

LEARNING FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN FOLK HIGH SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Nowadays in the field of andragogy, there is a significant transition from learning as a merely cognitive phenomenon to a more comprehensive approach, defining learning as a process of whole person development. Thus this study has its focus on sharing the experience of good practice for promoting adults' personal development at six folk high schools in Latvia and Denmark. Observations have taken place since June 2011 till December 2012. All in all fifty six days of formal and informal activities were transcribed as field notes within different subjects as Danish, Latvian, Pottery, Philosophy, Self-development, Music, Yoga, Diet class etc. Data analysis were provided by AQUAD 6.0 (Huber, 2003) using mix-methods approach, combining conceptual codes and open coding. Main results show, that the most appropriate pedagogical circumstances of learning for personal development are those, where adults can develop themselves through body, mind and emotional activity and where 1) person has been treated as a value him/herself, 2) person's values are the main focus and 3) high-/democratic values fulfil study process.

Key words: adult learning, folk high school, personal development.

Introduction

Today the ever increasing topicality of lifelong learning opens up new insights in the field of andragogy, improving the view of 'helping adults learn' (Knowles, 1980, p. 43). An adult is treated increasingly as an individual, a personality who is studying for life, for the development of himself and of his life, or, as underlined by Jarvis (2006), Illeris (2006), Korsgaard (2000) and Veugelers (2003), a transition must take place, from a economic oriented growth to a personal growth. These tendencies are reflected in the evolution of the theories of adult learning – cognitive theories (Kolb, Kegan, Mezirow) are improved and transformed into comprehensive theories (Jarvis, Illeris). The comprehensive theories open a new view on adult learning by expanding the understanding of the transformation of experience in the dimensions of human body, emotions and mind.

Learning for whole personal development, and hence its pedagogical circumstances, still remains a rather new approach, in particular in the countries of emerging democracy, such as Latvia. However, it is known that there are educational institutions in the world which are based in their functioning on similar principles and have been working for a long time. These are folk high schools. Researchers have concentrated their attention on studying the good practice of these institutions which may help not only to improve the learning process in the folk high schools themselves later on but may also be integrated into various kinds and forms of adult education. The subject matter of the study was formulated in the following research question: What kind of learning facilitates adult's personal development at the folk high school?

The study was carried out at folk high schools in Denmark and Latvia, taking into consideration the purposeful activity of these educational institutions specifically in the field of adult's personal development, described precisely by Andresen (1981, p.10) noting that in these institutions 'what is important is not the subject, but the growth process it can serve.' Despite the fact that there are differences in the historical development of these two countries – in Den-

mark, the country where the first folk high schools were established, educational institutions of this type have been working for more than 160 years now (Davies, 1931), and in Latvia, with a gap in activity, for about 40 years now (Sokolova, 2000) – the results of the study show that institutions in both these countries have a unique experience that can be applied in practice successfully and can be used to describe the principles of learning for personal development.

Learning for Personal Development – from Grundtvig to Jarvis

The beginnings of the idea of the folk high school are found in the work of Nikolai Frederick Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872), a Danish theologian, writer and folk educator. Even in those days, on observing a lack of principles of learning in grammar schools, Grundtvig put forward his idea of ‘schools for life’ as opposed to the grammar ‘schools of death’. The principle of ‘school for life’ was based on the development of adults not only from the purely cognitive perspective but also on practical activity in life, the so-called ‘enlivening’ of educational content where an important role was given to the activation of emotions and senses ((Davis, 1971).

K. Kold (1816–1870), a practicing teacher, the main follower of Grundtvig, successfully formulated this principle in practice – ‘the power of the word to speak to the heart and make people good and free and happy.’ (Davies, 1931, p. 112). Therefore waking up the feelings and emotions of adults was not the only important thing; bringing out positive emotions was important as well. K. Kold paid special attention to the creation of the emotional environment, stressing its importance in terms of the results of learning – ‘...you may be sure that the things that you have heard from me with joy will come up all right again when you want them.’ (Davies, 1931, p. 118). Kold paid big attention to the imagination and emotions too by encouraging the students to feel what tells them and to study it after lectures but now on their own (Rordam, 1965, p. 59).

It was specifically K. Kold who implemented the principle that ‘the people must be enlivened before they are enlightened, or at all events be enlivened and enlightened together.’ (Davies, 1931, p. 119) in practice more than anyone else. Here the necessity was noted to structure the learning process so as to enable the students first to feel whatever will be told them and only then to do. Or the teacher was expected at least to present an exciting and interesting narrative, with examples from real life. No doubt the environment of folk high school was and continues to be well-suited for that; it had a kind-hearted and family-oriented spirit in it where students too were encouraged to be open and supportive, tolerant and understanding. It was important not only to ‘enliven’ the educational contents but also to open one’s heart and to cultivate the good things in it. In this connection, when describing Kold, Ludwig Schroder said that ‘...he talks to all these people in such a way that he always evokes their feelings...What he wants to awaken is the „heart and spirit”’ (Rordam, 1965, p. 62). Folk high schools of the present day have been following these directions so far, improving and developing them in practice.

