
Non-Formal Adult Education and motivation for Lifelong Learning



“We’re searching for the stuff
that works!”

Steen Elsborg &
Steen Høyrup Pedersen

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Motivation, Guidance, and Training for Adults with a Short Education.

Foreword

A large group of people are not sufficiently educated to get jobs or function properly as citizens, a fact which has been substantiated in one study after the other.

It is not that campaigns or educational opportunities have been lacking, but those kinds of opportunities cannot solve the problem alone because a good portion of the people in question cannot find the proper motivation they need to overcome the limitations they have due to their lack of education.

How can they discover or rediscover the motivation they need to get an education? That is the great question society faces.

The study used in this report has part of the answer. That is what Steen Elsborg and Steen Høyrup Pedersen discovered through non-formal adult education.

The human subjects in the study consisted of participants and professionals at six day folk high schools and similar type programs in non-formal adult education that were selected based on their success. The two researchers analyzed the statements made by the participants and professionals by building further on earlier studies done on education, guidance and motivation and by using a number of theories in the field from which emerged a matrix.

It is not a quick-fix. Nor is it a model that all schools can just apply without further ado, but rather, it is a structured approach to what works and helps motivate people.

In contrast to many others, Elsborg and Høyrup Pedersen refuse to provide stopgap solutions. The problems are complex and therefore require complex solutions, solutions which they have discovered. Their matrix gives a systematic overview of the various approaches and methods that can help create and re-

**The problems are complex
and therefore require
complex solutions.**

create the motivation needed by a specific target group to attain an education.

The methods, approaches and principals that Elsborg and Høyrup Pedersen present in this report are in no way bound to the six schools used in the study. They can easily be applied by others who are also working with improving the motivation, guidance and training of people with a short formal education.

According to the authors, the structure used in the non-formal adult education schools have specific pre-requisites for applying them. In fact, it is not just an option but an obligation. As Elsborg and Høyrup Pedersen write: " The desire to learn is the key competence of the future. It is therefore essential that there is an awareness within non-formal adult education to further develop its obvious potential for creating and strengthening the motivation to learn within the population.

The desire to learn is the key competence of the future.

The secretariat of DAEA (Danish Adult Education Association), Oct, 2013



Summary

The general aim of the project is to shed light upon the specific qualities and potentials in the non-formal adult education sector - especially in relation to motivating adults with a short education towards maintaining lifelong education in a broad sense, including adult supplementary training, but also non and informal learning.

The project is a continuation of Elsborg and Høyrup's studies on Breaking social patterns through the learning environments in the non-formal adult education (2010), including NCK's (National Center for Competency Development) overview of existing research about motivation and teaching methods (2009).

The focus of the present project is adults with a short education and the aim of the project is to shed light on, and where appropriate, to consider how, non-formal adult education as a part of adult supplementary training, motivates individuals toward participation and learning. The aim of the project is to both strengthen the general understanding and provide the basis to qualify the development of local pedagogical methods at the schools providing non-formal adult education.

In the project, data in the form of observation and interviews with teachers, principals and participants at six different day folk high schools or courses that had the same format as day folk high schools was collected. This qualitative data was then analyzed in the light of motivation and perspectives in learning theory which will be presented and introduced in an introductory paragraph below.

The analyses of the empirical data suggests: From a participatory point of view the following statements are crucial:

- "I am allowed to be myself."
- "It is an entirely different way of learning."
- "We are trained to perceive ourselves in the real world."



From an institutional learning perspective the following is crucial:

- “We look for resources.”
- “We create challenges tailored to the individual participant’s qualifications.”

When these perspectives are analytically combined and theoretically connected to one another influential and central elements in the general practice of schools become crystallized.

In the report, these elements are treated as “the efficient materials of general education” in connection with the work of motivating lifelong learning.

In our efforts of identifying these “materials” we have provided both the participants and the professionals (teachers counselors, principals) with a voice: What is your opinion? In other words, we identify expressions for what we do, what we can do, and what we believe will work in realizing our intentions.

In our efforts of identifying these “materials” we have provided both the participants and the professionals (teachers, counselors, principals) with a voice: What is their opinion? In other words, we identify expressions for what we do, what we can do, and what we believe will work in realizing our intentions.

However, that is not to imply that the report is a mere passive reproduction of already existing knowledge or concepts. We aim to organize the generated knowledge so that new contours may emerge and we aim to connect this practical knowledge with relevant pedagogical theories and concepts in order to ever-so slightly disengage this knowledge from its truisms, thus giving access to new perspectives, ways of understanding and challenges. In other words, we not only aim to respect the voices based on practical experiences but to reach beyond the practical aspects which we may have attained.

The collected data and analyses are then, according to these intentions, presented/structured in a matrix which is the concrete result of the project.

In this way, the project not only sheds light on but also goes into depth with the most essential elements in the non-formal adult education programs examined through its focus on stimulating and supporting the development for motivation for lifelong education. It is worth pointing out that while some of these efficient materials are very clear in their material today, others seem less pronounced yet comprise to the same degree indicators for further efforts.

It also appears that the efficient material in the non-formal adult education programs examined is not characterized by isolated and independent elements: the elements are rationally decided upon and factors get their distinctive features through the complex contexts in which they have been incorporated.

The present project may be perceived as a pilot project. It is thus presented as a relevant possibility to apply the results from this project as a qualitative fundament to create a quantitative representative research project in the field.

Background for the Project

The desire to learn is the key competency of the future. It is therefore important that the non-formal adult education sector is in tune with using and further developing its obvious potential to create and strengthen the motivation for people to learn.

That was the background for the research project that Steen Høyrup Petersen and Steen Elsborg from DPU undertook in the publication "Breaking social patterns through the learning environments of the non-formal adult education." The publication can be downloaded here:

<http://www.daea.dk/themes/adult-learning-in-denmark/articles-on-danish-adult-learning/breaking-social-patterns/>

In this first project, Elsborg and Høyrup Pedersen examined five specific educational programs in adult education associations and day folk high schools. All the courses are aimed at people that, for various reasons, are caught in a threatening situation in society and are therefore not generally motivated to learn anything new. On that basis, the researchers, through their analyses, discovered five elements that characterize the learning environment of the non-formal adult education and that also motivate the desire to learn and thereby help to break certain habitual patterns, such as:

- The insistence on meeting the participant at eye level and relating to them as a resourceful player
- An energizing social setting for action
- Flexible and targeted preparation of the content
- Active interaction between teaching and counseling.
- Focus on both process of education and development.

Upon that basis, a model was sketched for further developing attractive and motivating teaching environments in non-formal adult education sector.



The project has received much interest both within non-formal adult education and the outside world, which was very encouraging. As a result, in the fall of 2010, DAEA initiated the current research project that is based on the earlier one, but specifically focuses on shedding light on certain qualities and potentials in relation to adults with a short education and the development of their learning motivation.

The Empirical Basis of the Project

The present project was executed in 2011 through six case studies and analyses including a reference group meeting in 2011 where the temporary results were discussed with representatives of non-formal adult education and relevant external professionals. The participant list for the reference group meeting has been attached as attachment 2.

The six cases that are described in further detail in attachment 1 consisted of courses at the AOF (Workers' Education Association) on Bornholm, Grindsted Day Folk High School LOF (Liberal Adult Education), The Gym Day Folk High School IDA in Aarhus, The Day Folk High School Sydvestjylland in Esbjerg, the Day Folk High School FOKUS in Aalborg and Hammerum Herreds Gym Day Folk High School in Herning.

During the process of selection for each case, particular emphasis was placed on the following:

- That the case is able to contribute relevant methods/ approaches in connection with motivating adults with a short-term education to make use of lifelong learning.
- That the case is able to contribute in clarifying the significance of learning motivation in connection with the change/transitional phases.
- That various types and approaches are represented.
- That the case, on the face of it, is assessed as successful by the principals and teachers involved.

In other words, the project is dealing with specific cases that are directed to adults with a short-term education and who do not represent non-formal adult education as a whole.

Steen Høyrup Petersen and Steen Elsborg were once again responsible for the project, assisted by project worker Inge Harlung, who has a Master's degree in Education. Randi Jensen, who is the secretariat director of the association of Day Folk High School and a member of DAEA's board, was head of the project and was responsible for the editing together with Agnethe Nordentoft from DAEA's secretariat.

The Project's Question and Perspective

The primary question addressed in the study related to how motivation for lifelong learning is formed through general education with reference to the specific cases in question. Or, phrased in a different way: What qualities are specific for the educative pedagogy in these cases when it comes to forming or finding the motivation to learn?

The question is a central societal and institutional matter, not least because the target group examined for the adult education program, that was, moreover, broad and heterogeneous in nature, was characterized by, among other things, that the motivation for learning and taking on new challenges to a large degree had disappeared. The people in the target group had typically had bad experiences in school and had other experiences under certain conditions that had hindered them in their desire to learn. Society has generally had difficulty in giving this group the support they need so that they can obtain a meaningful life.

There is a great challenge in developing relevant programs to this group of citizens and in this context creating or helping to find the motivation to learn is an important element. The aim of this project is to clarify the extent to which there are specific potentials in the educative, non-formal approach to teaching in relation to this challenge.

Experience from the non-formal adult education courses analyzed suggests that considerable results may be obtained in regard to the realization of the following goals:

- To develop robust and independent members of society that are able to take charge of their own lives.
- That the motivation for learning and development returns.
- That relationship to the job market is strengthened.

What qualities are specific for the educative pedagogy in non-formal adult education when it comes to forming or finding the motivation to learn?



What are the efficient materials – the stuff that works – in these non-formal adult education courses that are not representative of adult education as a whole but represent rather the best practice in relation to the target group. This is the question the study aims to clarify.

