

Open Space Session:

“What makes life good for you now? What would make this a world you feel is good?” By Michael Britton

Introduction to the Topic by the Host

Michael: Two world wars, cold war,...

How do we heal from this trauma that humans put on humans? We need to find a process to live through that trauma.

One way could be to focus on the good. We are ready for and focussed on the negative/bad.

“Campfire for happiness”

- 1) What brings joy into our own lives?
- 2) How could a good world / a good era look like? What do you want it to look like?

Discussion

Berit: I edited a manuscript “the journey to the land of joy”, I have passed that journey. After Breivik I was fed up of the evil things.

My parents were members of the Norwegian Resistance Movement, both were in jail and fled with children to Sweden. Difficult life, trauma.

My parents had ethics and principles, were helping other people. This is a strong foundation for their children that helps to navigate. That foundation gives safety for the children

It is something you don't have to turn to when you experience difficulties, it is in my backbone, automatically with me. When I get depressed, I find my direction – a situation where others are lost.

Sigurd: It's a talent, an intuition that pops up. Leaders in government have it.

Michael: Our environment is shaped by leadership. When honesty and qualities are practised, we feel safer and protected

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Sigurd: a good life for me contains 3 things

- 1) Nature – to enjoy a sunny day alone or with my grandchildren, to feel as a part of the whole
- 2) Flow – when you start work and it begins to flow
- 3) Adventure with grandchildren – to imagine and share stories from different perspectives

Julia: I can be happy when there are no borders, when I can travel. As a holder of a European passport I have that privilege that not many people have. And when I can be who I am, when I'm not judged. And I love watching people when they enjoy themselves

Selina: I feel as if I don't have time to appreciate the good things in life. Focus on solving problems, anything good that happens does not need to be solved or to be thought about.

Berit: life is a fairy-tale of symbols, follow inspirations! If you see something strange or funny, let it touch you. Our brains are trained to focus on problems. Let positive things take the lead instead.

Michael: Freud would refer to the superego that tells you "work, work, work"; join other egos like Sigurd, who goes out and plays with his grandchildren.

Zehlia: It is difficult to be at peace in the world today. How can I be at peace when there's so much trouble in the world? I try so hard to improve something, but seen in the whole, we make so little contribution 0% or 0.00001%.

Steve: But there is progress. It may be small but it's a start. The glass is half full and we can slowly fill it.

Zehlia then talks about her work in Tanzania, how the system seems to work against her efforts. She is improving things at one level and the government goes backwards at another level.

Berit: this leads us to the question what is hope? If we connect hope to something concrete, we can easily be disappointed. So we need to connect it to something else. Your health for example, the nice feeling of eating. "animal side" of life. Hope is like fire, it grows when you help it/ feed it.

Michael: be around people who work for the good. We catch emotions from each other!

And then you never know how things turn out: "7 Generations" you have no idea what consequences /effects of your deeds on others will be! You are stardust in all other people. If you inspire just a few people, it might change the world after 7 generations. They might talk bad about your ideas now but after 20 years, someone might pick up what you said and bring out something good with the help of it.

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I once gave a talk at a conference and afterwards I thought it might have been inadequate, I felt I might have ridiculed myself. And just recently I found out that what I said has become part of a peace-colloquium

– you don't know what will happen

Be part of this great giving force (Michael is pointing towards the whole group).

Berit: spiritual connection to nature is important food, spirituality, sami culture

Anja: that's exactly what I'm doing. I feel my grandmother's presence, it gives me security, a feeling of joy. We used to look at the sunrise together, those memories make me happy.

Michael: I went to a shaman in NY with the following intention: I wanted to find a way to get rid of this anger and negativity in me that had come to me because it was around me when I was little. Through a healing ceremony that poison was taken out, to liberate joy

Steve: (turning to Zehlia) when you deal with something falling back – keep trying. I try as good as best that I can. It may work just a little bit, maybe only for 5 people and not 500 but that's an achievement, too.

Zehlia: it is, but there is this frustration because it is a system you cannot break. How can I reach the top? It's very humiliating

Anja: I like that "butterfly effect of positive things" that Michael was talking about

Michael: the French revolution started 100 years BEFORE the actual revolution took place. The ideas and principles were shaped long before the revolution. We can feed the future, we can plant the seeds!

We stand at the shift between two ages: the era of modernity, capitalism and world wars is about to end and a new era will be built. How can we influence it, how should it look like?

Berit: This new era will contain new thought systems. Change needs patience and time. I'm a clear, rational, logical thinker. I had developed a "crocodile skin" and to work a lot to re-connect to the child inside, that could believe in magic, smiles automatically; I had lost list ability.

Michael: To overcome a post-modern-depression (which is quite typical in our time), we need to use the right side of our brain, we need to refine it. It stands for creativity, reading and expressing emotions,...

Zehlia: the image of a teacher is serious, he has a "crocodile skin" and can bite at times.

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What makes life good?

Anna: travel and dance! Movement, music from different cultures and engaging with the world – that’s what makes me happy! Anna then tells us about her experiences: at a typical US-school you need to shut up and sit quietly, only speak when you are asked to. With her work, Anna tries to break that, to encourage expression, movement;

Berit tells us about the benefits of meditation, how it opens up your heart and how you become more present and mindful through it.

Evelin shares her experiences with us: She wrote a thesis about ‘what is a good life’ in Egypt and Germany (it was a comparative study). The results were similar, both nations wanted a life to look forward too and a social cohesion. The only difference was that Germans wanted less technology and more humanisation, while in Egypt people wanted more/better machines.

Evelin’s spirituality (she would not call it religion) is based on patience and living in/for the moment. She listens to the moment and follows. She does not decide, but waits and is humble. Her whole life is a prayer. For Evelin, there is no need to *believe* in experience because she *is* in it. This world/moment might be an illusion but it holds her and guides her. Success, hope/pessimism are irrelevant. **Evelin then shares a personal experience with us that won’t be presented here in detail but she concludes that her worldview makes her vulnerable to disconnection.**

Michael: to be vulnerable is part of our journey. Being able to hurt and cry is a blessing

Sigurd: your resilience (weak/strong) depends on what kind of identity you have

Michael: You can walk away and have different opinions/feelings, but still you can stay connected. We can heal together.

Selina: When I was typing down my notes from this open-space-session, I remembered a movie: “Pay it forward”. Here here are the links to two essential scenes

1) Here the teacher presents the task for the students

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKpieWec_7w&feature=related

2) Here you can see the solution of one of the students <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7Xnlc2GLfy>

And here you can see what people have made out of the movie’s message and it’s just incredible

<http://payitforwardday.com/inspire-me/best-pay-it-forward-stories/>