Similar to Grundtvig, in the middle of the 20th century, there appears, in opposition to the concepts of behaviourism, cognitivism, and psychoanalysis, the movement of humanism which shifts the focus from the teacher’s guidance to the student’s self-guidance through its influence on the pedagogical thought. Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, the founders of this movement, postulated a new *person as a value and a student-centred* approach (Maslow, 1954; Rogers, 1969). Similar to Grundtvig, this approach was based on the idea of the holistic development of a person, with a special role given to getting to know oneself and fulfilling oneself not only in cognitive terms but also in the dimensions of emotion and body. Despite the fact that the conceptions of Grundtvig and humanism are rather independent units, they share many common characteristics (Davis, 1971). The belief of Grundtvig in human value and good nature, in saying that man is a ‘wonderful being’ because God fulfils himself in man (Rordam, 1969) may be given as a good example.

Peter Jarvis, and Knud Illeris, two leading modern scholars of adult education, encourage the society once again to think of the importance of a person and of the necessity to view

the adult not only within the framework of narrow cognitive processes but in an entirety – as a union of human body, emotion and mind, thus forming the learning process so as to find a place in it for both reflection and emotional experiences and for practical activity as well (Jarvis, 2006; Illeris, 2004).

The ideas of Grundtvig were brought to Latvia from Denmark in the 1920s and put into practice at the Folk University of Murmuiza. The main activists of the Murmuiza – principal P. Petersons and lecturer Z. Maurina – created an educational model of their own by adopting the ideas of democracy, paying special attention to the creation of the spirit of family and culture, close and family-like relationship between the teachers and the students. At Murmuiza, the principal idea was not only to acquire knowledge but specifically the spiritual education of students, teaching of virtues (Sokolova, 2000). Folk high schools were closed in 1940s and restored in Latvia in 1991 (Kulich, 2002) when trips of headmasters and teachers to Denmark to gather new ideas of democracy were organised again.

Methodology of Research

During the study the researcher stayed as an exchange student in Denmark for 6 months from February till July 2011, enjoying the opportunity to get to know the local culture; this provided a greater sense of stability and facilitated communication. Back in Latvia the researcher already had, by that time, 4 years of teaching experience of classes for adults in an institution of non-formal education. Thus there was a certain notion about the processes which could be observed and recorded while staying in Denmark. Moreover, the web pages of the folk high schools to be studied were carefully analysed before entering the field of research.

School Selection

The research started with an analysis of the information represented on folk high schools' webpages in order to understand the objectives sought by the schools in their activities and also to choose educational institutions matching the question of the research – What kind of learning facilitates adult's personal development at the folk high school? – the closest.

Information about the activity of folk high schools in Denmark was gathered and studied using the web page of the Association of Folk High Schools in Denmark, which helped find web page addresses of the folk high schools and study the objectives, tasks and study programmes of 70 folk high schools. Of the 70 folk high schools, 3 folk high schools were selected that placed the biggest emphasis on personal development as their goal, i.e. Nordfyns (NFHS), Brandjerg (BFHS) and Silkeborg (SFHS). Schools that placed an emphasis on narrow objectives, such as sports, art, esoteric, weight control etc., were not included in the selection.

Since information of this kind has not been collected in Latvia, information was found about 11 folk high schools in Latvia using the data of the register of enterprises of Latvia (LurSoft), followed by a study of their web pages and other information available (mainly in the form of presentation files) as the web pages of the Latvian folk high schools did not offer much information. Three folk high schools were also selected which stressed personal development in their objectives the most. These were Latvijas tautas skola (LTS) [The Folk School of Latvia], Jaunpiebalgas tautas skola (JTS) [The Folk School of Jaunpiebalga] and Aizkraukles tautas skola (ATS) [The Folk School of Aizkraukle].

Field Notes

Considering the span of the phenomenon and the fact that the research should take place in institutions of non-formal education, it was decided not to draw up very detailed protocols but only to isolate the fields of research. A study by Merriam (1996) was used as the theoretical basis of the sections included in the protocols, in which Merriam isolated three fields of learn-

ing, describing very neatly the environment of learning and the activity of students and teachers that would promote the learning of adults and the development of personality. Using these three fields (the environment, student activity, teacher activity) as a guide, protocols were taken of the data through the observation of formal lessons (primarily) and informal activities as well as the informal way of passing the time by the students.

Upon entering the field of research and conducting the first direct observations of lessons, it was found out that it will be necessary to take protocols of a very varied and diverse environment and to reflect it in the data records, thus a decision was made to take record of nearly all processes and all dialogues between the teachers and the students, and small memos were also made in the form of reflection on what had happened. Audio recordings of the lessons were also made during the first days of observation, concurrently with taking protocols on a computer, to ensure data precision lest a dialogue would not be recorded. Besides, photographs and videos were taken of all processes in order to use them as a support for the data analysis process.