A highly acknowledged research perspective has therefore been put to use in the study which has entailed a close examination of what qualities, resources, possibilities and potentials are to be found in the practice examined. Qualities, resources, possibilities and potentials as they have, on the surface, came to light and as they have analytically presented themselves by the merging of the answers from the participants and the professionals and also incorporating motivation and learning theory.



The Motivating Learning Environment: the Motivational and Learning Theoretical Frame of Understanding

The Applied Motivational Theoretical Frame of Understanding

Traditional motivation psychology differentiates between internal and external motivation. External motivation consists of a "carrot and stick," that is, a form of reward and punishment which are often external in relation to the individual, that is to say, they are neither closely linked with nor relevant for the motivating activity in question. In this frame of understanding the motivating factor for the individual is knowing that he/she will "get a reward in return" for what he/she either has or has not done.

The outer conditions must support and strengthen the individual's motivation.

In contrast to this is the inner motivation: the individual is driven by the belief that that which he or she does is of value in itself, has a purpose, is interesting or exciting, often in connection with psychological states in the form of being enthusiastic, excited, absorbed in a given matter, which may, for instance, involve being in a state of flow, etc.

The concept of motivation, which we have chosen to be the basis of our study, aims to build a bridge between external and internal motivation, in which the external circumstances comprise of the lay-out, frame, culture, and social conventions, etc., of the given environment, the main point being that these elements must connect with the expectations and life prospects, etc., of the participants, thus creating coherence and meaningfulness. The outer conditions must support and strengthen the individual's motivation.

Motivation Must Not Be Created Because it Simply Is! (Parknäs)

In a more recent book entitled *Kompetence* (2011), Knud Illeris stresses a very old and important and much forgotten realization about motivation, in which he refers to Parknäs (1976) *Motivation skal ikke skabes, men findes!* (Motivation Must Not Be Created

Because it Simply Is!) That also includes motivation for learning and transformation. The assertion is thus built on a view of human nature in which individuals have this motivation for learning but because it has possibly been repressed it must be rediscovered and supported in order to develop.

This pedagogical approach corresponds with the fundamental view which we have found in the non-formal adult education programs examined: the participants are resourceful people that are basically motivated to improve their situation and so in the applied pedagogy these resources and sense of motivation are applied.

Self-Psychology: Motivational Directedness

Another theoretical perspective on this theme is Tønnesvang's self-psychology in which he operates with four motivational directedness (2002). Through these directednesses the individual navigates through his / her surroundings and seeks a response or reflection of his/her initiative.

The directedness of the self: The self represents itself thus: "See me as I am" This directedness deals with reflection and acknowledgment within which lies an ambition to make one's self significant, to claim one's own sense of individualism by presenting one's self as one is. Behind this lies the need to be understood, reflected and acknowledged "as the person I am." This motivation is aimed toward the development of a positive sense of self and self-respect.

The directedness towards meaninghorizons: "Show me who I am and what I can become." This directedness pertains to significant others and ideals. This motivation is directed toward the experience of value and purpose in life by responding to something that is bigger than oneself, which thus allows for the further development of new values and ideals as a foundation for an individual's actions and the experience that accomplishing something in the world can pay off. In this situation, the individual may need significant and constructive mentors that can help him or her on their way toward a desired path in life. This motivation is directed toward the development of values and toward the individual becoming a contributing citizen.

Directedness toward belongingness: "let me belong and be like you." This directedness pertains to community and solidarity. The individual strives toward

The directedness of the self: Motivation is directed toward the development of a positive sense of self and self-respect. (Tønnesvang)

Directedness toward meaning horizon. Motivation is directed toward the development of values and toward becoming a citizen in society. (Tønnesvang)

The directedness toward belongingness: Through this motivation a sense of self-esteem may develop and an ability to form ties and to learn how to trust in order to be an active participant in the community. (Tønnesvang)

forming ties and connections with other people and becoming a part of a “we-ness.” Through this motivation a sense of self-esteem may develop and an ability to form ties and to learn how to trust in order to be an active participant in the community.

Directedness toward competency: “Challenge me appropriately in the things which I can manage and for the things which I can almost manage” pertains to coping skills and competency development. It is a directedness toward actively intervening in and mastering the given conditions in both the social and personal world. In relation to the self, this could be called “Challenge me without suppressing me” This motivation is directed toward the development of self-reflection, self-insight and competencies (coping skills).

According to Tønnesvang’s theory, the motivations dealt with here are fundamental for all humans, regardless of their history, nationality or culture. They will always be present and may be regarded as motivations and resources that all people have and which all educational institutions and other organizations must therefore take into consideration.

The directedness toward competency: Motivation is directed toward the development of self-reflection, self-insight and competencies (coping skills). (Tønnesvang)



The Applied Frame of Understanding of the Theory of Learning.

Learning is equivalent to basic changes, changes within the totality that consists of cognition (knowledge, concepts, thoughts, notions, perceptions of one's self and the world) action and social processes, in which the individual partakes. Learning processes are thus fundamental changes within both individual (personal) and social processes.

The individual can enter situations and take up challenges in which old patterns and numerous attitudes that "take things for granted" are no longer confirmed. (Høyrup)

Our conception of the learning process is that the individual has, at a given time, developed a fixed pattern of knowledge regarding him/herself and the world, a pattern of actions and patterns of interactions with the surrounding world. This established pattern, which some call the individual's "biography" gets confirmed and consolidated for the most part in the day-to-day life of the individual. The learning process therefore begins with a denial or lack of confirmation: something must happen, the individual must enter situations and take up challenges in which the old patterns and the many attitudes of taking things "for granted" can no longer be confirmed. This type of situation can feel unpleasant and be associated with a certain amount of anxiety.

A psychological sense of security in the learning environment is crucial. (Høyrup)

Learning entails moving from that which is perceived as safe and habitual to the less secure, and mild or stronger forms of anxiety are therefore often a part of the learning process. In order to avoid anxiety from merely forming a defense mechanism and resistance to being open to new things, a psychological sense of security in the learning environment is crucial (Høyrup, Dec, 2012). As a response to this inner sense of insecurity, a psychological sense of security may be formed that can act as a type of foundation for the individual so that he or she can act openly and experimentally, allowing her/him the opportunity to test themselves and venture out into new situations. This openness is also supported by the individual's ability to reflect on things. The establishment of a space for reflection is thus crucial for learning.

The establishment of environments for reflection is essential for learning. (Høyrup)

It is essential that the individual has "practice arenas" in which new actions and ways of being can be tested. (Høyrup)

In the encounter with new situations that affects an individual's fundamental way of perceiving the world and his/her per-established knowledge, it could be said that that which is constructive is a suitable (optimal) dosage of the unfamiliar. It is important for the

learning process that the individual acts in relation to the new situation, maintaining an open and curious attitude and that he or she receives some form of feed-back on this new and experimenting form of behavior. This element of action is especially prominent when the learning is by nature a form of competency development. It is important that the individual has a "practice arenas" in which new actions and behaviors can be tested (Høyrup, Dec, 2012).

In that way learning becomes a change or transformation in an unbreakable entity of cognition, action and social processes.

Transformative Learning

In his most recent book on learning, "Transformativ Læring," (2103), Knud Illeris newly-defines deep learning with the concept of transformative learning which encompasses "all learning that involves changes in the identity of the learner" (p.67). In other words, significant and essential changes take place in relation to the individual. Transformative learning is in Illeris' view a superordinate concept in relation to competency development. A successful competency development involves "a broad, coherent and versatile mobilization of mental energy in relation to a content or problem area" (ibid, p. 169). Involvement, is according to Illeris, the reason why that which is learned is remembered and can be applied in a broad spectrum of relevant situations, just as relation in terms of practicalities is important. The last key word is reflection.

"Significant competency development (is...) an element of identity development."

In relation to the present project it is interesting that Illeris notes that "it is unlikely that there are places in the 'real' educational system that are as directedness-oriented toward fundamental identity development and transformative learning as the day folk high schools." It appears from the context that he sees this as particularly important in relation to participants with extreme fundamental educational needs, which also happens to be the target group in this case.

Illeris describes several forms of transformative learning: progressive, regressive and remedial.

Progressive transformative learning is the popular interpretation of the concept and which all profes-



The concept of transformative learning encompasses all learning that involves changes in the learner's identity. (Illeris)

A successful competency development involves a broad, coherent, and versatile mobilization of mental energy in relation to a content or problem area. (Illeris)

sionals strive toward achieving. The core elements include: "Individual experience, critical reflection, dialogue, comprehensive approach, attention to context and authentic relations," encouraging that "the learning processes (will be) meaningful, heuristic (examining), that the individual confronts positions of power and gets involved in differences, that their fantasy and imagination are used, that there has to be room to test one's limits and that teachers and others that are either leading or supporting the process are aware that they are functioning as a role model.

Illieris concludes that it is "quite a demanding constellation that has to be set up and brought into mutual interaction that is lucrative."

Regressive transformative learning can be a risk and become a result if the learner is pressured too much or experiences defeat. At first, the reaction is a withdrawal to a familiar position. In such a case, the reaction is not a "transformation to something better, to something that can be experienced and understood as development. Yet something significant has taken place, one is not the same as before, it has been necessary to withdraw and this pertains to transformative learning that is regressive in nature (ibid, p.139). During regressive learning, the type of intervention and the support of the professional become significant. Illieris states that it is not on the basis of systematic research, but on experience, that he submits that this type of learning process "in the slightly longer term can prove to be valuable, even very valuable for the individual in question, a contribution for further development that is realistically based, to a better and more sustainable understanding of significant conditions, allowing the regressive transformation to turn into something positive." Regression is a difficult but necessary "part of the process, acknowledging the fact that that which one is in the process of doing isn't good enough and must stop so that there is room to try something different and better" (ibid.,p.144). The crucial factor here is the supportive function. Typically there is a need, in the first part of the process, for personal support and then in the second part of the process constructive support in order to move on." Moving toward the third part of transformative learning, there is the process of re-establishing.

