



THE DIVERSE WORLD OF CAREER GUIDANCE



EKS

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The Diverse World of Career Guidance

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Dear readers,

this book is for everybody who works in people's professional development. We would like to dedicate the book to career advisors, teachers, further education lecturers, psychologists, social workers, coaches, therapists and anybody else who feels to be a member of our big family of "helping professions".

The main topic of the book is career guidance. We understand it as a supportive process that accompanies people throughout their whole lives. We help our clients to look for and find career paths that will be in accordance with their current situation. We support them in their decisions and choices so they can use the full potential of their knowledge, skills and experience and at the same time feel happy – in their jobs and personal lives.

11 authors from three countries and from different organizations of different sectors worked on this book. We have a wide range of occupations (from research and education at universities to working with clients) and various professional history. We differ in achieved education, age, gender, family backgrounds, opinions or values we hold. We speak different languages and live in different sociocultural environments. What we share is the passion for our work and the unexpected ways that lead us to our jobs.

The aim of this book is to share some of our experience with you, the readers. We would like to inspire you in the first place and also show you that there is no ideal pattern for the "ideal career advisor". There are just rules and principles that we can adopt. The other part of our profession is a combination of our education, experience but also the context we operate in, conditions we work in and our personality. This book should serve as a framework for your thoughts about what kind of professional you are. Try to use the reflection in the chapter 'My personal journey' to record your thoughts.

*If you are actually thinking about your profession, it can be interesting for you to see it from a different perspective. For this purpose and to lighten things up, we invited pupils from grades 6 and 9 of one primary/lower secondary school in Prague to work with us. The kids had a chance to try how it feels to create a book and to think about their future professional paths. You can read the opinions on the world of work of those who were born in the 21st century. You will find the kids' ideas in the chapter 'Profession of a career advisor through kids' eyes' and throughout the whole book where you will recognize them by the **different coloured text**.*

We created the book with the support of the "Diversity in Career Counselling" project that was funded by the European Union.

*Have a nice time reading.
Your project team*

Obsah:

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A/I. Theory vs. practice.



A career advisor needs a wide range of skills for his or her practice. Most important is the ability to listen and ask the right questions. A career advisor also needs to react to individual needs of the client and use common sense. Do we need any theories at all? What can support us in our work with the client and how is it connected to the modern world? In this chapter, Nicki and Jane, our two colleagues from the University of Derby are going to share their point of view with you.

DEAR EMMA

Jane Artess

Dear Emma,

I was thinking about what you said yesterday about wanting to know more about how people choose their jobs. I guess we all have our own theories about that but as career practitioners, we can see that some ideas are better at explaining what our clients do and think than others.

Take that young woman you told me about – the one who has two small children and is expecting a third – and who doesn't seem ready yet to even think about working. Her career development has not progressed since she was an adolescent. Her personal situation means that she has to take account of the needs of her children and her job has to fit around them. Some would argue that her need is for a good 'person-environment' match. Her career decision-making is more pragmatic than rational and she doesn't have a free choice as all job opportunities are not open to her – her 'horizons for action' are limited. Another way her choices might be limited is by her perception of herself. You told me that as a teenage mother from a troubled background, she has low self-esteem and that being unable to do well at school reinforced that. As she has not yet had the opportunity to have positive feedback in learning or workplace settings she has learned (socially) to think that some jobs are not for people like her. Some career theorists would say that her social class is

restricting her choices and perception of what kinds of work might be available to her. As a career practitioner, I think you are absolutely right to try to boost this young woman's self-confidence and encourage her to take small steps. Introducing this woman to ways of learning and working that can be fitted in around her children will provide her with a base from which to start. Encouraging her to explore what she might be interested in or good at is also a valuable strategy to take. Simply suggesting to her that many women with children work in demanding full time job roles nowadays is to deny her lived experience, and might impact her career progression negatively if she does not have access to money for childcare, or the social infrastructure to believe that is the right thing to do. You should also consider that whilst her current social setting appears limited, there is always scope for change and that the oppressiveness of opportunity structures (and labour markets) can be overcome with self-agency. Some career theorists think the promotion of self-agency lies at the heart of good career decision-making.

By contrast, I was interested in your new graduate client. He seems to have the world at his feet. From what you said, he seems overwhelmed by the range of career choices that face him. He is trying to match his degree subject and personal skills with what he thinks employers are looking for, and finding that although that makes sense – he wouldn't want a job for which he was a poor match – it is not as easy as it sounds. I think this is because job roles and people are not very stable over time. If I give you an example: think of all the teachers you knew as a child – did they all exhibit the same personal characteristics, qualifications, skills? No. I guessed not. Most jobs can be done successfully by a variety of people so your graduate's attempt to match his traits to factors employers seek is just one way to go about focussing his options. Of course, universities try to develop employability and broaden career choices in students by encouraging them to take work experience, or do voluntary work, or even work for the student union. Whilst all these things are hugely valuable, they seem more likely to be so if the student is asked to reflect on the experience – if he or she is asked to think about key questions such as: Why was the experience enjoyable? What kinds of personal motivation or values did the experience satisfy? Did I do that well? Was the experience easy or challenging? Answers to questions like this help the graduate work out what is important to him/her rather than focussing solely on what employers want. This helps what social learning theorists call the development of 'self-observation generalisations'. However, we need to remember that this kind of work-based learning is constructed over time and often context-dependent. As career practitioners, we have to find ways of making sure students and graduates are not put off types of work by the setting of the experience. As you know well, one poor experience in an office does not mean all office work should be avoided; in most jobs people have to be able to adapt to both the tasks and the setting.

Concern

- 1 2 3 4 5 Thinking about what my future will be like
- 1 2 3 4 5 Realising that today's choices shape my future
- 1 2 3 4 5 Preparing for the future
- 1 2 3 4 5 Becoming aware of the education & vocational choices
- 1 2 3 4 5 Planning how to achieve my goals
- 1 2 3 4 5 Concerned about my career

Control

- 1 2 3 4 5 Keeping upbeat
- 1 2 3 4 5 Making decisions by myself
- 1 2 3 4 5 Taking responsibility for my actions
- 1 2 3 4 5 Sticking up for my beliefs
- 1 2 3 4 5 Counting on myself
- 1 2 3 4 5 Doing what's right for me

Curiosity

- 1 2 3 4 5 Exploring my surroundings
- 1 2 3 4 5 Looking for opportunities to grow as a person
- 1 2 3 4 5 Investigating options before making a choice
- 1 2 3 4 5 Observing different ways of doing things
- 1 2 3 4 5 Probing deeply into questions that I have
- 1 2 3 4 5 Becoming curious about new opportunities

Confidence

- 1 2 3 4 5 Performing tasks efficiently
- 1 2 3 4 5 Taking care to do things well
- 1 2 3 4 5 Learning new skills
- 1 2 3 4 5 Working up to my ability
- 1 2 3 4 5 Overcoming obstacles
- 1 2 3 4 5 Solving problems

5 = Strongest
4 = Very Strong
3 = Strong
2 = Somewhat strong
1 = Not strong

I recently came across some work in which the authors saw career decision-making as a process of adaptation rather than linear development. In particular, they had developed a measure of 'career adaptability' which involved asking clients to assess themselves on a range of statements in the 'Career Adapt-Abilities Scale'. They reasoned that different people use different strengths to build their careers. No one is good at everything; each of us emphasizes some strengths more than others. The information then was used by the practitioner to help the client to 'tell his/her story' and develop career plans. I think it's interesting because you can see that it can be possible to be strong in one area and not strong in another. For example, someone who is strongest on Confidence and not strong on Concern may be assuming things will turn out OK without much effort and may need her/his career practitioner to provide a 'reality check'; whereas someone who is strong on Control but not strong on Curiosity may be plunging into job applications without adequate research or thinking.

Finally, I wonder what we can take from these wide ranging theories for our own practice given that theoretical perspectives change too. In 1960s in the UK and USA the linear career development theorists predominated; you would actually hear practitioners say things such as, "he is still at the fantasy stage, wants to become a footballer..!" In the 1970s there was high unemployment and practice was dominated by concerns about social class and unequal access to the labour market. By the 1980s and 90s everyone was talking about social learning theory and constructivism as we emphasised career learning... now we are thinking less about employability and more about career adaptability. Where do you think these ideas will go next?

If you want to do some reading about career theories, try these:

Artess, J. (2013) Changing conceptions of students' career development needs. Paper for the Serbia within European Paradigm of Career Guidance: recommendations and perspectives conference, University of Nis, October 2014. Accessed at <http://derby.openrepository.com/derby/bitstream/10545/565734/1/changing+conceptions.pdf>
Athanasou, J. A., and VanEsboeck, R. (editors) (2008) The International Handbook of Career Guidance, Springer. Accessed at https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=v7DoN0aahXsC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbg_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&cf=false
Savickas, M. L., and Porfeli, E. J. (2012) Career Adapt-abilities Scale: construction, reliability and measurement equivalence across 13 countries. Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 80, 3, 661-673.

Warmest wishes,
Aunty Jane



COMPETENCES OF A CAREER ADVISOR IN THE DIGITAL AGE

(Nicki Moore)

Have you ever found really interesting materials whilst searching the internet and then lost them again? This used to happen to me a lot and lead to a great deal of frustration and a waste of precious time. You may, like me, have watched young people, colleagues and family members making 'friends' on Facebook and sharing images and wondered who was really reading and looking at these 'posts'. It is a fact. The internet has quickly become an integral part of our lives. We use it for shopping, reading, listening to music, communicating, sharing information and of course for research. It is becoming commonplace to use the internet for researching and planning meals, holidays, and even personal relationships. Of course, careers are no exception and the internet offers all sorts of possibilities for people to develop and manage their careers.

The internet is not always the perfect solution to our career development challenges. A while ago I was searching YouTube for some film clips which I could use in a careers lesson for young people. I found a wonderful video in which a woman spoke eloquently about her job in veterinary science. She spoke of her own route into this rewarding job and the qualifications which she had needed. It took me a while to realise that the person on the video was talking about her job in the United States and that her route and qualifications were irrelevant in a UK context. It made me realise that sometimes the information which young people find on the internet can be less than helpful. They need the knowledge and skills to interrogate online information and make decisions about whether or not the information is really relevant.

I have also watched with some concern as my own children have posted pictures on their Facebook sites. I know that as an employer I will often do an online search for people who are applying for jobs with our organisation. I have questioned the wisdom of posting 'selfies' and photographs of social occasions knowing that potential employers will be making judgements about people's suitability for jobs based on what they find out about them online. I have decided to include more information about managing online presence in my teaching practice because I know that some people could miss out on important opportunities by having inappropriate pictures and information about themselves on the internet.



My work colleague, Tristram Hooley has helped me to understand how the internet has brought new possibilities to the world of career development. We have been talking about how the internet has become:

- a **careers library** through which individuals can search and source information, for example information about what different jobs involve or how much someone can earn,
- a **marketplace** where individuals can find and apply for job vacancies and to attend a college course,
- a **space for establishing and maintaining contacts and networks**, for example through social media sites like LinkedIn or Twitter,
- a **media channel** through which individuals can raise their profiles and manage reputations, for example through personal websites or blogs.



As a career development professional I find this fascinating. This new context for career development has a number of implications for me as a teacher, career development practitioner and career counsellor. It also leaves me with some anxieties! For example as I write this article I note that I have used a number of terms which in the past might have been noted as 'jargon' or 'popular speech'. I have had to learn a new vocabulary: posting, friending, selfies, surfing, and digital media. I have had to learn some new teaching approaches: integrating digital technology into the teaching environment. I also have to think about how I support career counsellors to operate in this new world. It is clear to me that if career counsellors are to teach their clients how to become 'digitally career literate' then we really need to get good at these skills too! This is part of our own career development! I am currently reviewing how I use social media to promote my expertise and skills and I have decided that I am going to create an online CV using digital media so that I can advise students how to do this themselves.

Fortunately, Tristram has helped me to think about the competences which we need to operate as effective career counsellors in this new digital world. He sets out a framework of seven competences (The 7 C's).

The 7C's of digital career literacy

Changing	the ability to understand and adapt to changing career contexts
Collecting	the ability to find, manage and retrieve career information
Critiquing	the ability to evaluate, analyse the provenance of and assess the usefulness of career information
Connecting	the ability to make contacts, build relationships and establish networks online that support career development
Communicating	the ability to interact effectively across a range of different platforms and to understand the 'netiquette' of different interactions and to use them in the context of career
Creating	the ability to create online content that represents their interests, skills and career history
Curating	the ability to develop, review and edit their online presence

On a personal level, I have worked very hard at improving my digital career literacy. This has focussed on a number of specific activities. In the first place, I have concentrated on my online presence. This activity is both a 'connecting' and a 'communicating' activity. I have come to realise that it is wise (and not self-obsessive) to 'Google search' my name. I now do this regularly as I want to make sure that the information about me helps to promote me effectively as a professional in my discipline. You can influence this but you need to know who is talking about you or sharing images of you online! This includes your own posts. I also make sure that people can find me easily if they want to ask me a question about career development. I am a member of LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and I have a Blog but I manage all of these carefully. It is a simple procedure and I recommend that you start doing this straight away!

Secondly I have concentrated on my collecting, critiquing and curating skills. I am now able to undertake effective 'searches' on line and no longer lose those useful and important documents. I use a 'social bookmarking site' called CiteU-like. This is similar to a personal online library and by using this I never lose those useful documents no matter where I am in the world. I have also begun to use sites such as 'Dropbox' and 'Google' to save, share and collaborate on documents.

As I write this article I am thinking about the sort of advice I would give to any new career counsellor. We are all so busy and have so much to do and learn but I really think that one of the most important things to do is to undertake an audit of your own digital career literacy using the 7Cs framework and then make a personal plan of how you are going to improve this important part of your practice. This will ensure that you are in the best position to help your clients.

A/II. Profession of a career advisor through kids' eyes

We, as career practitioners, know very well the importance of our work. The competences of a career advisor are defined by qualification standards. Does everybody think the same though? What do our future clients expect from us? Are they actually interested in our service? This chapter is written by kids - pupils of the 6th grade of a lower secondary school. Let's have a look at our profession from a different point of view.



WHO IS A CAREER ADVISOR?

(pupils from classes VI.A and VI.B, Primary School "Londýnská", Prague)

😊 Do you think there could be a profession that would include helping other people with the choice of their jobs? Do you think this kind of profession would be useful?

...Yeah, somebody needs help with jobs.

...Yes, it would be useful. But it already exists.

...Yes, because people have always had problems with work and they will always have.

...Yes, it would help people a lot. You can go to a psychologists today too.

...Yes, people wouldn't have problems with their work.

...Kind of, some people don't like when somebody interferes with their business.

...It is useful for people who lost their job and house. And they can contact them by e-mail, in case they didn't lose their computer too.

...Yes, and it actually exists already. I don't know how it's called but I know there is something like that (I saw ads in the subway).

...I don't know if a profession like this exists but I think it can be useful.