The collection of data took place in the form of direct observation, practically without getting involved in student activities so that dialogues would not be lost and the process of learning would be recorded in full. The main emphasis was placed on the observations of as natural a process as possible, therefore the researcher maintained friendly relationships with her respondents and tried to show her positive attitude towards what was happening. It was only during the period after lessons that the researcher spent part of her leisure time together with students listening to their casual conversations and taking part in discussions. In Denmark, classes for foreign students were mainly observed as they were conducted in English. The age of the students varied from 19 to 29 years. In Latvia, all classes were conducted in Latvian, the groups consisted of both Latvian and Russian students, aged 19 to 65.

In the selection of subjects, emphasis was placed on various disciplines which could encompass work with the body, mind and emotions. The periods, days, astronomical hours, and themes of observation are given in the Table 1 below:

Table 1. The time spent at schools, themes observed, and the duration of formal records.

Name of the Folk High School	Time Recorded	Themes Observed
Denmark: June 2011 till November 2011 (28 days, 59 hours)		
NFHS	(10 days, 14 hours)	Morning assembly, 'Take the Future' class, informal events (green day, bow-shooting, singing evening), final presentation day.
BFHS	(9 days, 26 hours)	Morning assembly, Self-development, Danish, guest-lectures, Music, informal meetings, project week, 'Kampus', Sculpturing, 'Rocket factory'.
SFHS	(9 days, 19 hours)	Morning assembly, Philosophy, EuroClass, Existence, Textile&trends, Writings, Pottery, Danish language, Counselling, Politics, guest-lecture.
Latvia: from October 2011 till December 2012 (28 days, 73 hours)		
LTS	(9 days, 28 hours)	Latvian I and Latvian II, English, Floristics.
JTS	(7 days, 23 hours)	School of style, Yoga, Bath Lessons, Life wisdom, „How to Love and to be Loved”, Diet class, Ayurveda.
ATS	(12 days, 22 hours)	Latvian folklore, Painting, Paper folding, French, Photo, Garden design, Self-improvement, Silk painting, Beading, Solstice celebration.

Mix of Methods

The span of the phenomenon identified both in the process of observation and while reading the protocols of observation repeatedly showed the necessity to mix different methods (one quantitative and two qualitative) in order to obtain reliable results and the reflection of the phenomenon to be studied as a whole (Muskat, 2012). Initially all protocols were printed out and encoded manually in a freestyle in order to read them and to see whether the codes that had been developed to reflect the information contained in the data and to see the real situation (this took roughly three weeks). This analysis confirmed that using one method will be not enough to describe the information contained in the data, as one could see appearing both the existing codes (information known as a result of a literature analysis) and brand new codes (out of practice), and there were also some major codes/themes which went through all the protocols and covered up all the over codes/themes. Therefore it was decided to use for the data encoding a mix of content analysis (conceptual codes), grounded theory (open coding), and thematic analysis (main themes).

Encoding

Given the large amount of the existing protocols, qualitative data processing software AQUAD 6.8.2.2. (Huber, 2003) was used for the encoding of data. This software provides certain advantages: it is easy to use and allows to obtain a perfect visual representation of the results in the form of tables and numbers, including the possibility to check linkages and make implicants where necessary. Besides, it is possible to always select just one code of study and to get a document with specific segments, which facilitates the work.

Since content analysis was chosen as one of the methods, codes were developed before, using the literature analysed. In the development of the codes, a matrix was created which helped develop the rest of the codes. Considering the difficulties faced in defining personal development, it was decided that it will be more convenient not to break down their definition and use it as a complete code so that an understanding of this phenomenon could later be constructed from the segments collected, and that the second group would be created from theory codes that describe a method of learning for personal development:

- 1) Personal development
 - Self-awareness, democratization, socializing (Grundtvig);
 - Self-realization, humanization (Maslow, Rogers);
 - Development as a whole through the body, emotions and mind (Jarvis, Illeris).
- 2) Learning that facilitates personal development
 - The spoken word, emotions ('enlivening'), real life, freedom, intimate relationship (being together) (Grundtvig, Kold);
 - Safeness, reflection, modelling (Merriam, Jarvis);
 - Safeness, high human values, student's interests and needs placed in the centre (Maslow, Rogers).

This matrix only provides the broadest generalizations included in these theories. Therefore the researchers did not use the strictly constructed system but placed codes consequently as soon as they appeared, keeping the existing limits in mind. The names of the codes were slightly modified during the process of encoding according to the information contained in the data. Whenever there appeared a phenomenon outside the constructed matrix of codes, it was encoded using a code that reveals its contents, and a new code is formed.

6 documents, consisting of 9744 lines in total, were prepared for analysing using the AQUAD software. The document was analysed in its entirety, including nearly each and every line contained in it. At the end of the analysis, the information was reduced to 31 code. Each code had the symbols S and T placed beside it as a designation of Student Activity and Teacher Activity. However, there were codes that only characterised the activity of the student, or of

the teacher, or the identity of the person involved in an activity was irrelevant; in these cases the designation S or T was not used at all. 49 code units were obtained in total, including the division into S's and T's. A table containing the results (frequencies) processed by the AQUAD software is provided below (Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency Indicators of Conceptual and New Codes in Observation Protocols.