The nature of the learning is implemented in relation to the identity as in a complete and fundamental state of transformation. A typically "weak or inadequate



identity (transforms) through the doubleness of regressive and progressive transformative learning...a crisis-like state to a new and more sustainable identity development. " (...) "The re-established transformative learning (is) both of a vast nature and at the same time a process and where the connection between transformative learning and identity development appear most clearly."

According to Illeris, it is not uncommon that the learner experiences "a combination of regressive and progressive transformations in such a way that what emerges could be called a remedial transformative learning."

Illeris further points out that it is also significant to refer to collective transformative learning where "the individual transformations are intensified, partly because it is possible to talk with others about what is at play, thereby allowing for inspiration and a sense of faith that it is possible to implement the task at hand, and partially because the community can assist in establishing an increased sense of security and strength (ibid, p.145). This description covers to a large extent the purposeful meaning of community that has been ascribed to the tradition within non-formal adult education.

Resilience (resistibility).

Research in resilience contributes to the frame of understanding within learning theory used in the study. The concept resilience originally derives from the field of physics: an entity, for example, a spring or a ball, is exposed to a (massive) weight load. At first, the entity becomes deformed, gets a different form, but the ability of the entity to reestablish itself in its original form demonstrates its resilience. The more resilience, or the more resistability there is, the greater the degree to which the entity will return to its original form.

This image can be used for people and psychological processes: an individual is whole, fully equipped with its biological, physiological and psychological armory, but gets exposed to massive loads of weight (adversity). For example, the scenario could be a child who loses his/her parents or siblings, experiences in a refugee camp, divorce, bullying, etc. Some of these children/youth may develop long-term psychological scars or pain. Others, who have a good deal of resilience, get over it and develop normally despite their

It is not uncommon that the learner experiences "a combination of regressive and progressive transformations in such a way that what emerges could be called a remedial transformative learning. (Illeris)

Resilience can thus be seen as a result of the processes that do not eliminate risk or stress, but allow the individual to deal with the situation in an efficient way. (Shonkoff)

traumatic experiences. In other words, certain individuals develop well even though the odds were against them.

Resilience can thus be seen as a result of the processes that do not eliminate risk or stress, but allow the individual to deal with the situation in an efficient way (Schonkoff et al, p.116). This is referred to as "coping with adversity" (ibid, p. 117).



Research in resilience deals with, among other things, finding personality traits that include a high degree of resilience in which not only children have been given a good degree of focus, but also youth and adults.

Other parts of the research focus on the interaction between the individual and the surroundings in order to identify forms of interactions that involve high or low degrees of resilience. It is this latter form of research in the resilient-providing interaction that is of most relevance to this study. What factors in the interaction creates high resilience? The concept of protective factors plays a big role here, which factors in the interaction between the individual and his/her surroundings contributes toward creating a high degree of resilience?

Research in resilience is relevant for the non-formal adult education programs examined because a large part of the participants come from a burdened background. Over and above that, education could perhaps be inspired to set goals for the learning process that contribute in developing the resilient personality. Finally, the protective factors may deal with the conditions which one may attempt realize in the relevant learning arena.

On the basis of this background a few results based on research will be mentioned here.

Personality traits, inner resources, that are associated with high resilience include:

- The person is liked by people of a similar age group and adults.
- The dominating cognitive style is reflexive (as opposed to impulsive).
- The individual has an inner locus of control (as opposed to lack of self-control) that includes the belief that the individual can influence his/her sur-

-
- roundings in a positive way).
 - The individual has a command of flexible coping strategies in order to deal with adversity/accidents.
 - The self-image the individual has includes a sense of self-esteem.
 - Included in this context is a strong sense of independence (autonomy) combined with an ability to ask for help when it is needed.

With regard to protective factors in interaction, "experiences that open up toward new possibilities" are emphasized. (Shonkoff)

With regard to protective factors in interaction, "experiences that open up toward new possibilities" are emphasized (Ibid, 673). This is based on the fact that the main reason why psychopathologies which the individual has developed through his/her life, continues, is because the burdened environment in which he or she lives continues to cling, so to speak, to the individual.

It is not so much a question of whether or not the burdened environment remains unchanged, although with time this may be the case, but rather that the negative environment, for various reasons, predisposes later symptoms of stress and accidents. To use this citation:

Protective factors: an experience of success, acknowledgment from others and a sense of being able to contribute something. (Shokoff)

Accordingly, one of the potentially important features fostering resilience are happenings that end damaging experiences and open up new opportunities and change of environments. (Ibid p. 673).

What is being referred to here is known as "turning points of experience." Can non-formal adult education programs comprise such a "turning points experience" that effectively hinders the continuation of the earlier experienced tribulations/accidents?

In the portrayal of whether or not relations/interactions are protective in nature, the experience of success, acknowledgment from others and feelings of accomplishment are mentioned. They are significant because they form a sense of self-esteem and self-confidence. To this may be added the experience of close and confidential relationships with others.

It is characteristic for pedagogical undertakings and learning processes that are based on resilience-thinking and research, that the point of departure is not based on "deficit" thinking, that is to say, that which



**It is not possible for us to perceive ourselves as whole human beings if we do not gain the appreciation we need from others in the social world.
(Honneth)**



the individual lacks in his/her competency pattern. Rather, the point of departure is based on the individual's strengths. The concept of and research in resilience are the most essential foundations, theoretically and empirically, for this thinking in learning.

Appreciation

In this flow of resources that is based on resilience thinking, there is an obvious connection to Honneth (2003) who, over a long period of time, worked with appreciation as a fundamental motivation for humans. According to Honneth, it is necessary for all people to gain acknowledgment in order to perceive him/herself as a successful individual. It is not possible for us to perceive ourselves as whole human beings if we do not gain the acknowledgment we need from others in the social world.

The pedagogy of acknowledgment or appreciation deals with how we constantly influence one another and form ourselves and one another through the relationships we enter into. Acknowledgment gives us a sense of self-esteem and identity because it means that we are being seen, heard and understood. Acknowledgment is not merely a matter of giving someone praise or agreeing with them. Acknowledgment involves allowing the other person the possibility to have his/her own opinions, and respecting them. The appreciative or acknowledging relation entails being genuinely curious as to the other party's intention in their social interaction. It is in contrast to interpreting the actions and intentions of the other by "putting them into specific boxes" that one has beforehand. With openness we must try to identify with and understand the background experience of the other (Bae, 1999).

The appreciative or acknowledging relationship is based on equality. Thus, a relationship where one party perceives him or herself as being more or less worthy than the other cannot be considered acknowledging. The acknowledging relationship is an ideal, the realization of which ought to be striven for. The acknowledging relationship is worthy in itself because it involves experiencing certain qualities in the social relationship, as for example, trust, independence, tolerance and brotherly respect. Acknowledgment is thus practiced through such dimensions as understanding, empathy, openness, mutual acknowledgment and self-reflection.

Lifelong Learning and recognition of prior learning

In continuation of this the discourse of lifelong learning and recognition of prior learning is relevant.

Prior learning is the all-encompassing expression used in Denmark when combining and referring to all the competences a person may possess but, in more practical terms, it is used with reference to the competences that are acquired outside of the educational system.

Lifelong learning and the thinking behind prior learning in many ways correlates nicely with the way in which learning in non-formal adult education has been and is perceived, where there has been an inherent tendency to focus more on the outcome and actual significance for the learner than on the formal curriculum, examination requirements and certificates.

Prior learning is essential not least in relation to the target group in question and the type of non-formal adult education program that is central to this study.

It puts the focus on competencies that are acquired other places than in the formal educational system as valuable resources which is especially of significance for adults who have a short-term education. Simultaneously, the approach entailing prior learning involves an appreciative approach/a resource flow to the learning efforts in a very concrete way, which is why it is valuable in relation to finding and developing motivation for learning and participation.

According to Knud Illeris, the reason why the concept of competence has become so popular is due to the fact that it, to a much greater extent than, for example, knowledge, qualifications and background, focuses primarily on what is needed to deal with both every day and professional life in today's modern society. Competence is the potential to act purposefully in not only familiar but also in new and unpredictable situations.

In relation to the line of thought associated with competence a distinction is made between formal, non-formal and informal learning which also plays an important role for the analysis of the non-formal adult education program examined.



The notion of competency focuses on what is needed in order to handle both everyday life and life at the work place in today's modern society. (Illeris)

In reference to formal learning, the learning situation is organized and completed with the purpose of ensuring that the participants meet the specific professional requirements within a certain line of work or field, in other words, one has "to complete something." For example it could be a language course at the higher preparatory examination. Formal learning often includes the following elements: students, attaining an education and tests/exams.

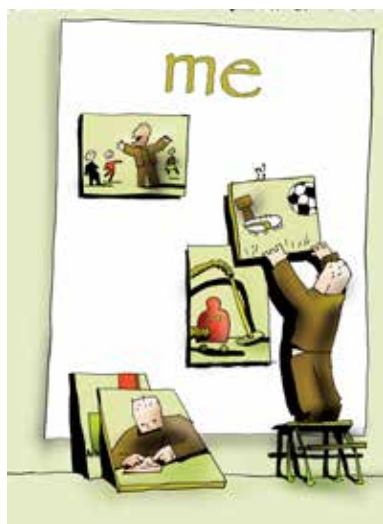
Similarly, with reference to non-formal learning, the purpose of the learning situations that are prepared is to ensure that the participants learn about something, but a specific professional competency goal is not predefined. A number of situations are set up that provide the participant with experience and inspire self-reflection. The learning outcome differs from participant to participant in the form of its nature, content, and/or level. Non-formal adult education programs are for the most part set up that way and that also goes for the programs examined in this study.