...Yes, but to me personally, it wouldn't be of any use.
 ...Yes, it could exist and I think it would be useful for everybody, even for me. It would help everybody.
 ...I don't think so, people should choose jobs on their own, but otherwise I think it's a good idea.
 ...The profession exists, it is called advisor for career choice or employment office (I have verified both, I saw it myself).
 ...It could exist and it would be useful. It would be more like trying to find a job for you than helping you choose.
 ...Definitely, somebody who could think about all the pros and cons.
 ...It would be useful. Look at me, I have no idea yet.
 ...Well yeah, it would be because they could help them. It could be like this: Me: "I don't know what job to choose. Can you help me please?" Him/her: "Of course." And they would find out what I like and what I am good at. And they find something.

😊 How would the profession be called?



Praximan
 Helper
 Work worker
 Career advisor
 Work advisor
 Occupationer
 Work specialist

Psychology
 Workofficer
 Adviseman
 Helping with career choice
 Advisor of jobs choice
 Workhelper
 Adviser

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS SHOULD THIS PERSON HAVE?



understanding
 brave
 educated
 kind
 logic
 good fun
 has to have a good speaking skills and behaviour
 fair
 stamina
 intelligent
 educated
 coffee addict
 ICT skills
 clever
 able to understand others
 creative
 patient with people
 must be experienced
 know a lot of occupations
 fantasy
 nice
 work with people
 must have good ideas
 something like a psychiatrist
 super mega smart
 have good tips
 to know who fits for which job
 recommends jobs
 smart
 communicative
 must remember things
 can't be edgy
 helps people
 talking to people
 friendly

A/III. My personal journey



Every one of us has a different personal journey that has led us to our profession of a career practitioner. Many colleagues would tell you that it was a coincidence, they didn't plan it or that other work or life experience brought them to this job. To what extent do our experiences influence the career path we finally choose and how we approach it? Sisters Karen and Julie, co-founders of British organization Justice Prince, decided to share their life story with us. You might find connections to your own life experience after reading it. That's why we included reflection part into this chapter. You can use it now or come back to it anytime during reading this book.

📖 THE CROW AND THE LYNX

The Crow is coming back from work and meets the Lynx who is guarding a storage, almost sleeping. The Crow hops on the Lynx's belly and says enthusiastically: "What's the matter, are you angry?" The guard replies: "Well, it's just the vandals, they annoy me ... I'd just ... yeah, never mind." The Crow responds: "I also have bad experience with them. They broke into our place a couple of times." The Lynx asks then: "Hmm ... and what are you doing here at such a late hour?" "It's because of my job. I am..." whispers the Crow "...the Crow from the movies." "Wait, you are THE Crow?" "Yeah, but stop yelling, I'm fed up with it. It's always 'Can I have your signature?', 'Let's take a selfie!' Ugh! So annoying!" "Well, that's OK, I have to chase away all those robbers who come here to steal." "Maybe you're right." "And you have much better wages too." So they decided to swap their roles. They meet at night and share their experience. They agree on one thing. They wouldn't trade their job for the other one. Never. Or maybe? No, never! And silence now!



BACK TO THE ROOTS - GUIDANCE FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

(Karen Anne Clark , Julie Cruddas)

Karen and Julie are sisters and founding directors and employees of Justice Prince Community Interest Company (small non-government organisation based in the north east of England). In the discussion below they reflect on their motivation for setting up the organisation and their approach to career guidance.

Karen: Remember how we used to dream of one day setting up an organisation to support disadvantaged people in the area we grew up? We talked about it for years and even had the name agreed long before we actually took the plunge and set up Justice Prince.

Julie: Yes - we'd both been involved in similar lines of work for years but employed in different organisations working all over the place - the UK, Europe and Africa. Every time we met up back home people would ask us to come and work with them and we'd always say: "Yes, one day we will definitely do that!" It seems strange to think now we have actually done it! I always find it odd that people question why we choose to work with people in disadvantaged areas.

Karen: Yeah, but it shouldn't be that surprising considering our own background and personal biographies. Growing up in a deprived area in a low-income family and seeing the impact this had on our parents certainly raised my awareness of poverty and inequality from a very young age. I think I've always had a strong sense of things just not being fair and this makes me feel angry! I think that's what fuels my passion and motivates me into action; I feel compelled to do something about it!

Julie: I totally agree it is definitely about personal biography, it shapes who we are and how we see the world. I suppose it would seem odd for us not to do this type of work. I do find it totally amazing though that many people living outside the UK - and in fact many people living in the UK - don't realise that 'disadvantaged' communities and people actually do exist!

Karen: I can understand why it may be difficult for people from less wealthy countries to believe that poor people exist in the UK; the UK is after all one of the wealthiest developed countries in the world.

Julie: Remember when our friend Sue from Africa came to visit? Sue was genuinely shocked to see that some people in the UK were homeless, living on the streets in cardboard boxes and people on low income were struggling to pay the rent, heat the home and buy food for the family.

Karen: Yeah, Sue really did think everyone in the UK was rich and lived in castles!



Many people don't realise that the UK may be one of the wealthiest countries in the world but that doesn't mean everyone in the UK is wealthy and the gap between the rich and poor in the UK is increasing.

Julie: Who would believe that people living in the wealthiest parts of the UK, certain areas in London for example, will on average live up to 20 years longer than people living in the most deprived areas in the country! Why should anyone accept this or think it's fair?

Karen: When you understand the context of inequality both in the UK and elsewhere in the world, what we do and why we do it makes total sense - we simply don't think it's fair that many people are marginalised, stigmatised and living in poverty!

Julie: Our target groups are often seen as problematic by wider society and by many mainstream service providers, often being described as 'hard to reach' or 'hard to help' but I think this may say more about the nature of society and mainstream services than it does about the target groups. It's not that people are hard to reach as such - it's that services are either not accessible / available or not organised in appropriate ways for our target groups which then highlights the need for an alternative approach to engage people in appropriate ways.

Karen: Yeah, I think a real strength of our approach to career guidance is the fact that our services are community based - we take our service to the people; we deliver in places where people live their everyday lives, such as the pub or the local community centre. They don't have to travel outside their own area so they feel more comfortable and confident and don't incur travel expenses!

We also adopt a genuine person centred approach, developing services in direct response to the needs and concerns identified by our target groups. Engaging target groups in conversations to gain understanding of how they see themselves, their views about employment etc. is about valuing and validating the voice and experience of target groups, we see them as the experts in their own lived experience.

Julie: Working with people in groups is another characteristic of our approach and a really effective way to build confidence; people realise they are not isolated individuals but actually share a common experience with others. It supports development of collective solutions to shared problems.

Julie: Working with people in groups is another characteristic of our approach and a really effective way to build confidence; people realise they are not isolated individuals but actually share a common experience with others. It supports development of collective solutions to shared problems.

Karen: Many target groups are shocked when we engage them in this type of conversation; identifying the nature and type of support they consider appropriate and meaningful. Usually because no-one's ever asked them this type of questions before.

Julie: The voice of the service user often gets lost and this can be very disempowering.

Karen: It's ultimately about serving the interests of service users; we're not simply trying to fit people into jobs - especially not jobs they're not interested in, low paid jobs or zero hour contracts - our approach is more holistic, we're trying to support people to have the best chance in life.

Julie: Yeah, and I think it's important for people to know someone believes in them and will speak on their behalf if necessary. This links to the issue of social capital which I think is really important when it comes to getting a job, it helps to be well connected or to know people who can give you a reference.

Remember when we were setting up Justice Prince, one of the biggest challenges for me was breaking down hidden barriers - it took a long time for me to realise the nature of those barriers. A good example of this and one that really hit home with me occurred during a meeting we had with our Member of Parliament (MP). Can you re-call? We were sitting with our MP at his home drinking coffee in his kitchen. We talked about the difficulties we were facing in relation to securing public sector (council) support and we were really frustrated that we kept hitting what felt like brick walls!

The MP listened carefully nodding empathetically and then stated: "You women are very passionate and excellent at your work; I've seen nobody better. The problem you have is clear - you have no social capital." I remember thinking: What does that mean? No social capital? Then I realised it meant that because we'd grown up poor, we didn't have professional family or friendship networks.

Karen: Yeah, and he was absolutely right! We didn't have any elite friends to help open doors or make introductions to influential people - it was just us - and let's not forget



our lovely mom who used to cash flow the organisation in the early days, ha ha! I don't think we'd have got through year one without her!

Julie: I feel really proud when I think about everything we've overcome and what we've achieved. One moment I recall which is very personal to me, is a time I was sat with my mom at the family home, the house we'd grown up in. Mom had suffered a lot over the years particularly with anxiety and stress which on reflection was directly related to living in poverty. My mother worried most days when we were small children whether she had enough food to feed us, bless her, and she always worked so hard. Anyway, we sat talking in the sitting room and she said: "Who would have thought my three children would have grown up to run their own business?" Mustn't forget brother Tom who has set up his own business in the construction trade! The pride on mom's face is something I will never forget; she was so proud - bless her.

Karen: I know, both mam and dad were so very proud and so supportive. It makes me feel really proud to know we have made a real difference to the lives of so many people. That's what makes it all worthwhile; that's exactly why we set up Justice Prince!

»Justice Prince Community Interest Company (CIC) was set up in 2006 by sisters Karen Clark and Julie Cruddas. Justice Prince works in disadvantaged areas in the UK supporting the active engagement of local people in social action projects; identifying needs / concerns and working collectively to develop appropriate solutions. Target groups include: low income families, women, single parent families, carers, offenders / ex-offenders, long term unemployed, excluded young people, vulnerable older people, people with disabilities and mental health issues, alcohol and substance misusers and minority groups.

Justice Prince is governed by a board of directors, people with vast experience of work in disadvantaged areas in the UK and internationally. The organisation employs a small highly skilled and experienced staff team which includes youth and community development workers, tutors / trainers, mentors and career guidance practitioners.

Justice Prince was named in the Fortuna 50 Index 2016; an annual index of the fastest growing women led small businesses / enterprises in the UK. The Fortuna 50 is a government initiative in celebration of International Women's Day aiming to celebrate achievements and success of women led businesses to inspire other women to take the entrepreneurship route. «



WHERE DO I STAND?

(Helena Košťálová)

As a child, I wanted to be a

because

I tried these jobs in the past

Nowadays, I work as a

My work includes

I work in career guidance because

Most of all I enjoy

I am really good at

What have I done to be able to work at my current position?

What part did coincidence play in it?

What helped me to use this "coincidence" well?

My main non-professional experience is

In my free time I enjoy

I am interested in these topics

I would like to try

My non-professional experience and hobbies influence my profession this way

Looking at the world around me, I like

Looking at the world around me, I really don't like

Through my work I would like to influence

I would like people to remember me as a career advisor who

I. How to work with my clients?

II. Different point of view?

III. Professionalisation of my practice

IV. Work at a threshold of the 21st century



B/ INSPIRATION FOR MY WORK





B/I. How to work with my clients?

As well as doctors have their patients and actors can't do without the audience, our clients are a necessary part of our guidance work. In this chapter, you can read articles by Ivana, Helena and the Justice Prince team. Let their view on the work with their clients inspire you.

DESCRIPTION OF ONE SESSION IN PRAGUE. INSPIRATION FROM PERSON -CENTERED THERAPY

(Ivana Šindlerová)

The doorbell is ringing. I let the client inside the building, I say hello at the door and show him inside. After a small talk and offering him tea or coffee, I start feeling his restless anticipation. His eyes are roaming around the walls, he has a shy smile, edging all the time. It's our very first session.

I start talking, just briefly about how the consultations usually run, the rules which I propose to steer our conversation, and about myself. I don't want to overwhelm him with information, and I wish to be brief, apt and easy to understand. I would like to let him talk as soon as possible. After a while, everything is clear and I ask how I can help him.

The client starts talking with relief. He doesn't enjoy his work, although it's well paid. He needs the income because of his family and his feelings of responsibility for them.

Every day he goes to the office aware that he has to sit the day out. He doesn't see any future for his career by staying with the employer.

He has been in the company for ten years, and his original goals have already been achieved. If he stays, there is only painful routine left for him. He has thought so any times that he might want to try something else, but what? He has no clear vision. The same job in another company, no way. In a few months it would be the same as it is now. Something brand new? He is not good at anything, is he? He feels old. Who would be interested in a man in his forties? There are plenty of younger and more capable people everywhere, he thinks. He confesses his doubts to me. On one hand, he would like to start again. He would like to feel the enthusiasm for his work again, and the feeling that he is looking forward to seeing his colleagues in the morning, as it was only two years ago. However, he is paralyzed by the fear of the change. He would have to gain his position again, establish new

relationships, try to gain attention, work overtime hours. Actually, he doesn't feel like doing it after all.

I feel the mixture of his tiredness, desperation, and at the same time the big hope that he puts in our working together. Or in me, better to say. It is a commitment but at the same time a challenge that repeats in my work of a career counselor. I have to show the client that he can help himself on his own. My job is to support him to find his own resources, to name all his skills and abilities, to find his lost self-confidence and to pull himself together and find enough confidence to solve his situation. What will the solution be? I don't know what his future career should look like. He might want to try another job or he may just find the source of his demotivation and stay in his position but feeling a bit happier. Or he may start working part time to sustain his financial resources and in a slow secure way, he can begin trying what else he would enjoy. He can go and study, or try some requalification courses or... he will find the best option himself.

The client goes on talking. He has a lot on his plate. Who knows if he shares his problems with anybody else? It is not always easy to confess our doubts to people who are important to us. Clients often play their roles, keep their image and the counselor is the only one who they can openly talk to. I don't interrupt him, we have time. I am listening...

He dreams that one day he will be able to devote his time fully to his hobbies. He loves history and hiking. Almost every weekend, he and his friends go for trips to visit towns or nature. When they are visiting a sight, he always tries to look up all available information and guides his friends around.

He takes his children with him, sometime his wife joins them. He posts pictures and interesting facts from his travels on his blog.

He enjoys it a lot. ...

I ask what exactly he enjoys about it.

After a while of silent thinking, he replies: "Well, probably all of it together."

I try it another way: "Try to remember a recent trip that went really well. What made you happy? What exactly did you do? How did you get ready? Where did you go? Who did you go with? What did your friends from the group tell you in the end?"

He starts describing a trip where he invited his parents as well. He had to walk the whole track in advance to make sure that they will manage. He smiles while talking. I can feel the enthusiasm and a gradual flow of energy from his speech. As if there was another man here with me for a moment. I stop him from time to time with a follow up question. I make notes about what I think is important on a flip chart.

Together we reach the conclusion that what satisfies him most is the chance to pass information or knowledge to someone. He likes to keep things rolling, keeps

looking for new places to explore. I ask if he is curious. He thinks for a while and then nods faintly. He doesn't feel himself when acknowledging his own qualities aloud. Thanks to a funny story about going over a road block on a hiking track we found out that he is very inventive and able to improvise. He also has good organizational skills and can deal with critical situations. Apart from that he can be also very empathetic. We found that out while describing his attitude to exhausted teenagers walking in the rain for twenty kilometers.

After an hour, our list of qualities reaches almost fifteen items. I can see he is surprised. He wouldn't believe that he could find so many strengths in himself. Moreover, strengths supported by evidence from real life situations.