Table analysis (Project: Noverosana_2013) Frequencies						
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Action S	10	34	27	67	6	16
Action T	3	7	8	9	9	15
Body S	16	103	41	37	51	78
Body T	17	34	9	15	22	53
Books S	0	0	6	7	1	1
Comfortable S	1	10	13	4	5	8
Discussion T	6	7	2	13	18	30
Discussions S	12	25	36	32	23	36
Emotions S	25	25	12	7	5	22
Emotions T	2	4	4	3	5	3
Encourage S	0	1	0	0	0	3
Encourage T	10	2	0	17	4	57
Exercise T	1	0	2	5	0	1
Facilitation T	0	5	0	45	3	47
Free S	20	57	32	66	23	53
Global S	19	10	3	0	0	0
Global T	21	5	4	0	0	0
Guide T	13	67	39	125	15	41
High/Democratic-values	73	37	50	15	67	14
Lecture T	1	16	9	21	92	38
Modeling S	2	8	2	7	2	3
Modeling T	22	12	5	49	26	50
National T	15	11	3	20	4	18
Negative value S	0	10	2	0	0	0
Negative value T	0	1	0	0	1	0
Personal interest S	6	5	4	5	4	35
Personal Development S	117	92	7	14	262	57
Personal experience S	6	4	2	9	7	15
Personal experience T	57	19	10	11	81	24
Person-as-a-value S	58	39	13	92	43	101
Person-as-a-value T	0	1	0	0	2	7
Person's-values S	4	9	13	192	118	77
Positive value S	66	37	2	5	8	36
Positive value T	11	15	10	39	39	79
Positive emotions S	80	32	11	72	59	67
Positive emotions T	58	9	0	23	15	26
Real Life S	49	23	12	53	47	49
Real Life T	39	26	21	56	115	40
Reflection S	110	60	15	87	58	140
Reflection T	120	62	18	133	76	23
Respect S	4	5	5	6	0	8
Respect T	6	5	2	9	2	7
Role play S	1	0	0	6	0	0
Support S	7	9	3	52	2	31
Support T	27	39	48	151	17	94
Together S	10	32	8	15	6	26
Together T	37	65	42	110	33	134
Trust S	4	3	5	16	1	16
Trust T	13	4	1	8	9	15

Table analysis (Project: Noverosana_2013) Frequencies						
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Modeling S	2	8	2	7	2	3
Modeling T	22	12	5	49	26	50
National T	15	11	3	20	4	18
Negative value S	0	10	2	0	0	0
Negative value T	0	1	0	0	1	0
Personal interest S	6	5	4	5	4	35
Personal Development S	117	92	7	14	262	57
Personal experience S	6	4	2	9	7	15
Personal experience T	57	19	10	11	81	24
Person-as-a-value S	58	39	13	92	43	101
Person-as-a-value T	0	1	0	0	2	7
Person's-values S	4	9	13	192	118	77
Positive value S	66	37	2	5	8	36
Positive value T	11	15	10	39	39	79
Positive emotions S	80	32	11	72	59	67
Positive emotions T	58	9	0	23	15	26
Real Life S	49	23	12	53	47	49
Real Life T	39	26	21	56	115	40
Reflection S	110	60	15	87	58	140
Reflection T	120	62	18	133	76	23
Respect S	4	5	5	6	0	8
Respect T	6	5	2	9	2	7
Role play S	1	0	0	6	0	0
Support S	7	9	3	52	2	31
Support T	27	39	48	151	17	94
Together S	10	32	8	15	6	26
Together T	37	65	42	110	33	134
Trust S	4	3	5	16	1	16
Trust T	13	4	1	8	9	15

A: /4NFHS 2013						
B: /6BFHS 2013						
C: /4SFHS 2013						
D: /4LTS 2013						
E: /4JTS 2013						
F: /6ATS 2013						

Linkages

The process of data encoding highlighted certain codes: personal development, high-/democratic values, person as a value and person's values. These were the codes which reflected the process of learning at a folk high school and stressed their uniqueness in the best way. Besides, when reading the segments of personal development repeatedly these three codes were often noticed covering one another. Thus there appears a hypothesis that the determination of personal development could be related to these three codes. An analysis of the linkages with the maximum distance between data segments (lines or seconds) – 3 – confirmed these thoughts:

- Personal development and High-/democratic values = 4+0+4+137+21+3 = 169 conformations;
- Personal development and Person as a value = 16+10+50+5+22+1 = 104 conformations;
- Personal development and Person's values = 17+5+147+9+3+2 = 183 conformations.