Both formal and non-formal learning are known as intended learning. However, informal learning pertains to learning situations in which learning in and of itself is not the main purpose. Learning becomes a by-product, so to speak, of situations and activities that were planned for a different purpose, for example, everyday life with family/circle of friends and participation in social, organizational and professional activities.

Informal learning can be included in non-formal learning situations through prior learning clarification and documentation. Non-formal and informal learning can be "translated" into formal competence through validation of prior learning.

The general opinion is that the development of society in connection with today's current globalization means that we cannot complete our education once and for all in our youth. We must learn throughout life if the individual and society as a whole is to thrive, and so lifelong-learning is a necessity.

At the same time, the thinking behind lifelong-learning has focused on the fact that we not only learn at established educational institutions but rather in all the various situations we encounter in life: in our professional lives, in our family life and while participating volunteer and interest-based activities and events



(life-wide learning). Moreover, attention has shifted from teaching and input in organized teaching situations to the direction of learning, learning outcome and competency development, in which competence may be defined as the ability and willingness to use knowledge and qualifications in a practical sense (Aagaard and Dahler, 2010).

Teaching Differentiation

Teaching differentiation appears as a particularly crucial concept in the analysis of the six cases. The main idea behind teaching differentiation is that the learners who have been assembled to learn differ from one another in different and various dimensions and that this difference comprises the actual basis for any dialectical considerations and the preparations for the teaching. Participants in the non-formal adult education program differed, for example, with regard to their qualifications, their motivation for learning, the languages they could speak, their cultural backgrounds, etc., but they were also different with regard to their preferred method of learning, how much time they needed, etc. Teaching differentiation strives to discover these acknowledged and established differences but without necessarily developing into an individualized, one-on-one-based teaching for each participant.

There is very little that has been done in the form of theory or research with regard to this concept. The following section is based closely on the way in which the concept is used by the Evaluating Institute EVA's report on teaching evaluation and differentiation in elementary school in that it very precisely defines teaching differentiation that was observed during the course of the non-formal adult education program that was examined. (The Danish Evaluation Institute, 2011)

EVA identifies five criteria that have been determined must be fulfilled in order to be qualified as differential teaching. The five criteria point toward a differentiated teaching:

- Remains pro-active toward a heterogeneous group of students
- Is centered on the student's learning.
- Is based on analysis and evaluation.
- Involves various and diversified approaches to learning.
- Requires a holistic approach to learning.



Great emphasis is ascribed to defining clear goals for learning and intermediate goals and that it is ensured that the learner understands and accepts these goals. (EVA)

The point of departure in both cases is to have a good "social and professional environment. (Nordahl)

The non-formal adult education program works toward a shared main goal in strengthening the participants' prospects in society, but often an entirely individual process is employed in terms of professional and personal goals.

EVA elaborates further in the report on how the concept is to be understood and this elaboration also makes sense in relation to the non-formal adult education program examined. Among other things, great emphasis is ascribed to defining clear goals for learning and intermediate goals and that it is ensured that the learner understands and accepts these goals. Finally, continuous and individualized feedback plays an important role. Differentiation consists of a continuous process between the learner and the professional.

There are, however, a few exceptions and nuances worth noting.

EVA refers to Thomas Nordahl who points out that differentiation is not equivalent to individualization.

Nordahl underscores that there is a need to see teaching differentiation from a broader perspective and in relation to other factors that are connected to the student's learning outcome. The aim of teaching differentiation is to a large degree to promote a good social and professional learning environment. The most important thing is that the teacher, prior to choosing methods and preparing the instruction, does through pedagogical analytical work. (Nordahl i Egelund (edited.) 2010, p. 95-96)

This plays a prominent role to a large extent for the adult education program analyzed, but in contrast to elementary school where specific scholarly goals are maintained, the non-formal adult education program works toward a shared main goal in strengthening the participants' prospects in society, but often an entirely individual process is employed in terms of professional and personal goals. For one participant it may be a matter of overcoming a stress condition while for another it may be a matter of gaining certain qualifications in order to get into a certain field of education. But the point of departure in both cases is to have a good "social and professional environment."

In connection with this it would seem that the pedagogical, relational and counseling competences of the professionals are the most crucial competences in differentiating the efforts of the non-formal adult education programs examined, in which the EVA

report suggests that the teacher's knowledge of the subject as well as their professional strengths are the decisive competences in relation to teaching differentiation.

Teaching occurs through the subjects as opposed to in the subjects in question, still plays a prominent role.

These differences fit logically in with the difference between formal and non-formal learning and further suggest where the specific potential of non-formal adult education learning programs in relation to finding and developing learning motivation lies and illustrates that the classical non-formal adult educational position in which teaching occurs through the subjects as opposed to in the subjects in question, still plays a prominent role.

The Zone of Proximal Development

Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) pinpoints a significant element in teaching differentiation and in the pedagogical preparation of the "hand-holding" process. The point of departure for this specifically adapted approach is that the participants are to be challenged in terms of "where they are right now."

Development and success in relation to new learning therefore presupposes that the professionals are capable of analyzing or "diagnosing" the learner's status and can provide them with suitable challenges that overlap into the next development phase.

The next development phase for each individual depends on what possibilities there are in the social collaborative situation: in concrete terms, in the interaction with other participants and professionals. That which the individual can accomplish today in a collaborative situation she or he will be able to accomplish independently tomorrow, is the reasoning behind Vygotsky's theory (1934/1974).





The Motivating Learning Environment, the Empirical Result of the Study

In this chapter the result of the study is presented which has been reached by merging the answers from the participants and professionals and analytically observing the image that on the surface merges through motivation and learning theoretical frames of understanding. In the matrix below generalized answers from professionals and participants are included regarding crucial factors in the learning environment.

Matrix

<p>The Participants' Impact</p> <p>The Professionals' Impact</p>	<p>The Welcome/ The Initial Encounter</p> <p><i>"I may be who I am."</i></p>	<p>Development/ Learning</p> <p><i>"This is a new way of learning."</i></p>	<p>A New Perspective</p> <p><i>"We practice seeing ourselves in the world."</i></p>
<p>The Appreciative Approach</p> <p><i>"We look for resources."</i></p>	<p>Inclusiveness</p>	<p>Competency Development</p>	<p>Potentials</p>
<p>Teaching Differentiation</p> <p><i>"We create challenges that are tailor-made for each individual student."</i></p>	<p>Differences and Commonalities</p>	<p>The Zone of Proximal Development</p>	<p>Insight and Outlook</p>

Reading Instructions

The inscription in the top horizontal blue row of the matrix indicates what the interviewed participants valued the most when asked about the specific ability of non-formal adult education to motivate them to take part in not only the program in question but also in relation to the process that followed. In order to better illustrate them, the concepts have been supplemented by what were typical statements made by the participants.

The red margin to the left indicates what the interviewed professionals (teachers, counselors, principals) emphasized as being crucial to the participant's outcome in terms of their motivation to learn and participation in each individual case. The various concepts have once again been supplemented with typical statements made by the participants.

Thus, the matrix displays both a structure and internal coherence in the study's data. The structure constitutes the participant's experiences, that which they themselves emphasize as being particularly significant, as well as the approach by the professionals, that which they emphasize as being crucial for the development of motivation for participating in learning.

Thus, the matrix displays both a structure and internal coherence in the study's data. The structure constitutes the participant's experiences, that which they themselves emphasize as being particularly significant, as well as the approach by the professionals, that which they emphasize as being crucial for the development of motivation for participating in learning.

If each individual cell of the matrix is examined, then what emerges and may be discerned is the study's suggestion of possible headings that may be used with regard to how these approaches may be contextually implemented as specific traits of the motivating learning environment. The matrix thereby frames the results of the study which will be examined more in depth in the following chapter.

But first the top horizontal row followed by the left column, that is, the elements that constitute the matrix and that refer to what the participants and the professionals, respectively, emphasize as specifically important in terms of motivation for learning and participation will be analyzed:

- The participants' impact in regard to significant experiences, welcome/initial encounter.
- The professional's impact with regard to a critical approach, the appreciation approach and teaching differentiation.

Next, the cross fields that contain the study's suggestion of how the accessions are implemented will be examined:

- In relation to the appreciative approach, inclusiveness, competency development and potential.
- In relation to teaching differentiation, differences and commonalities, the zone of proximal development and transformative learning.

The Participant Group

As basic background information we will now take a closer look at the participant group in the non-formal adult education program that was examined.

As mentioned before, the study dealt with adults who have a short-term education and a good portion of the people in the target group had had bad experiences at school. During the course of their time at school, they had experienced defeats that had had consequences for them later on in terms of having damaged their sense of self-esteem. In fact, many of them hate anything that has to do with school. Many have never had a job or any form of education. It is not uncommon for them to have suffered physical or psychological damage. Some suffer traumas that were very violent from earlier in their lives and their relationship with the job market has been minimal.

This group of people live on the margin of our society, they risk being marginalized or ostracized by the educational system and the job market, their means of support are under constant threat and they are, to a large extent, excluded from having access to the democratic processes of society.

At the same time, the group is very heterogeneous and representative of various different backgrounds.

Below are some statements that illustrate the above mentioned traits:

The participants:

I have never had a job. I have been depressed and had many problems. Many of us come from places where there has been war so it is very difficult for us to be at places where there is a lot of pressure put on us and we also have families we have to support.