In the second half of our meeting, I go back to his concerns about changing the job, which he mentioned earlier. I ask how he feels about his previous doubts now when he admitted that his strengths are creativity, ability to solve problems and need of change.

He shakes his head in disbelief.

"Do you perceive it as a big contradiction?" I reflect.

"Exactly, I don't know what I am actually afraid of." he replies.

He goes on after a long time of silence that I don't interrupt: "You know, when we got this far, I have to tell you something."

I know it is not easy for him. I nod to let him know I am ready to listen.

"I play computer games half of the time I spend at work. Nobody checks on me. For years I have learned how to pretend I am solving something very important and need privacy. I don't even feel guilty about it. I lost the reason why I went there so I am just killing time. I have realized now that I am destroying myself completely. I earn money, that's true, but the job doesn't fulfill me anymore. Now, when I realized how guiding my friends satisfies me, I got frightened about how much time I waste every day."

"You would prefer doing a meaningful job but the easily earned money keep you in a trap, is that right?" I ask with empathy.

"Yeah, it's something like that, it really feels like a trap. I gotta get out of it somehow. I have the feeling that I can't avoid the change if I don't want to stay in that empty job anymore."

I understand him and admire his courage to confess his, for some people maybe problematic, strategies for surviving eight hour working day on the first session already.

Our session is almost at the end. I point out that we have little time left and I sum up what we had managed today. Our actual result, apart from stating the aim of our cooperation and mapping current situation, is a basic list of the client's strengths. We will build upon it further.

In the end, I share something about my feelings from our session with him. I was

impressed about how focused he seemed while talking about preparing the trip for his parents. I suggest that one of his strengths may be dedication as well. He says with a smile that he will think about it till next time.

We will go on with strengths on our next session and we'll look more closer at the source of his motivation for work. We will most probably compare the pros and cons of changing his job as well...

The client says goodbye and leaves. I have the impression that apart from the outcomes mentioned above, we managed the most important thing - establish a relationship, one of the crucial aspects of person-centered counseling.

»Person-centered therapy founded by an American psychologist and psychotherapist Carl R. Rogers is the basic of my work with clients. In comparison with many other counselling and psychotherapeutic approaches that are aimed at problem solving, this approach targets the man and his experience. It builds on the belief that everyone has the ability to live a satisfactory life despite unfavorable circumstances. We only have to discover this ability and learn to use it to our advantage. To make this happen, we need appropriate conditions. If the conditions are guaranteed, we can reach deeper into ourselves without worries, analyze our situation correctly and the way we perceive it and search for the best solution. Among the necessary conditions that a counselor should provide during the session there is a relationship based on trust, empathy, congruence (authenticity) of the counselor and unconditional acceptance. Once these conditions are provided, the counseling process can work well and offer the client support that is needed.«

Unconditional acceptance is something everybody would probably like to experience, most desirably from people who are important to us. It is the counselor's respecting and open attitude which avoids any judgments or assessment of anything the client confesses. The client gains space, where he or she can openly admit for example the feeling of hatred to his or her boss. They can also confess behavior or attitude that would be probably criticized in normal circumstances. The client won't be judged, on the contrary he or she will encounter understanding, which will help explore the resources of attitudes more deeply and reach their change.

In which part of the dialogue can we find an example of unconditional acceptance?

Empathetic listening is much more than just listening. The counselor takes an active part in client's narration. He or she tries to understand, put himself or herself into the place of the client, understand the meaning of the words and also feel the emotions. The counselor can reflect on everything carefully and sensitively. Thanks to empathetic listening the client encounters understanding and interest

in his or her person. It is a healing element helping the client to find an open way to himself or herself. Continuously, the client finds answers for the questions autonomously without any need of professional advice or diagnostic testing.

Can you find examples of empathetic listening from the counselor's side in this dialogue?

Congruence or the authenticity of the counselor is the last condition of person-centered counseling by Rogers. The counselor should stay himself or herself, shouldn't pretend anything or flatter without reason. The counselors should also be able to accept their own mistakes and be aware of what they experience during the session with the client. In case it is suitable and useful for the client, the counselor can also share the experience with the client. Only when the counselor doesn't pretend anything, he or she can inspire the client who is often afraid of sharing their thoughts or making mistakes.

Can you find an example of counselor's congruence? How would you express your congruence in similar situation?

It is not easy to follow all the conditions mentioned above. It takes time before you become familiar with it. The best way to become a "rogerian" is to undertake a training in rogerian psychotherapy and person centered counseling (PCA). Most European countries have their PCA institute organizing long term trainings or study at universities. So good luck on your way to your and client's humanity.

My inspiration:

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WORK WITH CLIENT'S STORY

(Helena Košťálová)



An Encounter

„Beware of the stories you tell yourself, for you will surely be lived by them.“

Shakespeare

Sipping his third Foster's lager, Story Dontknowwhatsgoingonwithme is sitting at the Shabrazad's Tavern. At that time, his old friend Story Knowhow enters the pub. After

ordering a Guinness, two shots of rum and salted peanuts, he sits down next to D.

“Long time no see, buddy. What's up with you? Do you ever go out to meet people?”

“Not much. Getting old.”

“Come on! You, the once called Trustmyselfandliketotalkaboutit?”

“That's long time gone. I don't resemble the one they used to tell at parties anymore. They adored me. I kept shaping up really well since I was born. Five people at my birth and five different versions. Do you get it? And imagine when the storytellers sent me further, I changed again. I looked totally different in front of their wives or in front of friends or customers. And when the wives, friends and customers were telling their customers, friends and wives, I didn't even recognize myself. I was stunning, every day in a new coat. But now I'm getting lost in it. I'm afraid I start looking awkward and pathetic.”

“Look, buddy, you are very pessimistic about it. The storytellers share us but we have the last word. People behave according to their stories. Do you remember how Story Headfullofideas transformed into Troublemaker? What happened to the human of his? Or when Nothingcomesalong let his suite altered to Knowwhatwentreallywell? And haven't you forgotten about that girl Notlikemysister? She had her hair cut to Beunique. Hottie, she is. I'm going out with her tonight. And you pull yourself together. Go and have a little word cosmetics, it will do you good.”

A story as the agent of change

Do you like stories? I do, a lot. Just a few words and here comes the plot, emotions, wisdom or inspiration. People and their lives are hidden in the stories.

I am lucky that I make my life by listening to stories. The client comes; I sit down and listen to the narration. Sometimes, it is full of hope: “...we are expecting a baby so I'll have to organize my life in a way that I don't have to give up my beloved job...”. Uncertainty, sometimes: “... my parents never supported me in anything so I was just hanging around and now I'm not good at anything...” or irritation: “...I don't get along with anybody at work, they are spiteful and the boss pretends he doesn't see anything ...”. People coming to our office often put an imaginary label on their forehead right at the beginning of our consultation (I am competitive, lazy, hesitant...) and they elaborate it into a story. To confirm their statements, they illustrate them by real situations from their lives.

All of us have plenty of experiences. In our memories, we can find moments of joy, disappointment, success, injustice, adventure, loneliness or harmony. Events are like stars in the sky. As well as a long time ago the astrologists decided to put stars into combinations that we call constellations, we also (mostly not deliberately) connect separate events and thus, confirm our mainline story.

If we notice the examples of failures more (and I bet every one of us can remember some) and start presenting ourselves as losers, people start automatically

perceive us that way too. Same as us, our friends will start talking about our failures and the story we constructed will confirm itself retroactively. It's hard to step outside this circle sometimes. Good news is that nobody has to stay a loser forever. If we focus, in our skies of events, on the positive things and look for what went well, it is possible to overwrite our story and experience success as well.

My work is based on the idea of social constructivism, which works with the theory that the meanings of separate events aren't clearly set in advance. Each person involved can add something to the process of creation (construct) by means of language. In different words - it depends a lot on how we label our idea about "the reality" (or on the contrary whose version of the story we embrace). The world is not black and white, our experiences aren't random and isolated but they are interrelated parts of an entire system. It is a never-ending process and that serves us, the counsellors, very well if we want to support positive change.

How to make it work?

It is often enough to repeat literally what the client said during the consultation. When hearing it from somebody else, the client usually needs to clarify the meaning or soften what he or she said (... it's not really that bad, I'm not in permanent stress ... I just don't like when ...).

It's definitely worth spending the beginning of a consultation by so called clarifying. In this part, I focus on key words - what the client puts stress on or what he or she repeats. Further on, I make sure how they understand their meaning (What does "Doing a meaningful job" mean for you? Have you ever done a meaningful job? How can you recognize it? and so on). I also don't forget that nothing is happening in vacuum and understanding the context often helps to understand the meaning of the whole story.

And if you like playing games you can try the following activity: Ask the client to describe something that happened to them. Then ask them to narrate it as if it was a script for a thriller movie. There is obviously a condition that nothing in the new version of the story can be made up. Next, you can try to change the story into a romance, horror, comedy, travel documentary or a detective story. You may learn more facts about what happened and understand the story better. And the client can experience the variability of stories personally. It is always mainly about the point of view.

For further reading:

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 Freedman, J., Combs G. (1996) *Narrative Therapy: The Social Construction of Preferred Realities*. W.W.Norton&Company, New York.
 A nice demonstration how to perceive the words and details is also a recent Jim Jarmuch's movie "Paterson".

WORKING ROOTS. PROJECT CAREER GUIDANCE & EXCLUDED YOUNG PEOPLE.

(Karen Anne Clark, Julie Cruddas, Jim Robertson)

We believe that issues of inequality pose a serious challenge for mainstream approaches to career guidance. Traditional models of career guidance in the UK tend to be organised around mainstream education in schools or colleges but if young people are excluded or choosing not to access mainstream services, then it is highly likely they will also be excluded from any form of career guidance. If young people do not fit existing structures and services, the young people are deemed to be the problem not the structures or services.

In this article, we share a brief case example from practise with 'excluded' young people living in deprived areas in the UK; young people not in education, employment or training. Engagement of excluded young people highlighted the need for an alternative holistic approach to 'career guidance' and led to development of a new bespoke programme: Working Roots.

Voice and experience of excluded young people

Central to our approach is valuing and validating the voice and experience of excluded young people. We aim to gain understanding from the perspective of young people; to identify and accept their truth about their lived experience. We believe this is fundamental in supporting people to develop meaningful solutions to their problems.

Using participatory person centred methods, we engaged excluded young people aged 16yrs+ living in deprived areas in the north east of England. We supported young people to work together in a series of interactive conversation style workshops which took place at venues within localities where young people lived e.g. community centres, pubs, youth projects etc. A total of 88 young people participated.

Through this process we gained valuable insights into the experience of young people; how they perceived themselves and wider society; views about careers and employment, including barriers and issues they identified as restricting them from engaging in learning and limiting employment opportunities.



Key insights included the following:

- Young people felt far removed from employment; many were from families of 3rd / 4th generation unemployment. Talk of career guidance wasn't very meaningful.
- Most participants described negative experience in mainstream education excluded from school at a young age. Confidence levels, literacy / numeracy skills were very low; many had undiagnosed learning difficulties and struggled to write their own name at 16yrs+ and were very embarrassed about this.
- All participants wanted meaningful opportunities to learn / obtain qualifications describing failure in mainstream systems in terms of negative labels, attitudes of professionals, not fitting in, dislike of classroom environment, lack of support.
- All participants had a strong desire to work and wanted opportunities to engage in 'real life' work activity; all wanted to earn money and not live on state benefits.
- Personal issues also acted as barriers including the need for support with relationships / family, peer group culture, low social skills, low confidence / self-esteem, feeling isolated with no one believing in them.
- Attitudes of some professionals - young people feeling stigmatised, treated with lack of respect. Dreams and aspirations had been knocked out of them through cycle of failure in mainstream and they felt angry and frustrated.

Developing an appropriate response: Working Roots

In response to the voice and experience of excluded young people a new cross sector partnership developed between Justice Prince CIC, North Tyneside Council and Kier North Tyneside (a private sector construction company). All organisations worked collaboratively over a long period of time to develop a meaningful solution; a new bespoke full time work based guidance, education and learning programme to tackle identified needs and issues.

The new programme: Working Roots is a full-time programme supporting excluded young people aged 16yrs – 18yrs living in North Tyneside. Working Roots was launched in September 2013 providing 15 full time places, it is now in year four and has recently increased in size to provide 24 places per year.

Core elements of Working Roots

- 5 days per week Monday to Friday 8.30am - 3.30pm for one full academic year.
- Young people work in small groups of 4-5 trainees; each group has a qualified supervisor.

- Qualifications in key functional skills: IT, Maths and English & vocational qualifications in either construction or horticulture.
- Focus on practical skills; learning and assessment take place in the work environment.
- A Learning Mentor provides guidance / supports personal social development; advocates on behalf of young people re issues impacting on their lives.
- A weekly allowance is paid related to attendance / progression.
- 3.5 - 4 days per week delivering 'real life' neighbourhood services; painting and decorating, fencing and gardening.
- Locality based guidance / employability to support positive progression into further learning, education and employment.
- Integration into communities / society through engagement with local people to support delivery of community projects e.g. repairing community buildings.
- Create new track record of performance / achievement, access to references.

Outcomes, Transformation & Change

Working Roots programme has proved to be extremely successful in re-engaging excluded young people in the learning process, increasing access to employment opportunities and improving overall quality of life.

Attendance levels are extremely high for this target group averaging 95% and over the past three years the vast majority of young people; 43 out of 45; have successfully completed the programme gaining qualifications and 30 have progressed directly into employment, further education or training. All participants have progressed dramatically in terms of self-confidence, skills, knowledge and understanding.



»“Working Roots has totally changed my life because it's changed me, it's the first thing I've ever stuck in my whole life! I had a real opportunity to learn new things... I realised I could actually do things... it meant such a lot knowing people really believed in me and that made me start to believe in myself.”

John (Working Roots Trainee)«

Active participation in the programme has increased the social inclusion of excluded young people into wider society, transforming the way young people perceive themselves and the way they are perceived by others. Stigmatising labels are redefined through everyday actions and status as trainees.

» "...people look at me differently now and everyone talks to me... I love wearing my work clothes because people can see I'm a trainee, I feel great and love it!" Liam (Working Roots Trainee) «

Wider transformation and changes are also evident. For example, mainstream education providers have totally restructured services delivering courses in the community with limited time in classrooms; increased flexibility with bespoke one to one support and work in small groups; assessment in the work environment.

Excluded young people are no longer defined as a problem needing to adapt to fit structures; structures and services have adapted and transformed in direct response to the voice and experience of excluded young people!

Can you identify any similarities or differences to career guidance practice in your own geographical context? Is this approach relevant? Could it be adapted and applied in your work?



FROM EXPERT APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIP. EMPOWERMENT & CAREER GUIDANCE.

(Karen Anne Clark, Julie Cruddas, Jim Robertson)

In our career guidance practice we adopt an approach that is focussed on increasing the confidence and self-esteem of the service user; what we would describe as 'empowerment' of the service user.

The concept of empowerment is very complex and heavily theoretical! It's linked to the Radical Theory of career guidance and we would suggest further reading and research if you want to learn more about this.