Results of Research

The range of subjects even without visiting the folk high schools in real life already show that in folk high school adults have the opportunity to improve themselves in bodily (yoga, diet class), emotional (music, floristics) and mind (language, philosophy) dimensions. Little difference is observed in the realization of these principles – in Latvia these three dimensions are offered as different disciplines, but in Denmark as in the country, which established the idea of folk high schools; these dimensions are integrated more into the content of different subjects.

Investigating the obtained results (Table 2) it can be seen that in folk high schools learning is provided mainly, using the same methods, which can be found in other adult education institutions, and not many variations can be noticed. As shown in Table 2, the most popular are discussions and lectures! The students are often encouraged to express their opinions, to discuss in groups and to prove the validity of their point of view. In relation to the lectures it should be noted that during these lessons the students reflect often, they are active participants, who are constantly facilitated to express their opinions (Code: Reflection). In addition, the observation showed that learning process in folk high schools, unlike other adult education institutions, is added by non-formal and informal events – to go to the theatre, a picnic in the wood, to go to the bank during the lessons, Solstice celebration in ancient traditions, music party, archery, pool. So, there are the differences.

The combination of mostly used codes shows that very important factor in learning environment, and the relationship “teacher-student and student-student”. The environment is humanistic and democratic - it is free (everyone can express his opinion, to show his attitude), filled with positive emotions (during lessons jokes and laugh is heard often), the students are supported and facilitated to be active, as well as often the teacher and the students work together, hand in hand, with one task. In those schools the students form close, safe and open relationship, where all are active participants of the learning process (Codes: Together and Support).

In addition to these factors the teachers often put the emphasis on the positive aspects of life, and support the students to be positive in their expressions (Code: Positive value). Maybe, due to it in folk high schools laugh is heard often and smiling faces of the students and the teachers can be seen (Code: Positive emotions).

Learning environment is characterized very well by one teacher, discussing with the student about his action, she said: *“But when you get the chance to find and work where... where you like to work and do the things that you like to do, then... it comes out.”*

Personal Development

Observation gave interesting results – it was stated that questions on personal development make an essential contents of subjects that helps to discover the process of personal development and define it in folk high schools. This understanding could be got both in the content of subjects and guest lectures and in definite dialogues between students and teachers as well as from the learning environment that filled in the area.

In Danish folk high schools from the teacher’s side such questions could be heard: „What did you get from it? Particularly you?” These questions were not heard often on the lessons in Latvia – here the emphasis was put on useful advice for arranging oneself and one’s life.

In Denmark learning for personal development mean deepening into oneself, one’s feelings and one’s action. This deepening is usually attained by the teacher’s use of reflection method. It also works with oneself, discovering one’s potential and expression of its better side using different actions. These are useful advices for various situations in the real life and it’s arranging.

Some illustrative fragments from Denmark: „Student: “Just this feeling of “I can do that or we can do that”. That’s the most important thing. Yes, we can! (All laugh)” “Teacher: Yeah. Trust. (writes on blackboard) And what did that trust give you? That you felt that trust. Student: (pause) Security.(Others laugh)” “Teacher: Inspiration. Ok. So, these three words are really important to me. And so now I know... this was the first... thinking path towards that emotion or value. And then... chances are that you will know more about how you get there another time.” “Is it useful for yourself? – yes, I start to think about myself. But I have a lot of bad influences in my life, and I have to put it out.” “Teacher speaks about using sicknesses – when you feel sick. Where to get inspirations.” “Teacher explains what it is – how to use obstacles, how obstacles can help us.” “So, it is not necessary to drink, but the most important is the freedom.

You must trust your impulses. Something that you find inside, just follow it. What is that?” “Teacher works not with music sheet or piano (they have that in a room), but with students own musical potential – the voice they have, the hearing, the movement, feelings.” “This evening was dedicated to music. Some band was playing on stage – mix of school students and some from outside. Students played songs, what they learned here at school.” “I am here and I get more and more optimistic, and I feel more confident about myself. And I feel myself more useful. Now I can see more in group things. Teacher says – do you know how to integrate more, for better result? – to see goals.” “Teacher says – if you do not ask right question than you will not find a right answer.” “Teacher speaks about relationship in a family – how it influences adult life (because of reflection). About love and close friendship – how we react.” “Students have to think how to attract people, so they do not run away from the message.”

In Latvia learning for personal development mean getting advice how to arrange oneself and one’s surrounding in body, emotional and mind dimensions. Knowledge about oneself and one’s body functions as well as practical life questions and friendly lifestyle is acquired and practically enlivened. Particular emphasis is put on one’s development in practical aspects where support is needed, for example, language acquisition, silk decoration and painting.