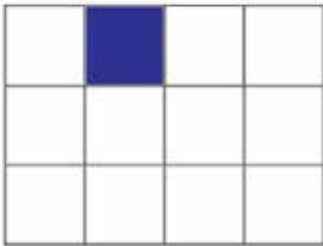
The Professionals:

Some suffer from a bad back, others have depres-



**I have been depressed and had many problems.
(participant)**

Many start out with having low self-esteem and a great number have been bullied which means that they had bad schooling and is most probably the reason why they never gained a significant foothold in the educational system.
(teacher/guidance counselor)



The job of the professional personnel is thereby to maintain a fine-drawn balance between both respecting the individual for who she/he is by providing a sense of safety and acknowledgment but also at the same time to help the individual in “shouldering” the conflict while continuing to support him/her and challenging him/her to overcome the chasm.

sions. Some have illnesses and are mentally sick. Many have been isolated for many years. Many start out with having low self-esteem and a great number have been bullied which means that they had bad schooling and is most probably the reason why they never gained a significant foothold in the educational system.

In connection with this it is important to focus on the fact that, as is also salient in the in the non-formal adult education program in question, this group is full of resources. Moreover, in many cases the individuals in question display a large amount of independence and don't like to be forced into a specific agenda, they are usually interested in and curious about having social contacts.

The Welcome/Initial Encounter

The “welcome” should not be perceived as something that is solely reserved for the first phase of the process. The “welcome” or “initial encounter” is, so to speak, something that happens everyday, and lasts the entire period, from the beginning of the process to its finish. It is crucial to first and foremost perceive the newcomer as a resource for the group and not merely as a person who must be introduced and socialized into the dominant mind-frame and patterns of the group, in other words, he or she should not just learn to accommodate the standards in question.

The job of the professional personnel is thereby to maintain a fine-drawn balance between both respecting the individual for who she/he is by providing a sense of safety and acknowledgment or appreciation but also at the same time to help the individual in “shouldering” the conflict while continuing to support him/her and challenging him/her to overcome the chasm.

In relation to the specific target groups of the programs examined, the first meeting or encounter under the motto: “I may be the person I am” is of particularly significant importance yet at the same time somewhat paradoxical from a learning perspective. The motivation for learning is often based on some form of disharmony, a tension, a chasm between that which the individual brings or has in his/her “baggage” of life experiences (“biography”) and the particular assignment, requirements or challenges the individual is faced with. The motivation for learning is embedded in the notion “habits do not work.” When the individual continues to do things he/she is used to doing the

results are usually dissatisfying for him/her. Through learning, it is possible for the individual to learn to overcome the chasm, thus reducing tension and increasing his/her sense of being in harmony.

The job of the professional personnel is thereby to maintain a fine-drawn balance between both respecting the individual for who she/he is by providing a sense of safety and acknowledgment but also at the same time to help the individual in "shouldering" the conflict while continuing to support him/her and challenging him/her to overcome the chasm. So, in a way, at least in the long run, it is not all right for the person to remain who he/she is! And herein lies the essence of the re-establishing transformative learning process.

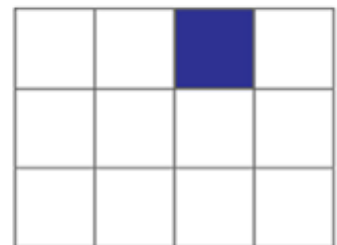
In the empirical material we see a number of examples of how the environments of non-formal adult education face these (aforementioned) motivational factors. In the first meeting between the participant and the process it is particularly the first motivational directedness and the way in which the school relates to it that is of significance. The empirical material shows that the participants have a basic experience of being allowed "to be who I am." furthermore, resilience theory and research sheds light on the "meeting." The non-formal adult education program and "meeting" has the possibility of becoming a turning point experience, in other words, a significant break with the former burdened environment that continued to cling to the individual and influence his/her path in life.

Development/Learning

The most striking feature of the participants' experience of their development was expressed thus: "*This is an entirely different way of learning.*" We interpret this observation that their basis of comparison is the "scholastic way of learning," that is, the facilitating, scheduled and formalized way of learning as they have experienced it at school.

What exactly characterizes the type of learning the participants encounter in the adult education program examined? First and foremost a wide range of diversity found in the various forms of learning that the participants encounter. The forms of learning that are used are numerous and vary in many ways. Emphasis is placed on learning through experience (practical learning), there is a sense of flexibility in the learning

**I may be the person I am.
(participant)**



**This is a completely different
way of learning.
(participant)**

environment and there is focus on action and activity on the part of the participants during the learning process. Furthermore, teaching and guidance are integrated. And the teachers' point of departure is based on the participants' status in life:

"--because the participants still need to get access to certain things in themselves and build themselves up and that is exactly what we do here, catching them at the very point where they have lost themselves."

The pedagogy tends to focus on the things which the individual is capable of, on where their strengths and resources lie and those pre-existing resources constitute thereby the point of departure.

A decisive feature in pedagogy is that it is not based on a "deficit" model, in other words, a way of thinking that emphasizes the things which are lacking in an individual or uses those deficits as its point of departure. On the contrary, the pedagogy in the six non-formal adult education programs focus on the things which the individual is capable of, on where their strengths and resources lie and those pre-existing resources constitute thereby the point of departure. This pedagogy, that defeats the "deficit" model, is first and foremost both empirically and theoretically supported by resilience research and theory that stresses teaching that is based on the individual's strengths.

The broad spectrum of forms of learning which the participants encounter entails a realization of and is based on the principal of learning that encompasses "a suitable amount of unfamiliar entities" These unfamiliar entities are partially characterized by theoretical material from a more facilitating type of learning, and partially characterized by new and different experiences that may help to invalidate earlier patterns of experiences and pre-established assumptions that are taken for granted. The concrete experiences and possibilities in acting in accordance with them are a significant element in competency development

In the non-formal adult education program examined non-formal learning is the dominant type and informal learning is included as a resource in connection with guidance and clarification of prior learning. Also included to a varying degree is a more formalized type of learning as when, for example, preparing for a specific education or in the form of preparatory adult education (FVU) just as bridges are built to a formal education (among others SOSU, which is a social and health worker education).



A specific challenge which schools of non-formal adult education face is the ability to integrate the three forms of learning on a continuous basis so that the learning motivation of each individual is supported and developed in the best possible way.

In sum, with regard to this learning strategy, there is a tendency for it to be based on the participants prior learning, attempting to develop the entire individual and is realized through the application of a wide spectrum of learning strategies attempting to be integrated and balanced with aspects of formal, non-formal and informal learning. The learning environment includes both the "school" and the society outside to which the participants are exposed and where they gain experiences that they can reflect upon in the learning environment of the school.

The realization that comes with these principals in terms of learning provides the participants with a sense of an entirely new way of learning.

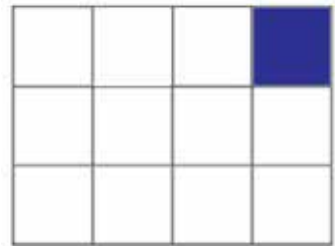
A New Perspective

Obtaining a new perspective is crucial for processes of development. Also educational processes. The new perspective deals with the fact that although the primary learning environment is the non-formal adult education program, the borders of the surrounding society are, in connection with the work done in non-formal adult education, permeable: the participants also have to look beyond this learning environment and connect themselves and their identity with their society which they return to now strengthened.

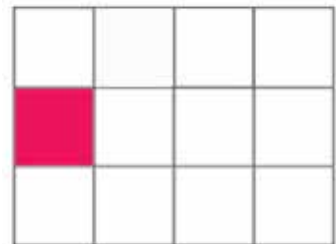
This new element of perspective can also be seen as an implementation of the directedness of motivation: "Show me what I can become." The examples not only show that the general education programs make contact and collaborate with external players and institutions but also that the participants, upon leaving the "school" don't necessarily need to be left to their own devices. Having established a network, it is possible to take it with you and cultivate it and in some cases it is possible to arrange follow-ups and support-groups after the program.

The Appreciative Approach

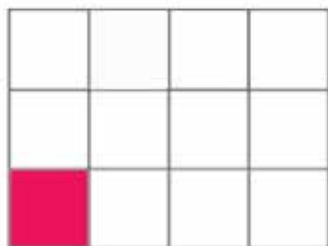
The approach in terms of learning in the observed cases is not the traditional approach used in education where the focus is typically placed on the things which



We are trained to perceive ourselves in the world. (participant)



**We're looking for resources.
(teacher/guidance counselor)**



**We create challenges tailor-
made to fit the needs of the
individual.
(teacher/guidance counselor)**

the individual lacks. Quite the contrary, the cases are based on the existing prior learning which is central to the teachers' approach based on "looking for resources." This will be referred to as the "appreciative approach" with reference to Honneth. Also resilience research underpins the importance of this approach to learning by emphasizing features in social relations that create resilience: the experience of close and confidential relations, the experience of success, receiving acknowledgment from others, the sense of being able to contribute something to others, relational characteristics that create a sense of self-esteem and self-confidence in the individual. All of these types of relations are seen to a large extent in the empirical analysis.

Teaching Differentiation

Teaching differentiation is in direct contrast to the traditional form of "class instruction" where all the students receive the same assignments and are examined in the same way, etc. In teaching differentiation the offered education to the individual is adjusted according to his/her needs and prerequisites, while at the same time being rooted in the community.

According to the empirical analysis, a thorough learning differentiation is practiced in the observed cases. The point of departure in the teaching is based on where the participants find themselves in life and the broad scope of learning processes that are applied which assure that a participant does not become "fixed" in a teaching or learning process that does not suit them.

Challenges and assignments are taught in a way so that the learner can cash-in small and big successes, both by scholastically being able to master new subjects such as: Danish, math, IT or by making signs for the school cafe, balancing the cash register or writing an article for the school newspaper on the internet, but also in relation to broader social and personal competences certain milestones are set, as for example: daring to speak about one's self in front of a group, being able to support and show compassion toward the other participants or daring to call a company. The concrete examples illustrate that teaching differentiation can take place in a community setting.