In relation to our own career guidance practice, we would simply describe empowerment as a process of supporting and enabling people from low income disadvantaged backgrounds to recognise their own power and ability to challenge and change their situation; to gain the confidence to believe in themselves and take actions to achieve their career goals.

Whilst we would strongly advocate use of this approach in all career guidance practice, we believe it is particularly important in our work with people from disadvantaged areas in the UK. People who experience disadvantage often have multiple barriers to overcome to enable effective engagement in employment e.g. negative experience or exclusion from mainstream education leading to low skills and qualifications, long term unemployment, feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness, low confidence and low self-esteem.

Effective re-engagement of people from these target groups has demanded an alternative approach; one which places the service user at the heart of the guidance process, supporting them to have a voice in identifying goals and appropriate ways to achieve them. We find this approach highly effective in building confidence, supporting re-engagement and achievement of positive outcomes.

As guidance practitioners, we play a central role in facilitating this process through our interaction with service users. The basis of our approach is to build trust and mutual respect, to value and validate the perspective, knowledge and experience of the service user and

to work in ways that actively engage the service users to increase their control in decisions around employment and career options. We encourage, support and enable them to make informed choices.

The role of the career guidance practitioner and the nature of the interaction between the practitioner and service user is therefore of vital importance to us. The underlying values, beliefs, behaviour and attitude of the career guidance practitioner is crucial in terms of ability to effectively facilitate and support confidence building and empowerment of the service user.

Practical tips on how to put this approach into practice in practitioner service user interactions:

- Develop awareness of yourself as a practitioner. Who are you? What type of background do you have and how has this influenced your underlying values, beliefs and biases? Yes biases! We all have them! These will influence how you perceive and interact with service users.
- Be aware of the wider context in which you practise career guidance and the impact this may have upon employment and career opportunities. This is the context in which service users live and seek employment and career opportunities so it is essential to equip yourself with good knowledge and understanding to inform your approach. For example, in the North East of England the decline of former major employers in coal mining, ship building and other heavy industries has resulted in a dramatically changed employment landscape and has led to entrenched poverty and social inequality in this part of the UK. Employment insecurity is now a common factor in many North East England communities. This presents many challenges for our career guidance practice.
- Listen carefully to the service user and value their perspective. Remember people don't all view the world in the same way so don't assume you fully know or understand what the world looks like through the eyes of the service user!
- Validate and value client's existing knowledge and experience. In our work with disadvantaged people, service users often comment on how interactions with professionals can make them feel inferior, and unimportant; the professional acts as the 'expert' using power over the client to portray their knowledge as the true correct valid knowledge and opinion. This serves to reinforce feelings of inferiority, insignificance and disempowerment.
- Gain insight and understanding of the service user's personal biography. Be actively interested in their background and story as this can provide real insights into existing knowledge and experience and also underlying barriers or issues a person may need support to overcome.
- Recognise and acknowledge the potential impact both opportunities and con-

straints, related to a client's location within the wider social, economic and patriarchal structures of society. For example, cultural values and traditional beliefs will influence perception of self and perception of potential career options. Supporting service users to increase awareness of these factors and how this can limit or constrain them is a really powerful way to increase confidence. We find working with people in small groups who share similar experience for example women, young people or people living in a specific geographical location works really well. We facilitate conversations regarding experience of education, employment etc.

- Work hard to build a relationship of trust with clients. Remember, it is not only the practitioner perception of the service user that impacts on the quality of the interaction, but also the way in which the service user perceives the practitioner!
- Acknowledge that sometimes people lack confidence and maybe don't initially voice their dreams and aspirations. In our experience, it is only after building relationships of trust that people feel confident and comfortable enough to share their inner thoughts, concerns and dreams.
- Encourage and support clients to dream and aspire e.g. ask the client what in an ideal world they would love to do. What do they want to achieve? Open up the possibility that they can actually achieve dreams and make it clear that you believe they can achieve. I remember as young mother, I desperately wanted to return to education but didn't dare tell anyone as I was afraid they would laugh. Finally, I met a fantastic practitioner who I trusted and felt confident enough to confide in and share my aspirations.
- Really important - support planning of realistic steps towards achievement of goals – e.g. acknowledge the dream job, fantastic, now let us look at small achievable steps you can take towards achieving this goal.

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II. Different point of view?

The aim of this book is to shake the stereotypes and broaden the point of view. It is up to you to choose the topics you want to use to enrich your work. In the following chapter, you can find inspiration from Eva, Nicki and Jane.

WE HAVE A LOT OF SKILLS AND TALENTS, WE JUST AREN'T ABLE TO LOOK AT THEM THE RIGHT WAY

(Eva Kavková)

Just like Káťa, one of my clients, who is skilful and capable, but she doesn't have enough self-confidence. Káťa comes from Karaganda, a town in Kazakhstan, and she moved to the Czech Republic with her husband five years ago. She finished university in Moscow and back home in Kazakhstan, she worked as a teacher of Russian for six years. After coming to the Czech Republic, she gave birth to two children who already go to kindergarten and she would like to go back to work. However, she wasn't able to find a job so far. The employers are discouraged either by the fact that she is a foreigner who hasn't worked in the Czech Republic yet or that she has two small children and had been on maternity leave for several years. Or both at the same time. Káťa is upset and doesn't know what to do and how to step out of the vicious circle. And that's why she came to me.

»What can be done about it? The Swiss asked a similar question in the 90's. According to a social tradition, most Swiss women didn't work. They stayed at home and took care of children and household. The problem arose when they needed to return to work. How can women apply for jobs when employers want formal education (diplomas or certificates) and "regular" work experience? How to evaluate skills and experience gained in a different field than the employer is used to? How to translate them into the language of headhunters and personnel officers? Identifying and classifying the competencies gained or developed when taking care of household, children or during voluntary activities proved to be a good solution. Women can compete men more successfully when they name their skills in the language of the personnel officers and give them a formal value. Men don't have to deal with this "handicap". «

How does it actually work? When I asked Káťa at our first session what competences she has, she replied that none. So we started mapping her "non-existing" competencies. How did it proceed? We talked very spontaneously about what she does, what she enjoys, and her hobbies. The questions were targeted not only at work domain but also household and free time. Thus, we completed the list of Káťa's activities that served me as a base for my further investigation of Káťa's competences.

»We show skills in every activity we do. Sometimes we don't even realize it. So when we speak with clients about activities they do, I want them to describe some of them in detail. How exactly does it proceed? What does it exactly involve? What obstacles do they have to overcome to complete it? What do they value about the activity and what made them happy after its completion. Thanks to a detailed description of what clients often perceive as trivial we find out what skills they performed. The clients narrate and I make notes about the competences I discover.«

But back to Káťa's story. I was interested in something that she managed and that made her really happy. Káťa started talking about how she organized a huge birthday party for her daughter two years ago. It was an event for 50 guests. Many of them came from abroad and Káťa helped solving their visa and accommodation too. She also took care of the birthday cake and food. Children nowadays are often intolerant to lactose, gluten or nuts. Káťa had to consider this and discuss it with the catering company to prevent accidents like a child suffocating suddenly in the middle of the celebrations. To entertain the children and adults alike, Káťa organized several competitions, dance performance and a magician's show as a surprise at the end of the party. Káťa considered all of this a trifle. When moving on in describing her story and adding more and more details we finally agreed that organizing such a birthday party is nothing less than organizing a medium-size seminar. And here we had the first competence - "organizational skill" detailed description included.

»There are people who have no list, not many hobbies; according to their own words they "do nothing". How to work with them? For situations like this I have a two-page list of all possible activities that a person can do. I go through them with the clients and they underline activities they do or used to do. It is a support and



inspiration for those with very low self-confidence, low self-respect or just no fantasy. At the point when we have the first activity underlined, we have a good starting point and we can work on it further. «

Let's go back to Káťa once again. She described a very successful party she organized and we agreed that it is a proof of her organizational skills. What comes next? We needed to translate her story into the formal language so she could use it in her CV or a motivation letter. We went through her story, looked for key activities and "got them dressed in HR clothes". In the end, we had following entries under the organizational competence: organizing events for 50 people, logistics including attending to accommodation and visas, arranging catering considering dietary and allergy exceptions, preparing animation program for various age groups, organizing interpreting and translation service. A list like this doesn't look bad in a CV, does it?

»Sometimes it's hard to convert informal competences into formal language. What really helps me in my work is the Database of competences created as a part of the National system of jobs (www.nsp.cz). It was developed by the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and it is a very detailed list of competences that serves as a guide for people looking for jobs. People can find requirements for different job positions and what they include. All competences, soft or professional, are described and classified on a scale of 0-5. For example, under planning and organizing your work, you can find that on the middle level (3) a person is able to plan work for short or long time, can distinguish important and urgent tasks, is able to organize his or her work as well as work of others and so on. It is a great tool for counsellors as well as for everybody who wants to create a CV without repeating well known phrases and clichés.«

What comes next in our story? Káťa has the list of her competences with their concrete descriptions. This alone will obviously not get her a job. What will follow? First, Káťa has to decide what work or activity she enjoys and what she considers meaningful. Next, she must compare her expectations with the real options and the situation on the labour market (What do I want? What can I do? How can I prove it and where can I actually use it?). Then she chooses jobs that are realistic for her. In case her aspirations are higher and she misses work experience, she will create an action plan on how to reach her dream position. She will plan how she can reach her goal step by step. She can start working as a volunteer or intern and get the experience needed. Káťa could also do some less qualified job in the field where she would like to work or in a similar field. She would continuously grow professionally until she reaches her goal. But that is already another story...

HAPPINESS AT WORK?

😊 Write a piece of advice to your parents that will help them to feel happier at their work:

...Mom, don't stress out too much because of your patients and enjoy your free time.

...Hi, make some more free time. How? Tell your boss to shut up.

...My mom works in an office. She is happy and enjoys her work.

...Dad is a graphic artist - he prepares the plates for printing posters. He's happy in his work.

...I have no idea about my parents' jobs. Mom doesn't work and dad is a director but he doesn't talk about his work.

...Mom, you are great in your job of a moderator. You are doing well and you look good too. Keep it up this way.

...I wish you many children who will enjoy learning English.

...Mom, try to listen to people first and if you don't agree, try to look from their perspective and only then, you can start explaining or argue.

...I wish my mom less picky people. And to my dad, less people who know nothing about real estate business.

...My parents are satisfied and happy in their jobs.

...My dad creates storyboards in movie industry and I don't know what to recommend him because he really enjoys it.

...I wish you were not so tired after work. You don't have to work so hard to make money. We can do without our snacks.

...Mom, I wish you good luck in your work, I wish you shoot a great report and also that you feel happy!!!

I'm lucky. I love my job!

(Nicki Moore)

I really love my job. Sometimes it is very challenging and can be stressful but I have never really regretted taking the career path that I have. That is not to say that my career has followed a detailed plan. It hasn't. I have often reached crossroads that I never expected or planned for but I have always found myself working with people who I have liked and who have challenged me in positive ways. On the other hand, I have met many adults who, on hearing that I am a careers adviser, have said 'I still don't know what I want to do when I grow up! Can you help me think of a job I really would like because I really don't like what I am doing at the



moment!' This always makes me feel a little sad. It seems to me that we spend so much time in work that we owe it to ourselves to choose occupations which make us happy. There is not much point in wasting life being miserable.

I often reflect on how lucky we are in having a great deal of choice and that this is not the case for everyone. Our career decisions can often be driven by what opportunities are available to us or can be constrained by the expectations of our families or communities. However, for many people their career decisions are made freely and we are able to enact our lives through the occupations which we choose. So why, I wonder, are many people so unhappy in their jobs?

When I was twelve years old, my parents took me on a trip to one of the UK's great churches, York Minster. The church was undergoing extensive renovation at the time. This was not exciting for a twelve year old. Whilst my parents were investigating the exposed foundations of the great church, I was in the shop looking at what I could spend my pocket money on! However I didn't leave the shop with a keyring or a bag of sweets. What had caught my attention was a small poster with the words of a poem written in 'monastic style text'.

Max Ehrmann wrote his famous prose poem 'Desiderata' (which means 'desired things') in 1927. The concept of vocational choice was very early in its development at the time: it was only nineteen years after the founding father of vocational guidance, Frank Parsons, wrote his seminal text 'Choosing a Vocation'. Ehrmann's writing reflects his concerns about the social problems of the times and his poem Desiderata sets out his ideas of what really leads to happiness in life. One particular phrase in the poem has direct relevance to career counsellors:

'Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.'
Max Ehrmann 1927

As a young person, this really resonated with me and it was the first time I really thought about the idea that I had a career. What interested me then and still does as a career practitioner is the idea that career and happiness are linked in this way. I think there are important messages for advisers as we develop our practice.

First of all, what is happiness? It is hard to define happiness without using the word 'happy'. One definition suggests happiness is a state of mental well-being. Let's stick with that! The United Nations recognises that happiness is a fundamental human goal and created the international annual Day of Happiness on

March 20th to celebrate this. Different disciplines view happiness from their own perspectives, however, with their focus on personal choice, careers advisers and counsellors have an interest in the concept of happiness as an end goal of their work with clients. Some researchers have linked happiness to better health and living longer. A healthier population reduces the burden on health and welfare services. Others have suggested that if all disciplines focus on happiness as an outcome of their work this will lead to a stable 'good' society. It seems to me that these are all very powerful reasons for careers advisers to focus on happiness as an outcome of their practice.

What does Ehrmann say about the nature of career? Ehrmann uses some important words in his lines about career. He notes the relevance of aspiration and achievement and his dynamic view of career requires planning and review. By emphasising the importance of enjoying our achievements as well as our plans he stresses that we should take pleasure in both. Planning our careers should be exciting and enjoyable. I was talking to a young person the other day who told me about her feelings about the future. This is what she told me:

'I get all tingly when I think about the future. It's a bit scary but really exciting. It's like waiting in a queue for one of those big rides at a theme park!'
Twelve year old girl

This is such a marvellous picture. One which captures a joy in anticipating the future. As careers counsellors, we have a duty to help young people find this joy and to carry that forward into their lives. It made me think back to that little girl in York Minster all of those years ago on the brink of adulthood and thinking about the idea of a career. I think I have maintained a joy for learning but I am also very conscious of the role of personal values in my career decision making. My joy comes from the knowledge that I have made a positive contribution and not because my bank balance is healthy. Perhaps this is the secret to happiness in career?

Ehrmann notes that careers are not something to be left on a dusty shelf and taken out once a year when you meet for a careers interview or appraisal. He notes that we should 'keep interested in our careers'. This requires a very specific mindset. One of personal reflection and review. I think that I have been fortunate with the adults, peers and colleagues who I have worked with. I have been encouraged through personal and professional processes to regularly reflect on my life and progress. Reflective practice is a pillar of our profession but we do need to help young people to do this too. I guess we need to preach what we practice as well as practice what we preach!

Ehrmann reminds us that all careers matter, not just those of high achieving individuals. Careers counsellors have an important role in engaging their clients in 'owning their careers'. It can be very hard for some young people to follow the path which will make them happy, particularly when there are high expectations from those around them and it might mean them challenging cultural or family norms. Building young people's confidence so that they can make decisions based on their own needs and aspirations is an important role that careers counsellor's play. We also need to ensure that we are equitable in the services we provide to individuals and ensure that those pursuing 'humble' careers receive the attention that they need to make their dreams come true.

