

Hope, courage and not yet discovered potentials

**– systemic responses to the dominant position
of the medical, cognitive and evidence-based approaches**

**Søren Hertz
PsykCentrum, Hillerød, Denmark**

Symposium

VIII. Nordic Family Therapy Congress

Bergen 2008



Not yet discovered potentials – “uanede muligheder”

Unexplored possibilities

uncountable

**Potentials that comes out of curiosity and creativity,
knowledge about possibilities and social interaction,
maybe even hard work**

**The idea of “uanede muligheder” is an important part
of a transdisciplinary scientific stand**



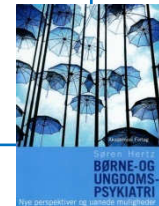
The idea of not yet discovered potentials implies

On the concrete level in accordance to referrals:

To co-construct contexts, where it's optimal to look for invitations and get potentials in play – not as individual issues, but as possibilities we create in common

On the societal level:

To see referred problems as mirrors of something much bigger than these individual issues and thereby to be inspired by the matters, that referred children and youngsters invite us to look more closely at. In that way they “teach” us about important societal issues.



Transdisciplinarity – systems theory –

**A meta-theory that moves
beyond the different disciplines**

**Concentrate on, how the different disciplines
are able to co-create good options for
optimal growing conditions –
“uanede muligheder”**

**The concept of “uanede muligheder”
implies the issue of preferred knowledge**



Preferred knowledge – schizophrenia –

From

**Traditional metaanalyses
stating recovery 15 – 20 %
(Saha et al, 2005, Fleischhaker, 2005)**

**Very critical and reductionistic ways of
understanding the concept of recovery
(Hemmingsen & Parnas, 2005)**



to

48 % recovery (Harrison, 2001)

**Longitudinal study average 28 years 65 % recovery
or significant improvement (Harding, 1993)**

**“The brain is the most plastic organ we have in
interaction with the environment. Maybe what we are
looking at is the neuroplasticity of the brain that is very
slowly correcting the brain on its own, in interaction with
the environment” (Harding in McGuire, 2000).**

**82 % recovery 5 years all psychoses
(Seikkula et al, 2006)**



Preferred knowledge – autism –

From:

“Children with autism or Aspergers syndrom are missing the basic quality to read, interpret and use social signals, as we human beings are using to connect ourselves with others in social relationships

The risk for isolation og loneliness is imminent, if diagnosis is not settled in time” (Pedersen, 2001).

To



(Son-rise)

“The children show us the way in, and then we show them the way out ... These children are performing their behavior for reasons that are important to them ... We find repeatedly that children begin to display an interest in us when we have an abiding interest in them. What’s more, this interest is spontaneous, not forced. These children interact because they want to ... When we don’t put limits on our children’s future, we open the door for limitless growth and progress” (Kaufman, 2002).

(RDI)

“Families can actually increase the flexibility and complexity of neural pathways of people with autism spectrum disorder through focused guided participation in challenging activities” (Gutstein, 2005)



**Preferred knowledge
– OCD –**

From

**A disorder/ disease defined and connected to
obsessive and compulsive behavior**

To

An emotional disorder with special traits



Preferred knowledge: medicine/ MTA

From

Many recent studies refer to this original study telling that psychotropic medicine works alone or in combination with intensive behavior therapy (MTA Cooperative group, 1999 and 2004)

To

Effect of medication is closely linked to a follow-up by intensive support and regular contact carried out by the doctor him-/herself. Effect was reported primarily by parents and teachers, who knew about the medical treatment.



Foucault: power/knowledge (1980)

Special caution to how to engage in the narratives of people's lives. This goes along with the special consequences of modern power, where people are in constant risk of internalising meetings with cultural institutions as personal shortcomings.

Bateson: Steps to an ecology of Mind (1972)