In the process the work is focused on setting concrete goals and subsidiary goals individually and emphasis

is placed more or less on formalized plans for the individual. Concrete demands from the Employment Center also helps define goals and plans.

Inclusiveness

As is evident in the matrix, we have designated the combination of both the teachers' and participants' perspectives at the meeting and the appreciative approach respectively as the notion of inclusiveness.

	Blue		
Red	Purple		

Inclusiveness is the opposite of indifference and more than mere tolerance. Inclusiveness entails that you can be present with your own specific individuality and your specific background and that we take an interest in you, guide and support you in the learning process within the frame of the learning environments that we have prepared for you.

Inclusiveness is a quality in the social system: there are no social processes that "run astray" in the form of expulsion from the social system. In the interview material there is nothing to suggest elimination or ostracization in the programs.

Examples of inclusion from the empirical material are referred to below:

The Professionals:

There is plenty of room for differences, but you could say that we perceive that as being one of our strengths and we can also deliver on it.

The students are included in all their differences, there is room for everybody.

There's a huge acceptance of the fact that we are all in the same boat even though we are different and have different life stories.

Most emphasize the fact that they want to have the freedom to be themselves, just the way they are, that that's what's most important to them.

And it is permissible to stand in the innermost part of the room with your back turned and we also have a sofa. Sometimes someone decides to take a nap and they are allowed to do that. There's a great understanding for the fact that you may not always feel like talking to anyone. We also have a rule saying that in the innermost part of the room you can talk and play

**There's a huge acceptance of the fact that we are all in the same boat even though we are different and have different life stories.
(teacher/guidance counselor)**

music but if there is just one person who needs a rest then things have to quiet down. We also have people with stress and they can't stand noise, so there has to be the possibility for peace and calm.

Many have had bad experiences in the past and the fact that you suddenly realize that you're being accepted and that you can be included in a social context and actually function gives you not only a sense of self-confidence but also the courage to get out there again whether it be to pursue an education or another job or a course or whatever it is you want to start on.

You are taken very seriously, you're not just another number, you are seen for the individual you are, not just someone they have to check up on, give money to and then leave you to your own devices. You are given the chance to make choices in your dialogue with them. (participant).

Participants:

You are taken very seriously, you're not just another number, you are seen for the individual you are, not just someone they have to check up on, give money to and then leave you to your own devices. You are given the chance to make choices in your dialogue with them.

We have to treat one another with respect and think about the fact that we are different people and we each have our own way of acting and thinking.

The place has given me the chance to be myself and find out who I am so that I won't be scared of what comes after this.

And she (the teacher) really has a clear understanding that people (the participants) differ greatly and that we think differently which she accepts and without expecting us to think in any specific way.

We see the residual effects in the form of acknowledgment (being allowed to be one's self), self-confidence, courage and self-reflection (finding out who one is) and a reduction in anxiety.

In terms of the relation between the professionals and the participants we thus see an expression for understanding, empathy, acceptance and respect for the identity of the other and we also see the residual effects thereof in the form of acknowledgment (being allowed to be one's self), self-confidence, courage and self-reflection (finding out who one is) and a reduction in anxiety.

Inclusiveness is a fundamental element in the six non-formal adult education programs. There is room for difference, difference is respected and difference comprises a resource for development and collective transformative learning.

Competence Development

The combination of development/learning through the appreciative approach we refer to as competence development. The competence development of the participants is in its totality seen as a consequence of all the activities and thereby also a consequence of the activities described in the other boxes, but it is in this box that we most clearly experience the specific approach to competence development that has been practiced in the cases examined.



Pedagogy is based on an individual's prior learning

- That which the individual already has acquired in the way of competences through education and life experiences.
- And a further development of these.

A practical formulation of the learning principal that is based on existing resources on the part of the participants is formulated by the professionals in this way:

Our foremost responsibility is to give the participants the freedom to take responsibility for their own lives because we are building on their resources and not on their flaws. We are building from the bottom up instead of administering from above.

Practical learning entails that both the teacher and participants through their actions and reflections on their experiences and wishes continue to produce pictures, stories and information that, in the initial phase of the learning process, challenge that which is already present in the participants. A recognition of the "internal," an exposure of the sides of the individual self is the first "budding" that takes place and that challenges that which is taken for granted and forms shared experiences. The one condition which must be present for this openness and exposure in the learning environment to exist is a safe social learning environment. In this context dialogue in the teaching is fundamental. The professionals say:

They dare to say things which they haven't dared to say to others and they understand one another in a different way and that is something some of them may find difficult because then you have to confront reality...

Our foremost responsibility is to give the participants the freedom to take responsibility for their own lives because we are building on their resources and not on their flaws. We are building from the bottom up instead of administering from above. (teacher/ guidance counselor)

So always this equal dialogue, also for one another, which goes both ways between teacher and participant.

Motivational directedness, coping, hints that challenges and actions are fundamental in the learning process. Coping is not learned though gaining knowledge alone. Action and practice are necessary. Coping also proposes actions and practice in authentic environments, "realities outside of the school." That is why teaching must be realized there. If it is a matter of social competences that need to be developed, action and experience in the surrounding environment is of importance.

The professionals:

You are trying to help them (the participants) build a scholastic foundation and if they then try it in practical terms and later get out and try it in the real world, that, I think, can only be a good thing.

Many of our activities do not take place here at home base but various places in the outside world so you have to interact with other citizens in society.

We are also a little bit different from other places, in that we don't have any steady companies but rather a large company-network. What we do is we talk with people (the course participants) about what they want and then we call the company and ask them if they would be willing to take on a trainee and we've had a lot of good experiences with that and then when it's all in place we follow up every four weeks, checking up on it all the way through and so that's how people (the course participants) manage to enter the labor market.

Learning to work in a shop (producing one's own jewelry, ceramics, etc.) and attend to customers, keeping things tidy, etc., they will get closer to the job market and gain a new perspective.

The case workers in the municipality often say that they can see a huge difference in these people. It's interesting for us to hear they have experienced that the women improve their Danish considerably and I also think that has to do with the fact that they (the course participants) are a part of society and aren't just learning Danish in a classroom situation. Now they



have to go out and talk with other people in the fitness center about how you behave there and who they happen to meet.

In pedagogy it is also important that the body is included in the process. The learning is not primarily cognitive, but rather a holistic approach: "whole person learning" this kind of learning means the development of the whole person.

There is a belief that physical activity can improve people, that they, through play, movement and physical training can get into a development that will get them from A to B and that is both in terms of education and work and of course also includes an improved quality of life.

In creative/practical activities there is also talk of "whole person learning." Creativity is an important aspect for motivation and learning and creativity is also included as a central element in the potential which makes up the core in the notion of competency. As such, creativity is both an aim in itself but also acts as a facilitating and developing element for the learning processes. Creativity is a highly prioritized element in a large in much of the work done in general education and research suggests that creativity can be stimulated under pressure and in fixed structures as well as in flexible and adaptable structures.

Below are some statements made by the professionals:

It always starts with something artistic that you can slowly expand on.

I have noticed that working with a piece of clay helps me to get grounded and gives me access to other feelings than when I am painting because working with clay is so much more organic.

Clay is wonderful, it tells a lot about what kind of person you are, about your patience and whether you have a fragile psyche. In that way, I can tell, through the material being used, how the participants feel even though they may not express it directly.

What is so fascinating here is that the dialogue between the physical and the creative expression allows us to maintain our focus of attention there so that we

As such, creativity is both an aim in itself but also acts as a facilitating and developing element for the learning processes.

Competency is the potential to act purposefully in not only familiar but also in new and unpredictable situations. (Illeris)

not only have the possibility to express ourselves but also have something to talk about.

Competency is the potential to act in situations that are not merely limited to being familiar or characterized by routines but include situations that are characterized by being new, surprising, perhaps vague, conflicting and difficult to interpret. Skills, qualifications and opinions are fundamental elements in this area of potential (Illeris, 201, p.40). But other elements enter into it as well: creativity, empathy, intuition, fantasy, ability to coordinate, flexibility, and a critical approach (ibid, p.50). In that way the learning process revolves around the development of the whole individual, focusing specifically on taking action and problem-solving, from which derives the name of the concept "whole person learning." Illeris mentions that the fundamental elements in a learning process that can produce such a versatile form of development is: Engagement, practical-oriented reflection.

With this formula work in non-formal adult education may be characterized to a large extent as competence development: commitment stands for motivation that is the actual point of departure for the learning process in the research done here. Practical relations are realized by creating a framework in which the students gain experiences which they then share with one another through a wide range of activities. This form of practical or experienced-based learning is supplemented with and integrated into a more formal, scholastic-based learning. And finally, the work done in non-formal adult education creates a number of constructive spaces for reflection, as for example, looking at one's own experiences, being open to others' experiences and attempting to integrate new and earlier experiences.

Potential

The combination of new perspectives and appreciative approaches is something we call potential. Potential should be seen in continuation of the box "Competency Development," where competence is fundamentally defined as a potential to take action, encounter challenges and solve problems in a changing world. This potential is especially relevant in relation to "seeing yourself out in the world."

In the cases observed, there are some good examples of how this focus on potential exists amongst the professionals in the non-formal adult education program:



What you come away with here is an element that is both clarifying and a form of guidance. You know what you want or at least have a sense of what would be good for you.

Many of our activities don't take place at the home-base but rather on the outside of it so you have to go out and interrelate with other citizens in society.

You get a network here that you can take with you afterwards, you make friends here and become a part of a network.

