusalem

University of Pécs, School of Music and Visual Arts, Pécs, Hunagry

art association memberships:

-SoBaBu Artists' Association, Hungary

-ULUS (Artists Association of Serbia)

-MAOE (Hungarian Artists State Assotiation)

- FKMS (Assotiation of Young Hungarian Artists)

art-camps, symposium, conferences:

2010 - „Nonviolent Communication in Education”, conference, Montolieu, France

2009 - „Áthallások” – crosscurricula visual education, conference, Budapest, Hungary

- „KREA”- Creativity in school, conference, Nyíregyháza, Hungary

2007 - Paper Island, International Symposium of Papermaker Artists, Siklós, Hungary

- Nonviolent Communication Summer Camp, Emst, Netherlands

2006 - Kalocsa Art Camp, Kalocsa, Hungary

2004 - IX. papermakers art camp, Simonfa, Hungary

- Krapanj 2004, Krapanj , Croatia

- Paper Island, International Symposium of Paper Makers, Krapanj, Croatia

2003 - VIII.papermakers art camp, Simonfa, Hungary

- Krapanj 2003, Krapanj , Croatia

links:

http://www.artportal.hu/lexikon/fiatalmuveszek/guttman_barbara

http://www.annadwa.org/cave/gallery_archive/barbara.htm

http://art.pte.hu/dla/2003/uj/Gutman_Barbara-Good%20Morning%20Harry%20Poter-2003.jpg

http://art.pte.hu/dla/2003/uj/Gutman_Barbara_2-2003.jpg

www.artschoolbudapest.com

www.barbaraguttman.carbonmade.com