Some fragments from the field notes in Latvia: “Student: No, I’m not German. I have a difficulty with short dialogues. The teacher: We waited from you exactly this. Do you have any questions? Student: We will think if we have more practice.” “It is essential to value one’s clothes and only then to think what make-up to use – if clothes are elegant, make-up is necessary, if the style is sporting, less.” “It is important to value one’s everyday style.” “And now we will work with the balance – at the beginning there will be a “stork” and then a “tree”. So at the beginning let’s remember the theory and then make.” “The teacher says that it is very good if we can mix a lemon with honey and then put it on legs.” “Today we will try it out and now I will go and make.” “So, in order to develop oneself, we will need to contact with people of all age.” “Working with oneself, you arrange your surrounding world.” “We will talk about how to live in harmony with oneself and one’s life.” It has to be learnt, it is elementary... there is a good method – start saying what you are doing... help your mind to understand that it is you who you lead.” “We need to learn to live without envy, jealousy etc., all negative must be taken away from one’s life because this way we lose our and other people’s energy. To learn to love oneself, every moment must be enjoyed, how air smells or frost has its odour, does not it?” “Positive features do not allow expressing negative ones, but negative ones – vice versa making us be angry, lie etc. But we need to strive to go up.” “Darkness acts to us as laziness. And together with it, we need to strive for the better so that darkness would disappear.

From the observation results it can be seen that personal development means first of all work with oneself – through oneself, getting to know one’s body and emotions and involvement as a result of which a person can arrange oneself, one’s life and perfect essential practical abilities to oneself.

Characterizing learning process, as it was mentioned above, researchers’ attention was attracted by some codes that were quite expressed and described this process well -, „person as a value”, „person’s values” and „high-/democratic values”. It could be observed that they are equally essential in both countries but its realization rate was slightly different – graphically it can be seen in Figure 1. Aspect ‘person as a value’ has the same importance in learning process in both countries, so it is places in the middle. Furthermore some differences can be seen – in Latvia aspect ‘person’s values’ is more expressed then in Denmark, but aspect ‘high/democratic values’ is not so intensive. As well as in Denmark situation is opposite – there is a lot of work happens with high/democratic values enlivening, but not so much pay attention to person’s values.

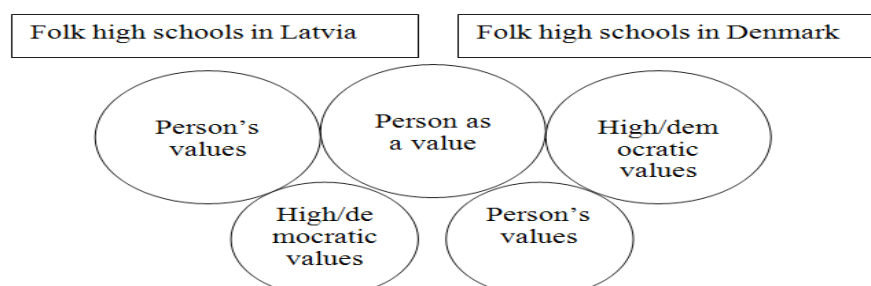


Figure 1: Level of expression of the main aspects of learning for personal development in folk high schools in Latvia and Denmark.

Characterizing contents of every aspect in both countries, further the brightest segments from the observation protocols were offered. They well illustrate expression of every characteristic in the real life. If there is no country emphasized into the brackets, that means that this aspect is essential for both – Latvia and Denmark. But if there is a country indicated, that means that this aspect is crucial only for one. As bodily and emotional aspects are in intense of whole person's development, the last upper-chapter will be dedicated to that.

Person as a Value – Teacher-Students and Students-Students Relationships

Every person in these schools can feel valuable as teachers put emphasis on successful actions and praise it. Observation revealed that in folk high schools between a teacher and students humane and based on mutual respect relationships are created where everyone can freely express one's thoughts and be heard out. It should be added that particularly in Danish folk high schools the good material base is provided where students' self-expression is not limited in the resources thus providing also physical comfort.

It is interesting that in Denmark teachers value students as a value but students themselves are not tended to express positive assessment about each other and about each other's activity in learning process. In this respect, in Latvia students receive not only positive assessment about them but also value very much and say positive words to each other.

Indicators that characterize learning process where an adult is valued as a value:

* Positively emphasizes student's activity: "Teacher says that a student has a beautiful voice, but "you have to be here. You need to be in a song. You are shy, but try to sing lines like you are present in a song." "Teacher: Yeah. And everybody chipped in. And I think that the fact that you use each other where you are best. You know, sometimes we all have to do the same thing and then obviously some are good and some are not so good. But when you get the chance to find and work where... where you like to work and do the things that you like to do, then... it comes out."

* Praises a student: "Well, this is my version, but maybe yours is even better." "Teacher: Your words are so much better than mine.(Students laugh)" A student correctly reads out the answer, the teacher says: "Well done". The teacher says "I can help because I have gold hands, do not You, V*? – V* smiles and says "I do not know", the teacher says "But surely silver."

* Takes care so that a student would feel comfortably: "One teacher sees that two students seat on one chair, so another teacher try to find place for them." "Maybe take your socks and blanket, than you will not feel cold." "The teacher: "So, how, I*? Are you still able to hold your

hand?...” – a student “Yes, it is ok, I just...” Some students are speaking while another student is telling about her pictures, the teacher says “Excuse me, she is telling” – students stop to speak.” “They also have speakers for English-speaking students with interpreter, so everybody could understand the meaning.” “Everybody helps Japan students to express themselves in English.” “The teacher says: Mistakes – they are ok, that is why we are here to correct them.”