The labor market policy emphasizes evaluating whether the program has any effect in relation to the ordinary job market. All our projects have an impact in regard to the ordinary job market, it's just not the final product. For us (principals/teachers) the final product is, in effect, our ability to help the participants along in getting to the next step as for example, an interem, activation, treatment, wage subsidy, education or ordinary work.

In terms of guidance, we come out every four weeks to follow up on the program and then it's a matter of finding out what the plan is: is it a test job, will it develop into a flex job (this is a phenomenon specific for Denmark in which the salary for the unemployed subject is subsidized by the government), pension, where exactly is it going?

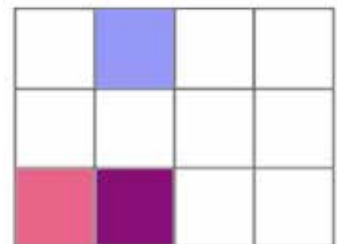
The examples here can also be seen as a partial implementation of the motivational directedness: "Show me what I can become." The examples show that in the work done in non-formal adult education, contacts and collaborations with institutions, organizations are made outside of school and that work is done to build up a network that the participants can use after the program.

Differences and Community

We call the combination of the perspectives, the "welcome" and the teaching differentiation, differences and community.

Differences are closely linked to the notion of inclusiveness: it is the differences that are included. But difference is something more, it is seen as a presupposition and strength in the learning community which the program comprises. The differences are on the one

For us the final product is, in effect, our ability to help the participants along in getting to the next step as for example, an interem, activation, treatment, wage subsidy, education or ordinary work. (teacher/guidance counselor)



hand a condition from which teaching takes its point of departure in the form of teaching differentiation. Yet, on the other hand, the differences comprise the very core in learning experience where there are differences in each individual's life-experiences through which the participants both challenge one another in the experience-based learning that is represented but also by sharing their knowledge and experiences. Through Illeris's method (2003) the community can comprise a frame for collective transformative learning. The participants learn from one another as well as together with the teacher/counselor in the experience-based learning process.

**We have different nationalities and we don't know one another but we really enjoy one another's' company, we talk and give each other advice.
(participant)**

Participants:

It is a wonderful place. We have different nationalities and we don't know one another but we really enjoy one another's' company, we talk and give each other advice. If someone's made a mistake or talked badly about someone else we try to find a solution without arguing.

You feel as though you are welcome, both by the ones you are grouped with but also by the teachers. You are not ostracized or anything like that.

Professionals:

They experience that it is liberating to be in a community where the others are also a little bit different or odd in some way, just as they have often felt normally, so this way they have a shared community in regard to their psychological vulnerabilities and that of making or producing things.

**They experience that it is liberating to be in a community where the others are also a little bit different or odd in some way, just as they have often felt so this helps them begin to feel normal.
(teacher/guidance counselor)**

In terms of motivational support, work is done in this frame very concretely with reference to the directedness toward belongingness, "Let me belong here and be like you." In the example below it is the sense of inclusiveness, of belonging, that is the main focus and not so much, "to be like you."

I could feel it right away; you are greeted and included in the community and not left out just because you are new.

She (the teacher) creates a calmness and sense of inclusiveness and then provides therapeutic input to the activities we partake in. We can ask her questions at all times, not just when we are practicing drawing but also when we are doing other things.

Of course, there are a few things that we have to get done but it is permitted to do other things or if you suddenly start talking about something else the teacher picks it up right away.

Learning differentiation is to a large extent something that which the teachers aim to use.

The thing that works is the fact that you get the possibility to develop along with everything that you bring to the table from your past at a pace that you can handle.

I'm always trying to get a sense of whether I can push them a little further. Some of them I can say it to directly and they're fine with that. So in that way I differentiate the way I teach an awful lot and there's room to do that because there's the peace and calm and needed.

Things tend to happen in your own pace and each individual is followed in terms of what they need and it is followed up because some need things like schedules and others don't.

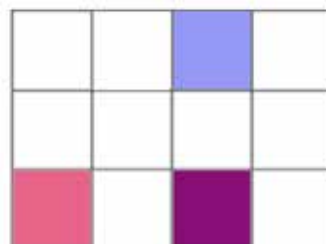
The only thing that occurs collectively is the teaching that takes place in class and the point of departure is to a great extent the citizens (course participants) that are there at that moment because we have some teachers that can easily initiate something if there is a wish among the participants to do so, if there is something that they specifically want to know about then it will be taken up. This takes place in classes, whereas one-on-one meetings, coaching and corporate trainee positions are on an individual basis.

The Zone of Proximal Development

When we combine teacher and participant perspectives on the respective developmental/learning and the teaching differentiation then we hit the area that we have referred to as the zone of proximal development (with reference to Vygotsky 1934/1974).

When the point of departure is the individual's resources and real competencies and the six non-formal adult education programs are designed to meet the educational needs of the people right then and there in a type of instruction designed to take those aspects

The thing that works is the fact that you get the possibility to develop along with everything that you bring to the table from your past at a pace that you can handle. (participant)



into consideration, the teaching will to a large extent include an expansion/broadening of the individual's potentials (competencies). The potential possibility in learning with the existing presuppositions, conceptually, in terms of skills, emotionally etc., is that which the individual can master if he/she is given the right kind of support which we interpret as the zone of proximal development.

There is something paradoxical in how the learning environment supportive of the learning processes in the work in non-formal adult education would look like. On the one hand consistency and stability are necessary to learn and to ensure that the elements which create learning and development are present. . But the idea behind democracy, which is the critical element in the concept of competency, that is, respect for the individual and the many differences that there may be, requires, on the other hand, that non-formal adult education is able to work with adaptable structures. It is a constant challenge to work with developing this balance between routine and structure on the one hand and flexibility on the other.

It's a challenge to work with developing this balance between routine, stability and flexibility.

In the cases observed there are a number of examples of how professionals working in non-formal adult education already now allow the frames to be subordinate in relation to the participants' instruction:

In the system, you are ordered to do this and that. There is much pressure from the outside, case workers and so on, and I have not experienced any of that here. There aren't a million things hanging over your head. The participants experience coming to a place where there are, of course, a certain amount of set frames and requirements but at the same time there is a relaxed attitude allowing them to be themselves. They aren't constantly being monitored.

**They aren't constantly being monitored.
(teacher/guidance counselor)**

This support and sense of security created in the learning environment allows the participant to venture taking a step or two in this somewhat risky box where she or he can experiment and gain some experiences and thereby consolidate the start of mastering these areas. The participants are not pressured into areas or functional areas where he or she is not in control, thereby avoiding considerable anxiety or emotional defenses that tend to hinder the learning process. When the aforementioned consolidation has taken place, new horizons emerge for the next development phase.

When it comes to creating motivation for learning, work is done in the box known as motivational directedness, "Show me who or what I can become" - new goals and values.

The professionals:

They (the participants) sometimes feel that is their own particular case that is important. But when we receive new course participants we see them for who they are without looking at their case first. We look a lot more at what they may accomplish in the future, which means that the respect they receive plus the fact that it is essential that they themselves are responsible for their own development means that they actually grow, slowly but surely and that they can see an end-goal when they feel that they are actually being taken seriously. .

They are guided in relation to the talents they (the course participants) happen to have and in how they may pursue something career-wise that would be realistic for them.

It is a program that is based on the individual, so the course participants actually create their own plan, their own schedule and their point of departure is based on what each individual is capable of enduring. And we are constantly working on regulating that because at times the course participants manage to create too packed a schedule. As one participant said, "There are so many interesting things, I want to do them all." But yes, you have to choose anyway so that you end up making a positive additional choice rather than rejecting something, which is what we focus on.

The element you take with you when you have been here is one of guidance and clarification: you know what you want to do or have a sense of what is good for you.

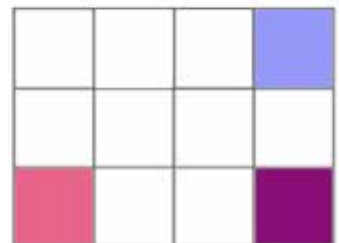
But of course they themselves have the possibility to say what it is they want to work with here because I truly believe to that it is essential they themselves participate in setting goals for what they will be doing.

Insight and Outlook

When we combine teaching and participant perspectives with new perspectives and teaching differentia-

**People actually grow, slowly but surely and that they can see an end-goal when they feel that they are actually being taken seriously.
(teacher/guidance counselor)**

**You know what you want or have a sense of what would be beneficial for you.
(teacher/guidance counselor)**



tion respectively, we hit the area which we call insight and outlook. Illeris (2003) uses the term re-establishing transformative learning. The familiar self-perception and understanding of the surrounding world is challenged in a way that results in "learning" which involves transformations in the learner's identity. The learning includes changes in the cognitive as well as in the emotional structures and in the social and societal dimensions.

Here, I take responsibility for myself and where I want to go, what I want to do, in which direction I want to go, I am always the one who takes responsibility for what happens. (participant)

Insight and outlook suggest the fact that the learning process partially has an introverted aspect with regard to knowledge, skills and opinions and at the same time, that actions are directed outwards and realized in a social and societal context. The outlook, which includes new possibilities, therefore appears as an essential element interacting with insight. The prerequisite is the differentiated and personal stimuli that, at the same time, develop a sense of ownership of the continued process.

Some participants formulated it this way:

The program helped me, I can't say that it has saved my life, but it has helped and provided me with the calm I needed, in order for me to say to myself, on my own, that it was now time to save my own life.

Here, I take responsibility for myself and where I want to go, what I want to do, in which direction I want to go, I am always the one who takes responsibility for what happens.

Putting It All into Perspective

The study of the six programs has shown that motivating such a complex and educationally estranged target group is a complex and demanding task. The study supports that complex problems demand complex answers. The endeavors were successful both in the view of the participants and the professionals. It was actually possible to support that the participants really do find a new sense of orientation in relation to the job market, the educational system and their own life in society as a whole.