The longer I work as a career development professional, the more I am convinced that helping our clients to identify what will make them happy in a job or occupation is fundamental to successful career decision making. This requires a real focus on values based career decisions. Of course it is important to think about many types of rewards for working. I am not suggesting that we should not help our clients think about career prospects or financial gain. But I do think that if we allow our clients to lose the joy that they have as children for the future then we do them a dis-service. After all, having lots of money but being unhappy is no way to spend your life!

HOW PEOPLE MAKE DECISIONS

😊 THE PIGEON AND THE FOX

Once upon a time, there was a pigeon who was very rich but he was very lazy as well. He was so lazy that he didn't want to do anything in his house and the house was a big mess. And since he was really rich he decided to hire a servant to clean for him. The Pigeon was not only rich and lazy but he was stupid as well. So he hired a fox to do the cleaning. It took the Fox a lot of work to clean everything so he wanted to keep the house clean forever. He said it would be a good idea to eat the Pigeon instead of cleaning his mess every day. So he ate the Pigeon.

Moral:

Mess in your house is not a big deal, better than end up as somebody's meal.



Mindfulness – less haste more speed?

(Jane Artess)

Tortoise: I need to be calm and peaceful to focus on my career; important choices have to be made. I don't want to rush into anything I might regret.

Hare: But if you don't get on with your applications, you'll miss the best jobs. That reminds me I have a deadline today – could be my dream job this time. Must send in my CV. ...

Tortoise: Another dream job Hare? What happened to the last one? I seem to remember it didn't last long.

Hare: Oh that - yes ... I thought it might work out for me but really the early start was a bit of a problem and the journey was very difficult at that time of the morning. And, you should have met the manager! She expected me to do this and that.... And I didn't really enjoy working on my own for most of the day. I hadn't realised how much I need the stimulation of people around me at work. I wasn't too upset about being asked to leave you know.

Tortoise: What did you do to find out about that job before you applied?

Hare: Well there wasn't much time really. The advert for the job came into my Inbox and I just thought – the salary looks good – I could do that – so I applied. Before I knew it I was starting the job.

Tortoise: Hare, you are so impulsive sometimes! So you didn't do your research.

Hare: As I said, there really wasn't time and in any case, can you believe the information companies put into websites and leaflets? It's probably all just hype to get you to apply. Speaking of time, I really must go. I'm meeting Chick for a coffee. I need to upload my CV... see you later.

Tortoise: Bye.

»Tortoise (to self): I do worry about Hare. She is always running around and never seems to stop long enough to think; I don't know where she gets her energy from. She is very different to me. I have recently become interested in Mindfulness – I will share a little quote from the BeMindful.co.uk website with you:«

Hare: Hi. It's me again. Chick didn't turn up (I may have got the date wrong). You'll never guess who I ran into.

Tortoise: Who?

Hare: The managing director of Freddo PLC no less. Do you remember I was interviewed there a couple of months ago? He said he had been meaning to contact me because another vacancy has arisen. HE OFFERED ME THE JOB RIGHT THERE! I can start on Monday. No need to bother with that CV then...

Tortoise: Are you sure it's what you want?

Hare: Yes. It will be fine. I can fit in picking up the children from school and the work looks really interesting and it won't involve getting up at dawn to get there. Got to go. I'll ring soon. Bye.

»I think Hare might do well to consider becoming a bit more mindful. If she spent more time thinking about what she really needs from a job, what skills and knowledge she can offer an employer – indeed what the employer is actually looking for – I think she might make wiser career choices. Career decision-making is important and I think it should be rational; we need to really focus on making informed career choices. We should research potential employers with care, assess our own skills, values and motivations and aim to find a good match between what we need and what the employer is seeking. Makes good sense to me...«

Tortoise: I was thinking that if you would like to get to know something more about mindfulness you can visit a website BeMindful.co.uk. Some inspiration:

"Mindfulness is a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations. By being fully present in this way – not forcing things or hiding from them, but actually being with them, we create space to respond in new ways to situations and make wise choices."



The one thing I admire about Hare is her flexibility and opportunism. She just grabs at life. Perhaps I might do well to think about being a bit more adaptable. I'm planning to go back to full-time study so I have a lot of serious thinking to do about the course, what job it might lead to, how I will fund it, etc. Big decisions which need to be taken mindfully! But having trawled through prospectuses now for weeks I think I am going to apply to Riverside University because the campus is so pretty. Is that an irrational reason? Perhaps Hare's impulsiveness is impacting me after all.



B/III. Professionalization of my practice

We are pleased that you are reading this book. It means your work matters to you and you want to develop professionally. What professionalism is and how experts from different fields can enrich one another - that is a topic that will be introduced to you by our colleagues Randi and Miriam from the VIA University in Denmark.

COMPETENCES OF A GUIDANCE PRACTITIONER – FLOWER AND ITS PETALS

(Miriam Dimsits, Randi Boelskifte Skovhus)

Helena: Hi Randi, hi Miriam, you both work at VIA University College. Could you tell me about your job?

Randi: Yes, we both educate career guidance counsellors and work with various research and development projects in the career guidance field.

Miriam: Yes. Randi is also finishing her Ph.D. on career guidance at the moment, and we are both very much engaged in working with and supporting development of counsellor competencies in the career guidance field.

Helena: When we met last time, you told me, that you really liked the NICE Flower model. I had never heard about it before. What is it? Why are you so excited about it?

Randi: Yes, you're right! We have found the NICE Flower model very useful in terms of describing and discussing the work of a guidance practitioner.

Miriam: Our experience from training guidance practitioners is that they often think of the individual guidance interview as their real job.

Helena: Exactly! I often meet practitioners who feel they need to improve guidance interview technique. And you want to say this is not enough? Why not?

Miriam: The individual guidance interview is important. No doubt about that. But being a guidance practitioner you also do a lot of other things in your practice that are also important. The NICE flower creates a picture of this and provides you with language to discuss this with your colleagues and manager. It can contribute to more work satisfaction if you recognize 'the other things' as important parts of your job and don't regard them only as a disturbance taking time away from your 'real job' when you're with your clients.

Helena: *I really like the model. However, it looks like a lot of work. Is it worth it? Can you convince me?*

Miriam: Yes, you could argue it is a lot of work. But as the team behind the NICE flower points out, both young people and adults are facing increasingly complex challenges to their career development. Over the span of their lifetime, they need to manage their careers and make numerous decisions concerning education, training and employment – decisions that seriously impact their futures and their wellbeing. To prepare citizens for these challenges and to support them in the progress, competent career practitioners are needed. By analyzing your individual practice and the practice of the service as such together with your colleagues and managers you can contribute to a quality improvement of the service. This helps you to support your target group in a better way and get more value of the resources.

Helena: *Who has developed the NICE flower concept? Where does the idea come from?*

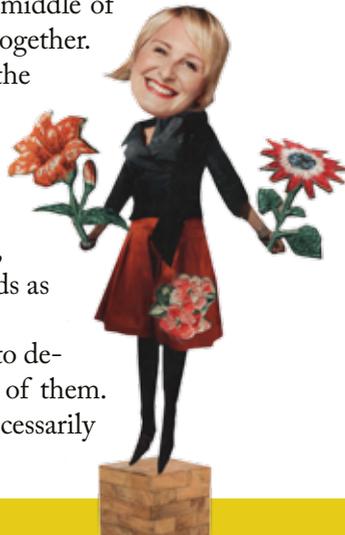
Randi: Well, there are different kinds of guidance systems and practices in different countries, but what not many new career guidance practitioners know is that there also exist various kinds of international networks working and exchanging ideas. They research on career guidance and work for developing and promoting good conditions in the field of career guidance for the benefit of individuals, institutions and society. The Network for Innovation in Career Guidance and Counselling in Europe (NICE) is one of these and has developed the NICE flower model with the purpose of establishing international standards for qualification of career practitioners. The standards are among other things useful in academic training of career guidance practitioners.

Helena: *Please, tell me more about the NICE flower. How does it work?*

Randi: If you look at the picture, you can see how the model describes five core competences as five petals of the flower. In the middle of the flower, there is Professionalism, which links the petals together.

Miriam: When you look at the petals and study the competences further, you can suddenly realize different aspects of your job as a career guidance practitioner. Maybe you realize that some parts of your job which you don't normally consider as part of the career guidance service are recognized as parts of the service here, and therefore need to live up to the same quality standards as the rest of your practice.

Randi: You could ask if every guidance practitioner has to develop all petals equally and not for example only some of them. This is a good question – and the NICE model do not necessarily



give you the answer. The point is that the model gives you a tool to reflect on and discuss this for example together with your colleagues and manager. An example: Maybe you decide that only one person in the guidance service will work on Career Service Management – then, only one person focuses on this petal. Or maybe you find out that all members of the team need to be aware of it and improve their competences in relation to this petal.

Helena: *I wonder how this model works in practice.*

Do you know how the NICE Flower is used in Danish context?

Randi: We are teachers at the Danish Diploma programme in career guidance. Up till now we have used the model as a foundation of reviewing and improving our curriculum for the Danish diploma in career guidance. We have been working together with other academic trainers in career guidance, who have all found the model very useful in our common work of reviewing the national curriculum of the diploma in career guidance. We have also begun to introduce the students of career guidance to the model so they can use it as an overall tool to reflect on their own practice and the entire service provided by the institution where they are employed.

Miriam: In addition, a concrete example could be a guidance practitioner working with a student who is assessed as not ready for education. Maybe the guidance practitioner has had several guidance interviews with the young student and experienced that the interviews don't help or that they are not sufficient to change the student's situation. The NICE flower model could inspire the guidance practitioner to reflect on other options for action. For example, the guidance practitioner could look into possible actions related to 'Social Systems Interventions' like making advocacy for the student and trying to develop social context around the student to better fit in. The point is that the NICE flower can be helpful in situations when the guidance practitioner does what she normally does in her work and doesn't succeed. She can look into the NICE flower model and reflect on if there are some petals of the flower which can assist and inspire her in her work.

Helena: *Can you see any challenges in connection with using the model?*

Randi: Well, yes, the model has been developed in a European context and is a product of compromises between different partners, e.g. in relation to what you name the different petals and their related competence standard. This can make it difficult for particular career guidance practitioners in a national context to recognize their own work in these standards.

Miriam: But actually in Denmark, we have translated the model into Danish to enhance the access for career guidance practitioners in order for them to make use of it in professional discussions.



As a guidance practitioner I am ready and willing to....

Career Counselling

- Conclude my clients' main reason for seeking support in an empathetic and respectful way.
- Formulate an offer for a counselling agreement with a client, specifying objectives and approaches that suit the clients' priorities and resources.
- Explore which psychological and external resources are available to support the client to cope with phases of stress and in achieving personal growth.
- Assess complex life situations and different types of information together with clients.
- Apply suitable models for problem solving, decision making and strategic planning.

Career Education

- Assess the career management competences and learning needs together with clients.
- Design career education sessions.

Career Assessment & Information

- Assess informational needs of clients.
- Select appropriate methods and tools for self-assessment, as well as information sources to satisfy the clients informational needs.
- Assess particular resources or interests of the client to provide the client with personally relevant information.

Career Service Management

If you want to know more details you can check out this book:
 Schiersmann, C., Einarsdóttir, S., Katsarov, J., Lerikkanen, J., Mulvey, R., Pouyaud, J., ... Weber, P. (2016) European Competence Standards for the Academic Training of Career Practitioners.

- Construct appropriate communication channels, language and arguments to attract members of a particular target group to a particular career service offer.
- Implement career services strategically in cooperation with other relevant subjects involved to reach relevant target groups.
- Establish good professional relations with clients, colleagues and organizations to ensure quality of career services.
- Review career services and their organization in order to propose approaches for service enhancement.

Social Systems Intervention

- Identify common interests between the perspectives of different stakeholders in supporting a particular target group to propose how relevant cooperation structures could be built up and maintained (networking).
- Justify the need for support and propose a strategy in the client's case in dealing with relevant stakeholders for the sake of the client's career development.
- Devise recommendations on how to overcome a career-related conflict, based on a fair evaluation of the interests of all parties involved.

Generic professional competences – the centre of the flower

- Review the process of one's own professional interaction with a client.
- Develop strategies to overcome personal role and evaluate conflicts while working with clients.

(Schiersmann et al., 2016, pp. 56–57)

RESEARCH CIRCLES – CROSS DOMAIN COOPERATION

(Randi Boelskifte Skovhus, Miriam Dimsits)

In 2014 in Denmark, it was politically decided that most students in compulsory school should receive collective guidance instead of individual guidance. This called for further development of collective guidance in Denmark. A traditional way of working with practice development is to give guidance practitioners theoretical presentations as a support and let them work on their development on their own. In a development project on collective guidance initiated by the Danish Ministry of education and the Danish Development Centre for youth career guidance it was decided that the project should be based on the research circles method. With this method the guidance professionals got competence development, they could share experience with other participants and the research circle leader and developed concrete collective guidance activities and programs for their own practice.

In Denmark there is a focus on developing guidance activities in compulsory schools so that they can be experienced as meaningful by the students and contribute to give the students outlook to life after school. In relation to this project it was also decided to build on the research circles method. Guidance practitioners and teachers worked together in small groups to develop activities and try them out. The groups met continuously in research circles with other groups of teachers and guidance practitioners dealing with the same topics and working on developing guidance activities in relation hereto. At the research circle meetings the groups cooperated on their own projects, got ideas by hearing about projects of others and formed network which went beyond the project period.

Together with colleagues we have been leaders of these research circles. In the Danish context research circles is a new method. In spite of that there has been some research and development projects in field of guidance in addition to the above mentioned project around development of collective practice. The two of us have as researchers also participated in projects where

- participants were involved in young peoples' transitions between compulsory school and vocational education develop and implementing methods of good practice
- participants were involved and engaged in career education and young peoples' transitions between compulsory school and youth education, focused on how to challenge young peoples' choice of education programme and also focused on developing collective practices in the field of guidance.

According to our experience research circles are a rewarding and energizing approach to working with practice development - both for participants and for us

as a research circle leaders. It has been very interesting for us to work with the method and develop it in order to discover its potential and its usefulness in the Danish context. With that said, we do not view research circles as one fixed method but as a method which needs to be adjusted to the specific context to support the concrete project in focus.

Below we give an introduction and a brief view over the phases of the research circle – this is not to be regarded as a recipe but as an appetizer for other professionals (both guidance practitioners and researchers) to look more into the method and reflect on how they can work with it in a way that would be useful in their practice.

Before we move on we will have a look into what participants say about being a part of a research circle:

At first you have to get to know 'the room'.

You are forced to look into your own practice – both when it goes well and when you don't succeed.

You get a more critical eye.

You are inspired by projects of other guidance practitioners.

In your group and in the research circle you develop a common language and focus.

You get a focus on structural problems and better understanding of what is to be done.

You are helped to work less 'random'.

The research circles method has contributed to develop my professional role.

What is a research circle?