* Freedom of expression is insured: “Students speak freely about their difficulties, about the difficulty to go deeper and deeper, but now it is a good feeling.” „If you want to keep to yourself it is ok.” Students say how they feel where they succeed in and where not. No one criticizes”.

* The teacher treats a student with respect: “Teacher says: Can I start? It was very interesting for me.” “Then one teacher goes out with thanking for discussions and ideas, and pleases to say if there are any more things to add. One of students says that he is a little bit lost, than teacher explains once again what to do to him.” “Teacher: If you want to keep it to yourself, it’s ok. But you...” “A student says – really or after all the first one? – the teacher sings and says “hmm, I will need to check it, thanks for telling me.” “Are there any Christian among you? – Ok, so not to touch others’ feelings.

* A student is supported to feel one’s value: “The teacher says – You can also say that you have a great experience, that you know all the neighbourhoods, all Riga, I have a great experience.” “The teacher asks – does anyone use it? – one student says “me” and laughs - Look, I am again the only one, bold.” “The teacher says – now love yourself. And now let’s go to our sweet carpets.” “The teacher says – How good we are! Applause to ourselves.”

* A student helps another student to feel one’s value (Latvia): “... one student says to another student “Ai, how I like it! – As if it is all, I think that everything will be fine” “Another student stands up and comes up – Ui, how big it is, beautiful.” “Student – “Who has this beautiful work?” “Student: “And you made it so well done! You painted such a wonder!” – “a student “ai! It just happened like this.”

High/Democratic Values – Implicit and Explicit

The data of the research shows that democratic or high human values make an essential part of the contents of studies both in Latvia and Denmark. Values are discussed during lectures and discussions, reflections often happen about them and students think about realization of these values in life. Students in Denmark study to be tolerant, reflect the different, support the poor, meanwhile in Latvia such topics are discussed as love, respect, kindness etc.

However, it can be noticed that in Denmark democratic values are applied in practice, more approximated to the real life – they are implicit. In this respect, in Latvia these values make meaningful study contents but are not so much integrated into practice – they can be called being on implicit level. High/democratic values can be implemented in learning process in four ways:

* Democratic/high values fulfil study contents: “ „Today the topic was „Difference/strange”. Two teachers were speaking how it is to be different and how they feel themselves as different, that we can have some things in ourselves that is different for us, but we never notice that.” “Teacher: Ok. Yeah. So, it’s possible to think about environment, that we have to take care of nature and each other.” “Lecture “The Construction of ‘otherness’ as ‘a social problem’” “Discussion - Refugee, human rights and asylum. What does it mean to be a refugee in Europe? How to fight for human rights?” “T - that you can do in the morning... the words are like this: “Make my conscience and my behaviour be of service to all beings in all over the world.” “Presentation about “Justice” – why do we need justice? Why is the discussion about justice? -John Rawls” “And new are respected if they have knowledge and old because they are older and as a result everyone respects each other and people grow.” “Love is when you serve

someone for free.” “As we are taught at school – do not do the thing to others that you do not want to have yourself.” “You cannot harm any alive creature. Fire is also alive.”

* Democratic/high values are realized in practise (Denmark): “We did that. Material support for South African projects? Any human resources for making the future?” “Teacher asks to create some nearness, not just stand together.” “Going to the bank... money that was collected during recent project, was sent to Africa, to one student, who could use it for studying in folk high school next year.” “Student - I will write here not to use odd amount of paper.”

* Reflections about democratic/high values are provided: “Teacher: Changed your thinking? Won’t people throw things out with garbage so easily? They know what can be created out of different materials? Know where to take things they don’t need.” “Teacher: Yeah. And then that’s also because the democracy is not rooted. We vote but what is voting if there’s no... no system to grab at?” “Another group speaks about medical insurance and possible decisions how to get health insurance that is working in all countries.” T “So, what did you do in project?” – S “What is corruption? And what can we do with it?” “Teacher asks – what principles do you need to create a perfect world?” “Now teacher asks what is justice or injustice in folk high schools. What should we do to make injustice go away?” “Students discuss themselves about the essence of a good friend.” “Teacher asks – Do you cook with love?” – a student says “Yes, of course. Only at the end of the day it is difficult to cook with love.”

* Show examples about realization of democratic/high values in the real life (Denmark): “Teachers say, that we cannot say “negro” in Denmark anymore.” “Students speak about their impression about refugee.” “Teacher answers the question about how we can understand refugees and how they come to Denmark.” “The first video showed a song of Afghanistan refugee who lives in Red Cross Centre in Jelling.” “Today students are going to listen to the lecture about situation in Philippines. How teacher and some of her students experienced situation there – living conditions, attitude to them, corruptions, resources.” “Teacher - in Denmark it is different – here people speak about social justice, not so much about physical conditions.” “There are some voluntaries from Hojskole that help woman in Africa.”

