



SYMPOSIUM
A dialogue on core qualities and practices needed in education
Driebergen, 8th & 9th February 2017

*We became co-authors of the narrative
of unfolding human potential*

Reflection by Aziza Mayo

I was particularly inspired by the dialogues we had at our tables. These dialogues made it so clear that education is not an economic or predictable process but a truly human experience. Creating a dialogue made it necessary for us to really listen at what others were saying. It required us to sometimes hold back our initial convictions, beliefs and feelings. Rather than automatically responding to what was being said with our personal understandings, we tried to bring to the surface the understandings of each participant through open questions and to create from this a shared understanding.

Reformulating our thoughts into open questions was certainly not a simple thing to do, nor was it something we were used to doing. We became aware that in everyday life as educational professionals we rarely ask truly open questions (not to each other, to our students or to ourselves); nor do we automatically approach the other with the openness, curiosity and lack of judgment that is required to really hear what the other has to say or show.

During the process of developing our dialogues, we found that we grew in our ability to engage in a dialogue. This was made possible (and at the same time made it possible to) because we got to know each other on a rather personal level. Personal, in the sense that each of us was being very honest and vulnerable about their understandings and misunderstandings; that we offered each other personal examples of successes and failures from our educational practices; but also personal in what we revealed about ourselves through the questions we asked and the answers we provided. For this we needed to develop trust in ourselves and in the others to treat each of the participants vulnerability with respect.

This learning experiences that we had and the understandings that developed from these dialogues were co-authored by each one of us, rather than owned by someone (and perhaps appropriated by someone else). As such we became co-authors of the narrative of unfolding human potential.

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