The history of the research circles dates back to the 1970's in the Swedish university environment. The method has strong roots in study circles and action research, and focuses on uniting research-based and practice-based knowledge.

Practitioners and researchers work on equal terms in the research circle collaborating on producing new knowledge and new approaches to different kinds of problems that practitioners face in their work. The work in the research circle is built on dialogue, communication and the will to use and express all the different competencies held by the participants in the group.

The process in the research circle

As mentioned, a research circle has an overall focus, e.g. developing collective guidance. The participants in the research circle meet several times. In the projects we have been involved in the participants met from four to eight times over a period from six months to a year. Each meeting can last from three to five hours depending on the resources and outline of the project.

The meetings are led by a researcher. She is the one who decides the activities in the circle, organizes the meetings, involves other participants in decision making and facilitates the meetings and the overall process in the research circle.

This is done based on what the research circle leader thinks will support the work in the research circle.

We will try to describe the phases of the research circle work – even though we have experienced that the phases overlap:

1. Problem definition. This phase of the research circle focuses on how to define or formulate the problem, the issue or question that the participants wish to have as a focus of the common work. In relation to the project on development of collective guidance we focused on how to define collective guidance and which aspects are crucial for guidance to be assessed as collective guidance, for example.

2. Exploring what we already know. The focus here is to put all the different kinds of knowledge the group has on the subject matter forth in the research circle in order to fully use the resources of the participants. In our own experience we have found it useful that the leader of the group introduces a selected adequate theoretical perspective that can be common reference for the group. It is important that this theoretical perspective is presented as an equal contribution with the perspectives introduced in the group by the participants. Thereby a common knowledge base is built and the group becomes aware of the amount of resources actually shared in the group. This also creates awareness of where new knowledge or literature studies are needed or required for further research / developing process.

In the second and the beginning of the third phase the participants define their project – what do we want to develop? This is done with inspiration and feedback from other participants of the research circle.

In the time between the meetings, the small groups work on their development projects and also prepare for the next meeting in the research circle. The groups for example prepare how they will present their work so far and on what they need feedback, help and inspiration from the rest of the research circle participants. That is the time between the meetings is just as important as the meetings.

3. Deciding and designing and analyzing. The participants work on their research and development projects. The participants (the guidance professionals and the research circle leader) together decide on the steps of exploration and research work.

The practitioners could for instance choose to collect different empirical examples from their practice, which are brought back into the group for common discussion. The practitioners could also choose to test new approaches or applying changes in practice, and monitoring these as an empirical study being carried out in their own practice. The experiences are brought back into the group for presentation, feedback and a common analysis and discussion. This can again form the

basis of another experiment in practice and so on. This means that work is going on in the circles as well as between the circle meetings.

Our experience is that it is very important that the research circle leader prioritize the time at the research circle meetings so that there is time for the participants to present their ideas, work so far, problems they face and so on. This is important in order to get feedback from the rest of the participants in the research circle as inspiration for their continued work on the project.

4. Concluding the research process and communicating the results. The participants draw conclusions on their work and summarize new knowledge and findings that have appeared through the work in the research circle. The participants discuss the results and how these can be used in the development of their practice in the future. Here the participants decide which professional recommendations should be made from the work and how and to whom these results should be communicated.

We would recommend

- to begin to experiment with the method to find out how it can be useful in your own context.
- to work together in a small group in order to help each other and discuss and develop the process in the research circle.
- to remember that each circle develops differently and has its own life.

Last but not least

The research circle leader has to be aware of the fact that he or she is not teaching or functioning as an educator, but has the important task of bringing all the competencies and knowledge of the participants into play. The research circle leader can be viewed as a responsive facilitator with expert knowledge of a certain field more than a teacher of a specific curriculum. It is also important for the participants to know they are not a part of a traditional educational course or training. As research leaders we have experienced an immensely uplifted atmosphere in all our research circles among the participants in the evaluation. The participants express how they have benefitted on a professional and personal level by participating in the research circle, e.g. in relation to understanding the problem in a different way and gaining new professional networks.

For further reading:

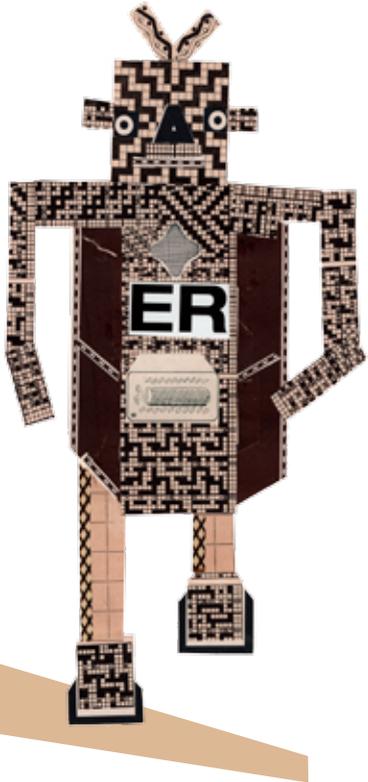
Härnsten, G. (1994). *The Research Circle: Building Knowledge on Equal Terms*. Stockholm: LO.
 Persson, Sven. *Research circles. A guide* http://malmo.se/download/18.72a9d0fc1492d-5b743f75935/1414504552463/research_circles_a_guide.pdf
 An example of a product of a research circle project:
 Preventing Dropout &VOFF: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJyTwPR_hbU



B/IV. Work at the threshold of the 21st century

We are the people of this world and even a small event at the other part of our planet can have a great impact on the labour market. Which topics should career advisors be interested in? There are many. Our colleagues, Tristram, Jane and Randi picked those that they find most interesting.

Work. People. Robots.



😊 What jobs would you use robots for and what would you rather do on your own? Robots would be handy for cleaning and writing homework. For massages and delivering food. I'd use a robot for experiments. For house work. Automatic vacuum cleaner. To help with homework and cooking. He'd have a jetpack and fly with me to school. For collecting trash and decomposing it to microstructures.

😊 What would we do on our own? Cooking and definitely cycling. I'd prefer doing most of the things at home by myself. I'd sleep on my own. We should drive our cars by ourselves. Eat, walk and get dressed. I wouldn't do anything by myself. I'd like to build with my own hands. I'd like to meet my friends on my own (but I'd take the robot with me sometimes). Fun. I want to be alone while doing hygiene and on the toilet. Cook, do sports, draw. Gymnastics. Hip hop dance and talking.

😊 What kind of robot would be most useful nowadays? President. Reconciler. Robot for disabled children. Robot for searching terrorists. The kind of robot that would help stop cutting rainforests. Kind robot peacemaker. Robot that will work as Terminator (for our benefit). Robot for cleaning the air and the environment. Money printer and walking fridge. Personal money maker into every family.



TV that would play all movies in the world. Robot diplomat. Teleport. Robot that would be able to listen to people. Robot that would help anybody who needs it. Robot in which you can insert textbooks and articles, connect information and he connects to your head and transports all the info in your head. Robot that would broadcast warning into every TV or radio in case of danger, e.g. catastrophes. It could connect into every camera or other electronic device (to keep people informed). I would use a robot that would be my friend and he would help others too. Trash-eating robot. To carry people so they don't have to walk and also for cleaning and switching the TV on when you're in bed. To chase away ISIS. For cleaning. For people to write instead of them.

I. THE RISE OF THE ROBOTS

(Tristram Hooley)

Our resident robot interviews Professor Tristram Hooley of the University of Derby

Robot: Do you like robots?

Tristram: I've always been interested in robots and technology. But, in recent years it has become increasingly clear that robots are moving out of science fiction and into our everyday lives. We've had robots in factories for quite a long while, but they are now starting to move out of the factories and into the wider world of work and our homes. My parents have got a little robot that cuts their grass.

One of the things that we need to pay attention to is the robots that don't look like robots. Not all robots have metal heads and swivelling eyes. Some of them live in our computers, automating lots of things that we used to do. Just think about Google and now think about what it has done for the library profession. The process of finding information has been automated.

Robot: Isn't it is good thing if robots do all of the work that people used to do?

Tristram: I'm sure that we can all think of jobs that we hate. No one likes cleaning the toilet or ironing a huge pile of shirts. When robots started emerging people talked about 'labour saving devices' and we all assumed that they would do all of the boring jobs while we got to focus on the interesting ones. But robots are getting more sophisticated all the time. We've now got robots that can diagnose

disease, do surgery, translate from one language to another and even robots that can beat humans at chess and trivia game shows. I'm starting to worry about what is left for us.

Robot: *Don't worry, be happy!*

Tristram: Well that is easy for you to say! The problem is that if we don't have work to do we won't have enough money to live. At the moment work is the main way in which our society distributes money.

Simplifying economics (a lot) we could say that in the current system rich people have money and they pay the rest of us to do things for them. The problem is that if they start to use robots they won't have to pay the rest of us. The ultimate consequences of this are a lot of rich people surrounded by robots while the rest of us starve.

But, it isn't just about money. We work for a range of reasons. Work is where we develop our identities, make friends and find meaning in our life. If the robots are doing all of the work we will need to find new ways to organise our lives.

Robot: *Aren't you just exaggerating all of this?*

Tristram: Well, opinion is divided on whether robots will really be able to take over. There are really two questions.

Firstly, will we gradually find that more and more of our work is automated. This seems very likely to me and gradually it is likely to result in the loss of some kinds of jobs. Initially these are likely to be low skill jobs, but they might also be high knowledge jobs like the law. This scenario is already happening. We don't go to travel agents any more, we get online tools like Skyscanner to compare flights and research options for us. The question with this scenario is how far these kinds of robots can go into the labour market. What jobs can they take over and what can't they?

Secondly, it is possible that we see a new kind of robot. A robot that has genuine artificial intelligence. A robot that can think like we do. This is real sci-fi territory, but given the advances in technology it is difficult to rule it out altogether.

Robot: *Have you found that you have been running out of work.*

Tristram: This is the strange thing. Most of us would say that we are really busy

at work. Despite all the robots we are still working longer hours. One analysis of this is that robots are actually increasing inequality which is weakening our position as workers. We have to work hard because so many other people want our job. Our employers can hold the idea over us that they can just sack us and replace us with a machine or another person.

Another idea is that we are definitely not running out of work. Work is not really finite, what is finite is the money that is available to pay for work. Many of our houses need a lot of repair work, our aged relatives need to be cared for and so on. We are not running out of work, we are running out of time and money. This is what robots should be good for.... But only if we have a political and economic system that supports this.

If robots start doing the profitable work we need to be able to redistribute wealth to enable us to do the unprofitable, but socially useful work.

Robot: *So what should careers workers do about this?*

Tristram: Well that is a tricky question. I suppose that I've come up with three main ideas.

Firstly, talk to your clients about the changing reality of work. They should understand how robots and automation are changing things.

Secondly, encourage them to think about what skills will be useful in the automated economy and what skills will be useful to enable you to work alongside robots. In general this is about increasing your focus on creativity and inter-personal skills as robots can't compete on those yet. It is also about increasing your understanding of automation and developing the technical skills to work with robots.

Thirdly, I think it is about recognising that this is a social problem as well as an individual problem. Individuals shouldn't blame themselves when they get replaced by a machine, but equally they shouldn't just take it. It may be that we need to start asking people to think more politically and more collectively about how to solve some of these problems.

Robot: *Thank you*

Tristram: It was a pleasure

Robot: *All hail your robot overlords.*

Tristram: All hail.



CAREER ADVICE Daily News, July 6th 2016

SAVES THE ECONOMY

Jane Artess

Yesterday saw the launch of a new government report on the state of the economy. Our reporter, Justin Case, finds out why this matters to career advisers.

The government forecasts suggest that the economy has grown slowly since the last recession and that there will be a shortage of highly skilled workers and increasing risk of unemployment amongst those without skills and qualifications as we approach 2020.

But how can we be sure this assessment is accurate or useful to young people starting their careers? Professor Knowable from Poppleton University explains, *“This government report is based on two sorts of evidence – observable facts and painstaking analysis. The research team collected measureable information such*

as employers’ recruitment patterns, and rates of unemployment and importantly created statistical models to predict the future. You can be sure it’s as accurate as it can be.”



reliable information

We asked Sue Fixit of the Central Careers Service whether the report will affect the advice she and her colleagues give to

young people. *“The report is useful background as it gives us a view of long-term trends in the labour market nationally but to be honest most of us are not able to read all that statistical data. What we really need is local, labour market information – about what the labour market offers young people leaving school or college this summer. It’s difficult but we have to find that out for ourselves.”*

Sue explained that career advisers use a variety of sources of evidence about what is happening in the labour market. They visit local companies, attend meetings of employer groups, track young people’s job destinations, work closely with recruitment agencies and local authorities to make sure they know where the jobs are locally and which businesses are coming into the area.

“Careers advisers work with current and very recent evidence of their labour market; we do not have access to big datasets or national surveys of employers. Our real challenge is finding ways of getting reliable information about the labour market to young people.” She explains that the Careers Service produces information for schools and colleges online, invites business people into classrooms, helps to organise work experience, combines local knowledge with national trends, and observes what is happening from a neutral, impartial position.

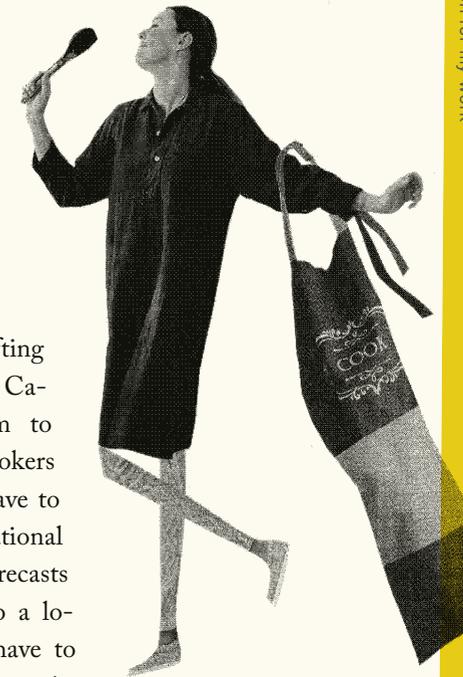
Yet some evidence of the labour market is subjective and can be confusing. For example if company X says it is recruiting, and company Y is making people redundant, then young people get contradictory messages. Sue explains, *“Sometimes young people are given labour market information by their family or friends which is out of date or wrong. A few years ago several large engineering companies went*

out of business locally and many people lost their jobs – now young people are told to avoid engineering as it is a risky choice.”

So how do young people navigate this shifting labour market? Career advisers seem to be the honest brokers in all this. They have to keep abreast of national labour market forecasts and put these into a local context; they have to understand the complex economic modelling and

at the same time appreciate the perspectives of local businesses. They have to make judgments about the reliability and authenticity of job information and they synthesise evidence from a wide range of sources to make it understandable to young people. One careers adviser described their role as “turning labour market evidence into labour market intelligence – by this I mean we make *all this information understandable so that young people can make informed choices about their futures. This helps young people get into the right jobs and succeed”.*

What we really need is local, labour market information – about what the labour market offers young people leaving school or college this summer.