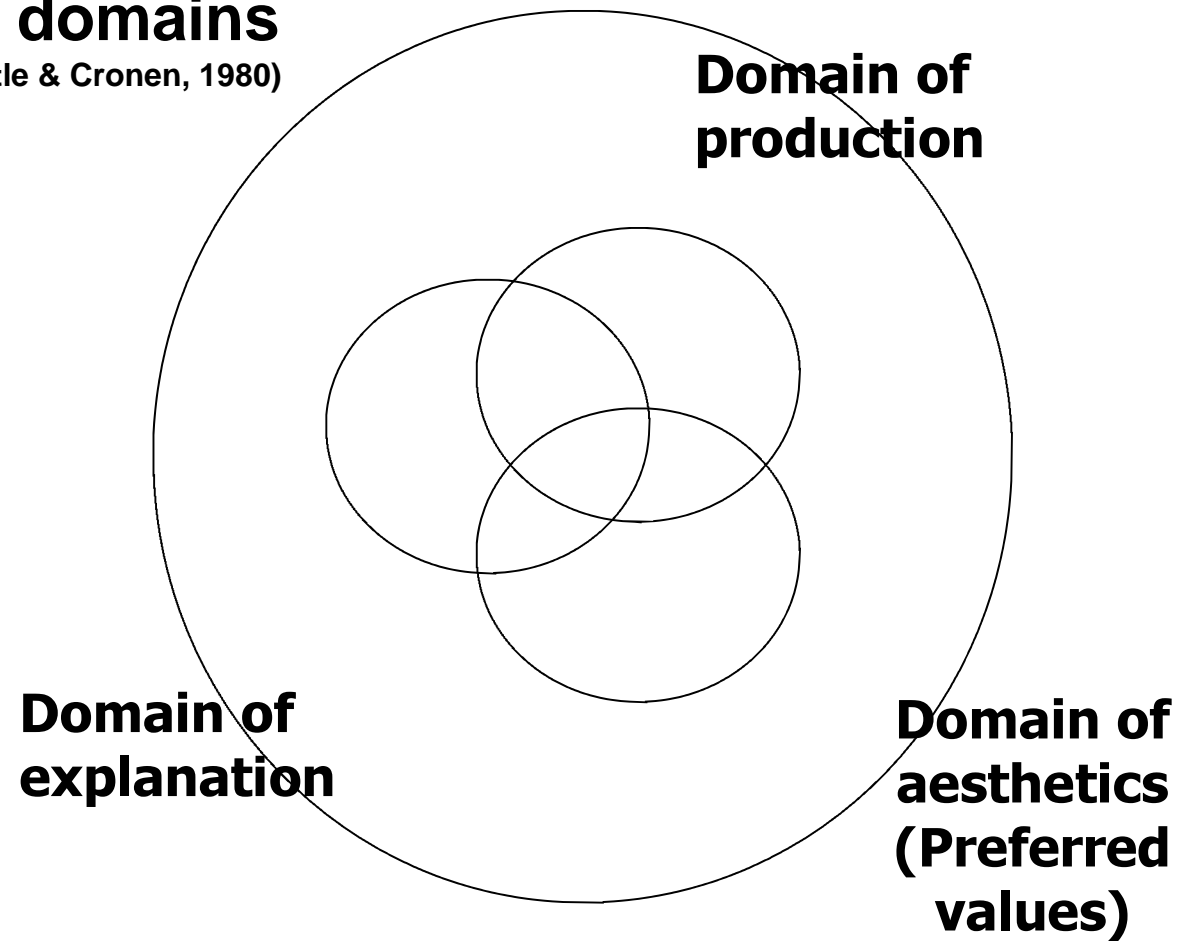
About unconsciousness:

It's not possible to make everything conscious. This obligates us as "co-constructing experts" to be aware of, what we privilege as ideas or emotions brought to the surface.



The concept of the 3 domains

(Lang, Little & Cronen, 1980)



Transdisciplinarity as the metatheoretical stand

**Based on the epistemology of Gregory Bateson:
Steps to an ecology of mind (2005/1972)**

**Information comes from differences,
that make a difference**

Which brings about, that:

“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts”

**Goes beyond knowledge derived from positivistic and
phenomenological scientific work and in that way
includes ideas derived from medicine/neuroscience**



The concept of invitation

Behavior and emotions are communication and thereby function as invitations to others. Invitations are filled up with moral values.

The important thing is: what kind of invitations and to whom about what?

Important to create contexts that makes it possible to understand the invitations and to create the kind of answers, that promote further collaboration or change.

Invitations are verbal as well as non-verbal.



ADHD within the concept of invitations

Core problem behavior:

Impulsivity
Attention problems
Hyperactivity
Oppositional behavior

Looks like:

**Wanting to manage
a lot on its own**
**At the same time
being in doubt and
Unsecure, if it´s possible**

Invitation to:

**Bio-psycho-social
maturation through**

**Less doubts on potentials in
social interaction etc.**
More common attention
More working memory
**More self-reflection/
mentalisation**



Deconstruction of the intimate relationships created culturally between:

Positive and negative

Resources and shortcomings

Responsibility and guilt

Neurobiology and attachment

Normal and special educational units

**The concept of invitations creates a pathway going
beyond - transdisciplinarity is creating "uandede"
bio-psycho-social possibilities**



Bio-psycho-social quoting:

There is growing evidence that successful intervention modifies not only maladaptive behavior, but also the cellular and physiological correlates of behavior (Cecchetti, 2002)

The efficacy of any given intervention will depend on the capacity of the nervous system to be modified by experience (Nelson, 2000)

The more you do the more you are capable of taking in. The more you stimulate the brain, the more synapses and fittings you create and the more cell connections you get. Activity is absolutely important to maintain and develop the brain. Passivity is strangling (Moser, 2004)



Deconstructing the intimate relationships - example -

**From an individualistic, here-and-now perspective:
autistic behavior, serious shortcomings in social
interaction**

**To a transdisciplinary perspective:
The boy tries to perfect something, that's too difficult
to a boy that age – creating mutual frustration
according to the wish for attachment**

**Understanding the story makes everyone eager to
explore potentials and enjoy the possibilities
of creating something unique.**



Preferred disciplines/ knowledge:

Plasticity of the brain

Developmental psychology

Attachment theory

Resilience theory

Recovery

Socialconstructionism

Mirror cells

Plasticity of the brain



The invitations of this symposium

**Hope is an action, not only a feeling – worry is strangling
– important to represent a substitute hope – knowing of
the potentials of mirror cells**

**Working with the central issues looking upon them
as invitations for the most outstanding potentials
for change – and at the same time working with the
incongruencies and the absent but implicit**

**Being transparent with your preferred values
as part of “objectivity in parenthesis” –
expertise as the actively knowing position**