The analysis shows how professionals in their practice observe principals that are based on an utterly fundamental humanistic and holistic set of values:

- Respect for the individual and thereby for differences.
- The community as a safe base.
- Understanding and acceptance of the fact that earlier experiences with the "system" may mean legitimate resistance and possible withdrawal.
- An acknowledgment of the fact that each individual has resources and prior learning that must be put into play and comprise a basis for new learning.
- That a broad educational concept is necessary when this group, that has otherwise been given up in relation to education, must be kept in line, in other words, a mere scholastic approach is not what is of value.
- That the new frame for learning is, in actual fact, a possibility for change and a new start.
- A stable and persistent dedication in order to ensure that these participants are given the best and most realistic prerequisites to fare in today's society.

The analysis shows which essential elements must be included in these special programs for motivating lifelong learning. It must be possible to combine them with a mix of elements that matches the qualifications of each individual. There is talk of a wide repertoire professionally, content-wise, method-wise and in terms of organization which the professionals have at



It is quite a demanding constellation that have to be put together and brought into a fruitfully reciprocal interplay," so that a re-established transformative learning program may be established. (Illeris)



their disposal: activities, practical and theoretical teaching, guidance, mentorship, coaching, internship, craft's apprenticeship, follow-ups, study trips, experiences, role models, re-entry, follow-ups and a foundation of collaboration with other collaborators such as formal educational institutions, companies, authorities or other collaborators in civil society.

Illeris (2013) stated that "it is quite a demanding constellation (...of decisive and dynamic elements and principals ...), that have to be put together and brought into a fruitfully reciprocal interplay," so that a re-established transformative learning program may be established.

A core competence that the professionals have is that they can not the balance between the different elements that will propel the participant forward. The analysis also shows clearly that this type of program presupposes extraordinarily flexible framework conditions, a factor that both the participants themselves and the professionals are aware of in connection with these six programs. It is a truly hand-holding effort that you cannot easily perform in an environment that has a more narrow and more formal view of education and firm schedules divided up in subjects with centrally determined goals of competence, measuring and testing and individual guidance.

Certain terms must be ensured so that these alternative integrated entry points and programs where it is possible to act flexibly with a wide repertoire and where there is, in actual fact, the possibility to define the learning goals in relation to the learner's needs. The general educative forms of school have, with their non-formal character and experience with developing programs to specific target groups, a good starting point to contribute to the solution of the importunate task of "getting every last one included" and give them tools that will help them assert themselves in society.

As one of the professionals said:

"We strive at helping the participants create their own lives."

Attachment 1

- The Cases Involved

AOF (Workers' Education Association) Center Bornholm

<http://www.aofcenterbornholm.dk/>

The Center has for several years offered a course called, "On the way to SOSU" in collaboration with the Employment Center in Bornholm and Bornholms Health and Nursing School. The aim is to clarify the extent to which the education is relevant for the individual in question. The participants are unemployed and have a relatively short education, but other than that their backgrounds vary to a great degree.

The course participants attend, from the start, a three week program at AOF where the instruction is in FVU Danish and math, and including IT instruction is used with the purpose of reading scholastic material and making a scholastic mini-project. Over and above that, the participants get a sense of what it is like to once again attend school and how you work on assignments in groups. After that the participants partake in a program to help them clarify if SOSU is the path they want to take, in fact, the right thing for them to do. All teaching is clearly related to SOSU and there is much effort put into creating a professional common environment. At the same time there is also room to pursue one's individual motivation through, among other things, mini projects. The project has had great success in getting participants further in the educational system.

IDA - Syd - Idrætsdaghøjskolen i Aarhus, IDA/ Gym Day Folk High School in Aarhus

<http://www.idaa.dk/ida>

This course was an especially planned program aimed at a target group consisting of refugees, female immigrants with little or no affiliation with the job market. The course was carried out due to an agreement with the Employment Center of Aarhus Municipality and there was an intake on a continual basis.

The aim of the course was to get the participants closer to the job market and to help them get clarified in terms of their occupational capabilities. In extension of the school's educative purpose the goal was also to help the participants gain insight into the fundamental ideals of democracy and acquire a personal sense of citizenship.

A fundamental aspect of the course was the notion of independence and ownership through freedom of choice. The participants were obligated to

participate for 3-4 hours a week on an individual and collective basis, but other than that they themselves planned their schedules on the basis of a wide range of opportunities. The obligatory hours were reserved for conversations, theme-based teaching and social studies, excursions and health-related topics within the school's profile.

The success of the course was evident in, among other things, the particular transformation which was identified in the women's behavior and body posture. From having clearly been burdened by a state of oppression and restraint at the start of the course, they ended up radiating with energy and courage by the time the course was finished.

The Employment Center acknowledged the results of the course, however it ended up being closed down anyway due to changes in the employment legislation in regard to the reimbursement laws of Jan 1, 2011. All 47 women in the project turned up at the councilman's office on their own initiative in order to explain what the project meant for their lives and future, however the municipality did not have the financial means for an entry course such as this aimed at unemployed people that have had no relationship to the job market in a long time.

Hammerum Herreds Idrætsdaghøjskole i Herning/ Gym Day Folk High School in Herning

www.hhi-dhs.dk

Hammerum Herreds Idrætsdaghøjskole is a small school with a general educative and occupational/educational promotional aim. Gymnastics is an essential element in reaching this goal. The case is a program for unemployed people attending an activation program between the ages of 18-60 that are interested in the physical fitness aspect. The focus in the program is on movement and exercise, education and jobs, diet and lifestyle and stress and depression. Primarily through guidance and elective subjects the needs and wishes of the individuals are met.

The school collaborates with a model for development and competency in taking action through an interplay between physical fitness activities, guidance and clarification, theoretical knowledge and general education with a focus on society, democracy and culture.

The gymnastics folk high school has had a considerable amount of success rates particularly in relation to motivation and education. The school has incorporated a culture of evaluating and keeps a continuous eye on how adults with a short education acquire the motivation needed for learning, for example through a shared community with all age groups and through daily physical training, movement, play and relevant challenges.

Kreativitet og vækst - Daghøjskolen "Fokus" i Aalborg/ Creativity and Growth – The Day Folk High School Focus in Aalborg

<http://fokus-folkeoplysning.dk/mere-info/kreativitet-og-vaekst/>

Creativity and growth are one of the many projects at FOKUS which is a big day folk high school. Work is done through drawing, painting and ceramics as tools for personal development. There is furthermore the possibility to participate in physical training.

Many participants are unemployed attending an activation program, especially those who have sick leave due to stress and other psychological problems but there are also participants who have been given municipal subsidies or paid their own way. The group is known for its vast sense of inclusiveness and flexibility in relation to the needs of the individual. .

The course aims to uncover strengths, barriers, and possibilities and to develop a sense of personal resourcefulness, self-confidence and the courage to be one's self and to learn to set goals and reach them through creative and personal challenges.

Validation of prior learning and various opportunities to try out different forms of practical work are included. The course helps many people further by way of its blend of creative and psychological processes.

Projekt Retro, Vejle – Grindsted Daghøjskole LOF (Liberale Oplysnings Forbund)/ Project Retro, Vejle – Grindsted Day Folk High School LOF (Liberal Adult Education).

<http://www.lof-ghs.dk/>

The project is a part of Grindsted day folk high school LOF's satellite in Vejle. The target group is receivers of sickness benefits. The program runs over 10 weeks and the purpose is to help the participants acquire a fitness for duty report or clarification as to how to get back on the job market.

The method is based on the appreciative approach and the approach is based on mutual respect, trust and dialogue. It is always introduced with a discussion in expectations are established. Focus is on the positive and the small successes that frames the background for new thoughts in the individual participant. There is instruction 20 hours a week in personal and professional subjects, mainly in the form of class instruction with lots of debates, whereupon there is individual work experience in a relevant company. Moreover, there are one-on-one consultations as needed are offered.

The school emphasizes that focus be placed on the individual participant and that stress is employing solely people with true commitment. The results for the school are 90m percent in intererms and 60 percent report fit for duty after the y have finished the course and thereby satisfy both the expectations of the municipality and help create a positive change in the lives of the participants.

**På vej - Daghøjskolen Sydvestjylland i Esbjerg/
On the Way - Day Folk High School Sydvestjylland in Esbjerg**

http://www.dhskolen.dk/page_control.asp?page_nbr=4&menu_nbr=4

The target group for the course are people that have been referred to flex jobs and are looking for jobs. The program is 12 weeks, consisting of 10 hours per week and a four-week follow-up. The course may be shortened if the participant finds a job and there is a continual increase in in the number of participants. The aim is for the individual participant to become aware of his or her resources and to find a concrete flex job through, for example, an internship.

The participants work with job applications and the job market in relation to their own wishes and plans. Furthermore, instruction in the significance of exercise and diet is included as well as creative challenges and personal guidance.

There is the possibility to work with IT, Danish, Math, and Social Studies. Together with the school's other participants, the classes partake in excursions, lectures, etc.

Attachment 2

– The Project's Group of Reference

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What type of adult pedagogical approaches can be used to help motivate lifelong learning in adults that are skeptical of the educational system and schooling in general? How can a holistic-oriented perception and humanity be transferred in concrete terms in what is a fine balance between creating challenges for participants and yet showing them respect. Steen Elsborg and Steen Høyrup Pedersen have examined selected non-formal adult education programs and drawn conclusions as to what works when the aim is to motivate a target group that has complex problems in terms of learning and participation.



Steen Elsborg, LDI - Learning-based Innovation



Steen Høyrup Pedersen, Institute for Education and Pedagogy (DPU), Aarhus University