FROM CAREER CHOICE TO CAREER LEARNING

(Randi Boelskifte Skovhus)

From a focus on career choice making to a focus including career learning

Why have you chosen to do your empirical research about career guidance of young people?

I think it is important that young people get education which makes them thrive and in that respect can be a part of their basis for creating an adult life with joy and commitment. I also think that it is important to provide young people with a basis to meet the continuous choices they will have to make throughout life, also in relation to education and vocation. Career guidance has a potential to support this. I would like to contribute to development of the youth guidance for young people so that we use the resources available for guidance in a way that is meaningful for the young people and the society.

If we want to develop practice, I think it is important that we do research in practice. We need to find out how practice, e.g. youth guidance practice, unfolds on a day-to-day basis in the daily life to create a foundation for professional discussions and development.

What is your field of research?

I have done research on how youth guidance unfolds in the last years of the students' compulsory school in two Danish schools and how the students perceive the guidance activities offered to them.

In Denmark, compulsory education begins in pre-school (age 6) and ends after ninth grade (age 16). Tenth grade is optional. Students then choose between vocational and upper-secondary education. In Denmark, education is free, whether compulsory, upper-secondary, or vocational and higher education.

In Denmark, youth guidance is provided for the students in the last three years of compulsory school (approximately age 14-17). Guidance practitioners employed by youth guidance centres provide guidance free of charge for all students. The guidance activities are a part of mandatory activities for the students in the school. In lower-secondary school, there are guidance activities, such as information about the educational system, 'bridge-building activities' in which the students visit educational institutions, and some optional activities, such as short internships.

I did empirical studies in two school classes (ninth grade) in two different schools connected to two different youth guidance centres. I followed the two schools' classes on selected days during the school year, I used participant observation of guidance activities, lessons and student breaks. I interviewed the students in relation to various activities to get to know their opinion on these. On other days, I followed the guidance practitioners in their work. I interviewed the involved guidance practitioners.

What did you find out?

In my research, I find that there is a huge focus on choice in the guidance activities and by the students. The students are very much oriented towards making a choice on which education programme to attend after compulsory school. This focus is also supported by the guidance activities of the youth guidance centres and the compulsory schools, which are primarily oriented towards supporting the students in choosing between vocational and upper-secondary education.

It is of course natural that the students are concerned about their future but my research shows that this main focus on the first educational choice has some side effects which I think that we in Denmark have not been sufficiently aware of and which I think we have to consider and discuss more. This is why my colleague Miriam and I have chosen to write about this topic in this book.

Before I move on I would like to point out that my intention is not to criticize young people or students in general. On the contrary, the central point is that their experience and thoughts are very valuable and relevant in order to make us aware of problems in the guidance provision. The students' experience invite us to take a critical look on the way we organize the youth guidance activities in Denmark.

My research shows that the students' experience with the guidance activities, whether they are meaningful to them or not, are closely connected to their understanding of what the activity can and should contribute to – in their eyes to a choice of a specific youth educational programme. Let me give some examples:

When a group of students have not yet decided which programme they want to attend, they are very interested in participating in different kinds of guidance activities, e.g. visiting different youth educational programmes as long as they consider the visit as associated with their interests and their overall direction of their soon to be made choice. Under these circumstances, the students find the guidance activities very meaningful.

When the students have made their choice of youth educational programme and are assessed ready for this programme, they often change their perspective on the guidance activities provided. This also applies for the guidance activities, which they earlier on valued as meaningful, e.g. the visits to educational institutions. Many of the students suddenly find the guidance activities irrelevant and meaningless to them. You could argue that this change in perspective makes good sense. The guidance practitioner and the teacher initially said to the students that they should participate in the guidance activities in order to find out which education to choose after lower secondary school. And now, after they have found out which education to attend, why should they attend more guidance activities?

Why isn't it enough that the guidance activities contribute to students' choice making?

My research shows that a primary focus on choice of education reduces the

curiosity and openness for many young people to explore various aspects of the world of education and work. Supporting choice making is one important aspect of career guidance. It is, however, essential to notice that this is only one aspect out of other crucial aspects of career education and career guidance. Even though you have made one choice, you still need to learn and reflect on the entire world of work, which you are going to be a part of.

Today the labour market is flexible, dynamic and is continuously changing in ways which are impossible to predict. As an example, we can look at the increasing global competition and the way certain types of jobs, and jobs in specific industries disappear. New technology and new forms of production develop rapidly, which among other things has the consequence that in Europe there is less work for low skilled people and a need for employees with technical expertise.

The choice of education after compulsory school is only one of the myriads of choices a person will have to make throughout life. Choices about education and vocation, and how these dimensions can play along with other important aspects of life such as family, friends and leisure, will continuously be a part of most people's lives.

In Denmark, an overarching goal for the compulsory school is to support the students to be prepared for being independent, knowledgeable and responsible youngsters and adults. To have respect for others and be able to eventually enter into and manage their adult life in a way that is meaningful for the individual and the society of which they are a part of. As mentioned, education and vocation are key parts of our modern society. To have insight into other people's worlds in terms of various educational paths and occupations, their reflection, reasons for actions and preferences as well as into your own, contributes to the democratic formation of a citizen. Career guidance has a potential to contribute to this. Therefore the aim of guidance should be much broader than solely contributing to students' first choice of education.

Thus, various career guidance activities can contribute to learning about a broader perspective than choice making, provided that the activities are relevant, well planned and well implemented.

In my research I found that if the students and we as guidance practitioners and teachers have a primary focus on choice making it can block a lot of relevant learning about society, different kinds of vocational paths and understanding other peoples' different views of life and their career choices; the learning options and learning potentials are simply not utilized properly but only on a superficial level. Thus, it is important to take advantage of the obvious learning experience in the guidance and school activities which can form a preliminary basis to be continuously developed further for the many choices of the students throughout their lives. If you don't know the society, your options and yourself, it gets harder to navigate, to be in control of your life and make fulfilling choices. This is why it can be relevant to participate in guidance activities even when an educational choice has already been made.

Okay, yes, maybe it makes sense – what do you think I can do about the problem of a primary focus on choice?

I think it is a complex matter that relates to the focus on choice in the legislation and in the general discourse of the society. As well as it connects to the daily practice in guidance and school.

In relation to the latter, I think it is important to reflect on how you as a guidance practitioner or a teacher can help the young people to get a broader perspective than just a focus on choice. To reflect on how to support a more open, curious and explorative approach by the students. This is also important in relation to educational paths and vocations which the students do not consider relevant for themselves and also after the choice of education after compulsory school has been made.

The practitioners have to consider how to support the students to find out how to be explorative in other ways than just asking themselves the question whether 'this education could be something for me'. What can you, as a young person be curious about and explore further? How can you discover things, learn, inspect for other purposes than finding out whether an education or a profession is suitable for you? Through which lenses can you see? What questions do you bring with you or may emerge from an activity you have engaged in? What experience can the various activities provide? What can be learned about the educational system and the labour market in general from this activity? What can you learn from it about yourself? How can you use your emotions from an experience to find out something about yourself without the purpose of assessing whether the educational path would be suitable for you?

Asking good questions is not something young people (and people in general) 'are just able to do'. You learn to ask good questions by being asked good questions. Curiosity and openness can be supported, learned and trained.

Yes, well, I will have to think this through to find out how to operationalize this in my daily practice.

I completely understand you. I also want to highlight that a change in focus can be challenge for practitioners as well as for students.

My colleagues and I have experienced that even if you as a guidance practitioner have a focus on supporting learning in a broad sense and not primarily choice making, the shift in perspective can be a challenge in practice. We have experienced that it may require a continuous attention to change the focus. If we want to focus on learning rather than choice, it is important to consider exactly when our thinking, our language and our ways to ask questions are being influenced by a focus on choice rather than a focus on learning.

I think that teachers, guidance practitioners and policy makers have a common challenge in relation to developing career learning activities and ways of preparing, implementing and post processing career guidance activities without having a primary focus on choice.

I think that it requires cooperation and continuous discussions among guidance practitioners to find good questions to ask and to work for a change of perspective from choice to learning. I suggest that practitioners work together to develop questions – e.g. how do we ask questions to students who are about to participate in a visit at an education institution, which they are not at all interested in in terms of their own personal preferences and soon to be made choices? And what questions do we ask in continuation of a young person's visit to an education institution if we don't want to ask 'did you find out whether this education could be something for you?'

Here are a few examples of questions you could ask the students:

- What do I/we see and experience here?
- How is what we experience here similar to other things we (or people we know) have experienced? How is it different?
- What is as I/we expected? What is different than expected?
- What can I/we learn about myself/ourselves in this context?
- What can I/we learn about different types of working environment?
- What are other people's reasons for finding this interesting/uninteresting?
- What do these arguments make me/us think about?
- Which role does this education/this job play in our society? What does this make me/us think about?

Together with your colleagues or students, you can develop more questions that fit into your specific context.

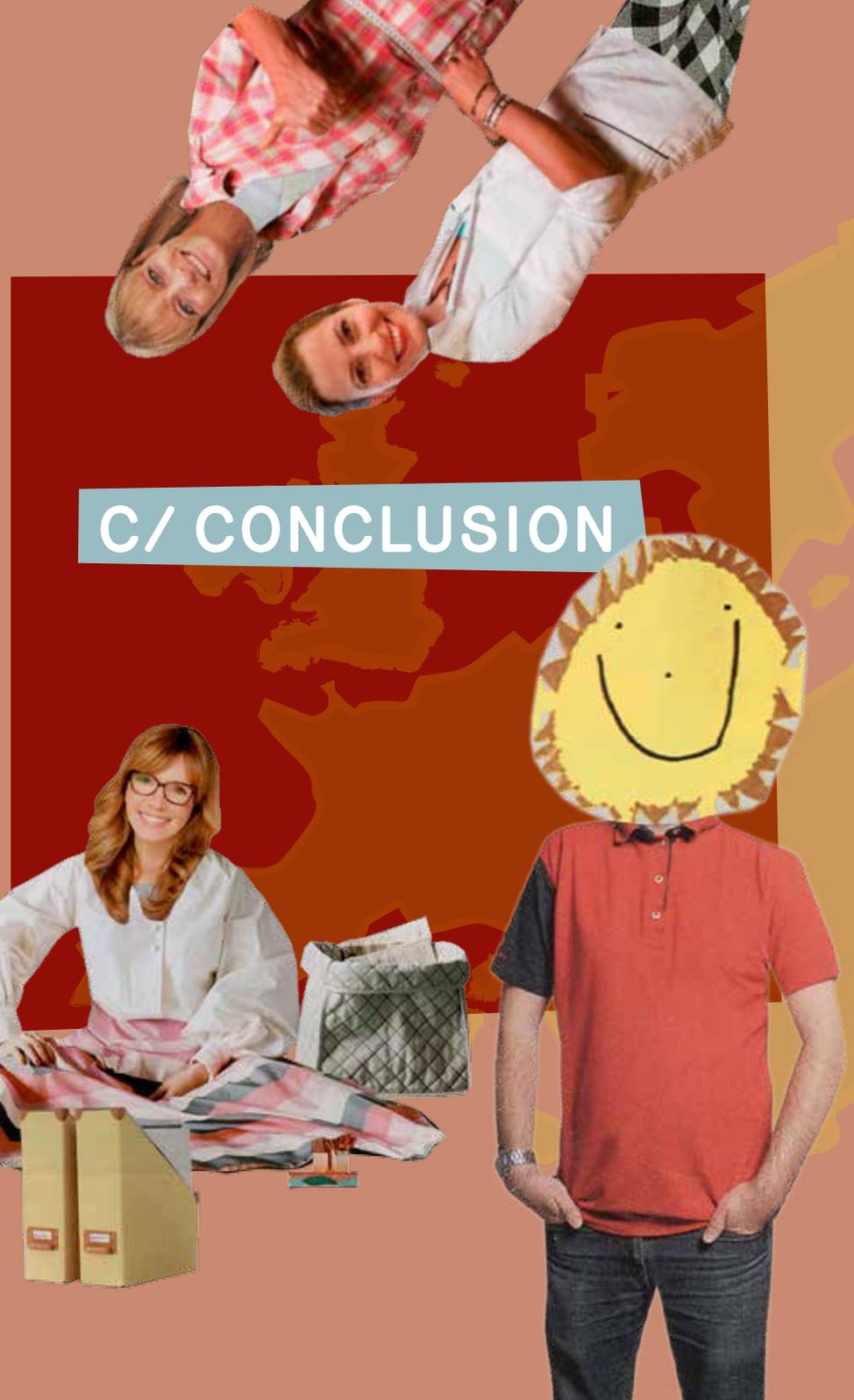
So what is your central point in short?

My point is that young people have to make choices. But sometimes they don't get the best basis for making the choice if they and their social surroundings primarily focus on the choice. A solid basis can be developed by walking another way, namely by a focus on learning and reflection. It is crucial to distinguish between the choice and the basis for making a choice. A learning perspective can support both the first coming choice and the myriads of choices the person will have to make throughout life.

Guidance practitioners therefore need to keep on developing their guidance activities so they will become more meaningful to the students, even though the students have already made their choice of education.

If you want to read more:

Randi Boelskifte Skovhus (2016). A focus on educational choice has social justice consequences – an empirical study informed by Sen's capability approach. *Journal of the national institute for career education and counselling*, Vol. 36, no. 1, page 54-60.



Conclusion

Our team of authors worked on this book for almost a year. Behind the hard work, there are many enthusiastic discussions about what career guidance actually is and how each of us perceives it in the specific context of our jobs.

I have realized a few things. I am really lucky to have a chance to work with people who are not only leading experts in their countries, but also people who inspired me a lot.

And on the top of that, they have a great sense of humour. And since work should be entertaining as well, here are a few jokes made up by pupils of grades 6 and 9 of a lower secondary school. Let's have a look at the world of work the same relaxed way as those who has not entered it yet.

A bus driver asks a Maths professor: "Do you know how much is one thousandth of a bus?" " I guess one microbus?"

A passenger wants to get off the bus on a request stop so he taps the driver's shoulder. The driver freaks out, he jerks the steering wheel and the bus crashes. Nobody survives but the driver. During the investigation a policeman asks the unfortunate driver: "What scared you so much?" "You know, it was my first day at a new job." "And what did you do before?" "I drove a funeral car."

"Teacher", says a ninth grade student. "you wanna heer a greight joke? I is gonna get to hi skool."

"What do you think is the biggest problem of our occupation, ignorance or lack of interest?" "I don't know and I don't care."

A woman gets pulled over by police and they want to fine her for speeding. "Gentlemen, show some mercy, I'm a teacher and you know how it is with our wages..." "Yesterday in the news, they said they raised your salaries for 3 dollars a month and you have two months of holidays, so what kind of stories are you fabricating here?" "I'm fabricating no stories, I only fabricate car components on night shifts in a factory."

A man comes to work and sees the boss standing angrily in front of his office. "It's the third time you have come late to work! Do you know what it means?" The man is thinking for a while and then replies: "It means it's Wednesday?"

About EKS

We are a training and consulting organization with over 15 years of experience on the market. We help people to be happy at workplace.

We are members of PMD and AVID. We started in 2002, inspired by the methods of adult education in Western Europe, and today we still strongly believe in experiential and interactive learning focused on practical use.

We believe in education and empowerment as a form of development for people of all ages and life situation. And not only people, but also organizations and companies.

We help our clients find the right fulfilling profession. We know how to guide them through a change of job or how to support them when they decide to give their career a new direction.

EKS has received the National Career Counselling Award in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Our organization is recognized by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic.

We have an internal team of trainers and advisors who focus on experiential learning, the team is systematically trained in modern teaching techniques. We are licensed in CHQ method for recognition of competences and we create our own methodology based on qualification and experience.

Our activities:

- Career counseling and coaching
- Personal development trainings – balancing work and family, preparing for an interview, self-assured presentation and communication skills
- Diversity in education
- Assessment center
- Facilitation
- Helping people to feel satisfaction from work

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Authors of this book

Eva Kavková

Eva works as a lecturer and career advisor. She started her professional path 18 years ago in international projects focused on supporting disadvantaged women and their personal development. Her target group were young mothers, women from villages or those who hadn't finished their education due to complicated social situation. She educated not only women but also those who were professionally involved in working with them. That means lecturers and social or community workers. Thanks to her activities she has visited many foreign countries and was influenced especially by her trips to socially excluded localities in the Great Britain, Romania and Sweden. She was strongly inspired by the experience with the principles of community development and inclusion of various groups, even those on the edge of society in these countries. The experience had an impact on her own work in career guidance and education. The topic of strengthening the voice of women and their empowerment became her favourite one and she deals with it up till now.

Another important life experience for Eva was a Swiss educational programme for mapping informal competences by the CH-Q method. She not only undertook this course but thanks to a two-level certification, she can educate and help others in this area too. She is constantly astonished by the ways people can change their lives when they start to believe in themselves and rely on their strengths they didn't realize they had before. Among other trainings and practice she values particularly Thomas Diener's experiential career guidance, Narrative therapy course and MBTI Typology. Recently, Eva is in her second year of Jungian psychotherapy training organized by the Czech Analytical Psychotherapy Association and she takes it as a challenge.

I like the diversity my work offers me. I work with individuals during the consultations and with groups as well. I meet some people just once or twice and we are both motivated to find a fast solution to a problem they have. With others, I can enjoy the luxury of working long term and systematically, dig under the surface. I teach bespoke courses for companies and organizations but also open lessons that can be visited by anybody who is interested. I deal with women on maternity leave or people who are unemployed for a long time. I have experience with teaching adults (that's what I enjoy most) and children too.

I enjoy trying new things at work, move on, learn. I don't like stagnation. What really satisfies me is when I see that my consultation or lecture brought something new to people's lives. That they realized something and moved on in their lives a little bit closer to fulfilling their life goals and to feel satisfied.

Randi Boelskifte Skovhus

Randi holds a Master's degree in career guidance, an MSc and a subsidiary subject in Psychology.

Randi is Associate professor at VIA University College, School of Continuing Education in Denmark. She works with research and development projects in the Knowledge Centre for Educational and Vocational Guidance. She also teaches on the diploma programme in educational and vocational guidance. Randi is a member of the Danish national network for research into career guidance. Currently, Randi is enrolled as a PhD student at Aarhus University, Department of Education, on the "Lifelong Learning" research programme.

'Like many other guidance practitioners in Denmark my way into career guidance and counselling came by happenstance or chance. I was a teacher in health and psychology in the diploma program for social pedagogy. Our rector decided to put resources into improving career guidance and counselling, and I applied for the job. For me, career guidance and counselling was learning by doing. I really liked my job; I enjoyed the personal contact with students and helping them finding ways in relation to their problems. After a couple of years, I wanted to have a more thorough basis for my practice and therefore I took a Master in career guidance and counselling. At some point I started teaching career guidance students in the diploma program and do research into career guidance. Over the years, I have become more and more interested in the structural barriers that people meet and how career guidance in practice can support justice for individuals and groups.

I decided to be a part of the project Diversity in Career Counselling because it offers an interesting opportunity for gaining more insight into how career counselling and guidance unfolds in different European countries and the conditions for guidance and counselling'.



Julie Cruddas

Julie has extensive experience of working within a broad range of settings in diverse roles both internationally and in the UK, with over 25 years of experience in youth work, community development, training and guidance. Julie has a proven track record in project design, development and management. Julie is a founding director of Justice Prince Community Interest Company set up in 2007. The company, Justice Prince, was listed in the Fortuna 50 Index 2016 as one of the fastest growing women led companies in the UK.

Julie is passionate and committed to tackling issues of social justice believing in a

fairer society. Julie's work practice is rooted in community development principles, a process that develops critical consciousness that enables people to understand their reality and better plan their destiny. Julie has vast experience and knowledge of working within cross sector, multi- discipline teams set up to tackle inequalities.

"I'm the youngest of three children, I have a brother and sister. We grew up in a disadvantaged community in the North East of England. We grew up in a household that was poor even though our mother and father both worked hard. There was a strong work ethic but looking back, education wasn't something we talked about, there was little expectation to attain qualifications.

I started work when I was 13 years old in a café at weekends. I continued to work weekends and school holidays until I left school at the age of 16. At which point I gained employment with a well-known large department store in Newcastle. I worked there for over ten years.

I was married young, at 21 years of age I gave birth to my gorgeous son then at 24 years old I gave birth to my beautiful daughter. Becoming a mother made me realise the importance of education; I had dreams and aspirations for my children.

It was around this time my sister graduated, she was the first person in our family to attend University. My sister's achievement opened my eyes to new possibilities which led me to enrol on a Sociology A level course. It wasn't easy returning to education. I struggled with low self-esteem and lacked confidence but I didn't give up.

As a qualified youth worker, I became part of a network of community development practitioners, which enabled me to explore social theory in more detail and develop new participatory styles of working which underpin my practice today. I believe that everyone should have equal opportunity and not be disadvantaged through their social or economic position within society- I live to work not work to live."



Helena Košťálová

Helena has worked in education for more than 20 years. Her main focus is personal development and career guidance. Originally, she studied social management and marketing, later on, she undertook several activities of professional development. Among the most important ones there are distant studies at Stockholm University, absolving the Career Guidance programme - theory and practice, a course of the Swiss CH-Q method for mapping competences, E-kariera+ course, Experiential career guidance according to Thomas Diener, two-year training in art-therapy and artfletics, an improvisational theatre course, training in the assessment centre and a psychotherapeutic training in systematic

therapy. She was strongly influenced by study visits in the Great Britain and Scandinavia as well.

Helena is a lecturer, advisor, methods specialist, consultant, evaluator and author of scientific publications. She leads a seminar for career advisors and supports new guidance centres professionally. She has clients of ages 9 to 60+ with diverse life experience, she works with them in groups or at individual consultations. She was awarded the National career guidance award in 2013 for her lectures in career guidance.

I didn't choose career guidance, it chose me and it was love for the first sight. I am glad that I can contribute to personal development of people in different phases of their lives. I perceive my role as supportive and I approach the wisdom, the experience and the uniqueness of my clients with great respect. Individual approach to everybody is a commonplace. I don't prefer any special target group, I enjoy working with adults and children alike. However, my personal topic is career guidance at schools and for young people. The reason may be that I can see what problems my adult clients have and I want to prevent young people from facing the same troubles. Another reason is that as a teenager I got a "career advice" that lead me to a dead end and I know myself how it feels to find one's dream and reach it.

When am I happy? With my family and friends. In sauna, when running the seventh kilometre, eating chocolate cake, travelling, reading a book ... when I can freely create something new. For example while cooking or putting this book together.



Nicki Moore

Nicki is Senior Lecturer in Career Development at the International Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby where she leads the Centre's initial and continuing professional development programmes. Nicki qualified as a Careers Adviser in 1996. Nicki is passionate about the role that career guidance plays in addressing issues of social justice and has worked with a range of disadvantaged groups including clients with learning difficulties and disabilities, the traveller community, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

I have extensive experience in developing quality approaches in career education and counselling in a range of education settings. I have written several professional guides for those practitioners working in an operational context including on career learning, action planning, digital career management skills, and widening participation and have produced career learning materials for all ages and stages of education.

I have written widely on a range of topics including around social pedagogy, equality and diversity in careers education, issues surrounding employability and progression and how young people develop vocabulary and conceptualise common career terminology. I am a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a Fellow of the UK's Career Development Institute.

Karen Anne Clark

Karen has held a wide range of roles within varied organisations and worked within the UK and international contexts. With over 30 years of experience in grass root community development / youth work, teaching, training and guidance practice, Karen has a successful proven track record. Karen is a founding director of Justice Prince Community Interest Company set up in 2006 and was elected as a local government councillor, North Tyneside Council in 2015.

Karen is passionate about tackling issues of injustice and inequality. Karen has strong commitment to working within community development principles and values with extensive knowledge of human centred participatory methodologies including training for transformation. Karen is committed to strengthening the voice and control of marginalised / excluded people in design and development of programmes which are meaningful and appropriate to them. Karen is experienced in building / facilitating multi-agency partnerships to develop an effective response to the voice of local people.

"I grew up in a disadvantaged area; left school at 15 with few qualifications. I worked in varied low skilled employment roles in factories and shops, I married young and had two beautiful children. When my children started full time school I began to question my own future career path. I wanted to do something more interesting and challenging but realised I would need qualifications. The thought of returning to education terrified me; I lacked confidence and questioned my ability.

I eventually found the courage to enrol for a course at my former high school which had become a community college. To my amazement I realised I absolutely loved education! This marked the beginning of a long and ongoing process of education leading to university and study at post graduate level. I was the first person in my family to ever get to university!

I discovered a fabulous community development project based on the college campus and I soon became heavily engaged in community activism. This mix of formal education and community development practice provided deep rich learning experience and marked the beginning of a dynamic personal journey of transformation and change".

Miriam Dimsits

Miriam holds a Master's degree in Career Guidance, a BA in Comparative Religion and a Master's degree in Arts. Miriam is an Assistant Professor at VIA University College, School of Continuing Education in Denmark. She works with research and development projects in the Knowledge Centre for Educational and Vocational Guidance in VIA. She also teaches in the diploma programme in educational and vocational guidance. Miriam is a member of the Danish national network for research in career guidance.

"I have always been interested in how people sought meaning in their lives, which is why I chose to study Comparative Religion in the first place. In my Candidatus I focused on how people express meaning in fine arts and in popular culture. So in a way I was already studying to be a career guidance practitioner before I knew about it.

I have worked with different groups of people in the career guidance field, and in my work life I have always been very interested in how to empower people from weak backgrounds, getting people engaged in group work in order to support one another in their preferred and pursued life style. Working as a career guidance practitioner in different fields sparked my interest in the role of the practitioner in his or her organization and in society as such. I became an Assistant Professor at VIA because I wanted to do some more work for the profession to make career guidance practitioners more aware of the societal context they operate in – and actually create more awareness about how powerful career guidance practitioners can be in changing the world, beginning with empowering an individual or a group.

I joined Diversity in Career Counselling because the project would give me insight into specific national and common European problems and challenges for career guidance practitioners. Through this community of different participants in the project we have the ability to share our best practices and contribute to guidance practitioners in many European countries."



Ivana Šindlerová

Her career has been bound with stories since the beginning. After dealing with the big stories while studying history at a university, by coincidence, she found her way to stories of individual people, their families, work, communities and that's what she stick to up till now.

Ivana has worked in education of adults in the Czech Republic as well as internationally for 15 years as a career coach, therapist or a lecturer. She is also an

author of publications from the field of personal growth and education. Ivana is using her rich experience with leading an educational institution in her consultations for team development and leadership. In her daily practice with clients, she uses her experience with working with disadvantaged women and foreigners. She supports women (and men) in their healthy self-esteem and shows them good tools to manage their work-life balance.

Ivana gained her professional knowledge and skills during her long practice and further education. She achieved the CH-Q Swiss career model certificate - level 2 and she is a certified assessor in the assessment centre. She undertook a training in Rogerian psychotherapy at the PCA Institute in Prague. In OnDialogue in Copenhagen, she mastered the methods of narrative coaching. Apart from various courses, she is most inspired in her guidance practice by her clients.

What I enjoy most in my work? Diversity - every day is different, every client is different and I am changing too, hopefully in the right direction. Encounters - with stories, destinies, persistence and inner strength of my clients. Discovering - skills and strengths, but also hope that nothing is set and that we, the people, have a great power to change it if we want to.



Jim Robertson

Professional practice and consultancy includes work in both Statutory and NGO Organizations including faith groups. Higher Education experience includes contributing to the design and delivery of learning programmes relating to community development, social policy, and recognition of practice based learning in local communities. International experience includes exchanges with various European countries. Learning and insights have been shared through contributions to publications, learning journals and workshop presentations.

What factors contributed to my career pathway, special interests and concerns?
I grew up in a very disadvantaged area of Glasgow - a peripheral housing estate with virtually no public services or amenities. It was not expected that young people from this community progressed to higher education and professional work. Involvement as a participant, activist and voluntary leader in local community projects raised awareness of how families and people were marginalised and disadvantaged in so many ways. Following a six-year period in Industry I was fortunate to gain a paid post as a community development worker in an NGO Organization. For more than ten years I gained valuable experience working on different projects with young people and across varied age groups. In this post, I could successfully develop innovative community based and

residential projects in response to career and guidance concerns of young people leaving school and care institutions. Also devise guidance and mentoring programmes contributing to the integration of immigrant families, particularly young people and young adults integrating in to the UK education system.

I developed a special interest in social justice and inequalities and how public systems created socially excluded areas and the career development difficulties this created for those who lived in these neighbourhoods. To pursue further academic and professional studies I relocated to North East England. In this new situation I was able to build on earlier experiences and special interests as the co-founder of an action research unit at the University of Northumbria. This was a very innovative initiative at the time: working in cooperation with local public bodies focusing on how disadvantaged areas were created; through both practice and research addressing themes such as unemployment, homelessness and other social concerns. This action research approach resulted in the University introducing community development academic and practice studies as part of the social studies curriculum.

Current practice activity continues to include mentoring, counselling and professional development tutoring on novel initiatives in disadvantaged communities in North East England. Involvement in a project for asylum seekers and refugees is showing how development of cultural and artistic skills have an important role in career and personal development.



Tristram Hooley

Tristram is Professor of Career Education at the International Centre for Guidance Studies and helps to oversee the development of the research and education programmes run by the Centre. His research interests are careers policy, the evidence base in careers work and the role of technology in career development. He is also interested in careers work and social justice, the role of appearance and attractiveness in career and the careers of researchers. He is a member of the UK Careers Sector Strategic Alliance, a Winston Churchill Fellow, a Fellow of National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC) and is on the editorial board of the British Journal of Guidance and Counselling. He was the specialist adviser to the House of Commons Education Committee inquiry into career guidance. He also writes the Adventures in Career Development blog.

Tristram's teaching activities include the University's MRes, EdD and New Route PhD programmes and he is also available to supervise EdD and PhD theses in areas related to career, career development and the educational use of social media. More information about Tristram can be found at <http://www.derby.ac.uk/research/icegs/staff-associates/tristram-hooley/>



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