Person’s Values – My Own and Global

In folk high schools in the learning process the emphasis is put on what is important to students, what they are interested in, what is actual for their lives and what they want to do. It is interesting that in this respect Latvia stands out with the particular emphasis on person’s values – very often a teacher appeals to students’ lives and students tell us about themselves. As far as Denmark is concerned, it does not emphasize this issue but students’ interests and needs are always in the centre starting with free choice of subjects.

Taking into account the present data and the seen facts from the real life, it can be supposed that in Denmark it is connected with transition of the emphasis of learning process from ‘onself’ to ‘others’. In Denmark students often receive information and reflect about life in other countries and people who live there, thus, the attention to person itself is taken away. Moreover, in every school in Denmark time is set aside for work with individual consultant about one’s development, in this respect it can be that this issue is compensated as it is mentioned.

Person’s values in the learning process are actualized if:

*The emphasis is put on the student’s interests and needs: “Yes, very exciting presentation. But do you like Danish white bread?” “Is it useful for yourself? – yes, I start to think about myself. But I have much bad influence in my life, and I have to put it out.” “Teacher says that students should think about what it will give to them and how it is possible to solve all together.” “Teacher says that very important topic is our past – that is big area, focused on history, on special life history.” “Some international student says about his possibility to speak

Danish and how he feels.” “Teacher says that of course everyone’s eyebrows are different and it must be taken into account. And then instruction is given what to do and what not to.” “Students tell what is painful for them and teacher tries to roll an egg there..”

* Reflections are happening about student’s real life: “One of students expresses her experience with mother – how she teaches her to make her own decisions – teacher listens it and makes some expressions about it”. “One student says, that his mother draws mandalas. Teacher asks to explain more – student says what his mother does.” “How it was while you were in your family, very good day in your family, what was positive that they didn’t had, but you knew what was true.” “Teacher asks students what problems they can face in the future.” “Teacher gives examples where to live, how to find a job and so on.” “So Māra – Māra, did you cook yesterday?” “Students tell the teacher about their experience – that their best friend is a book.” “What questions do you have about the text? What do you think about a picture? Do you like horror film? Do you watch them?” “The teacher says that today we will talk about your nationality and writes on the board how to start sentences.” “A student says in Russian about his duties, the teacher writes down on the board in Latvian.” “A student reads that he learned good at school – the teacher asks: “Did you study well at school yourself?” – a student says “Yes”. “A teacher says: “V* tell me how you celebrate Easter.”

*A student works with the things he/she likes: “Student shows her scarf; teacher looks and says what to do next.” “Student shows her dress to a teacher, teacher goes round, looks, student says that would like to prove that and that part, teacher looks closely and says what could be done.” “Teacher with one student tries to find appropriate buttons to her dress, other student comes, shows her piece of cloth and teacher says what to do now.” “The teacher goes to the blackboard, shows a new tool ‘rapier’ and tells others where it can be used in works.” “The teacher asks: “What colour of a wall do you like? – look, it will look differently. We go to another tone – see, it looks differently.” “A student: “Look (looking at the made plan of his garden) here... here a path... and here I have different things...”

* Reflections are carried out about the essential things for students (Latvia): “Students tell the teacher about their experience, where they studied and start telling her and show with gestures what profession they acquired.” “A student says that now he is taking driving courses, however, in the reality he passed the test in the Internet. It happens now like that.” “Students discuss their experience in different courses in the past – how it was, what they gained, where they used it.” “Two students discuss in Russian how it was to study in Soviet Union times.” “One student saying one word says that she knows it because she made the similar exercise with her granddaughter and she said that granddaughter asked her that time – How cannot you know that it is a horse?” “Now the teacher asks to say about one’s family members’ professions.” “Does your son have his room? – No, he does not, - answers a student, - so, no separate room, - adds the teacher.” “The teacher continues “And what does your family like the most?” – a student says that “borsch”. “The teacher asks – Do you clean your shoes? For all the family or only for you? – a student says that for herself.”

Reflections are carried out about what students like (Latvia): „The teacher asks – what subjects did you like at school?” „The teacher asks – V, where do you like having a rest?” Students mention their favourite subjects and the teacher writes them down on the board.” „The teacher says that they can be exchanged – a student says in Russian how they changed with peonies with their neighbours.” „The teacher asks questions to the next student „A*, what would you like to become? What do you like? All the categories?” „The teacher asks: „Do you like cooking dishes? What exactly do you like cooking?” – a student replies – the teacher asks further „Do you want to work as a cook? etc.” „A student says: „But what if I do not like with salt? – the teacher says „Take a mayonnaise.” – other students also speak about how they like eating. „The teacher asks – And what do you like? What do you play?” – students tell her about themselves”.

Emotions and Body – One Step Up

In addition to the main aspects it is necessary to look closer to the person's body and emotional development, which is crucial for understanding person's development as a whole, and can not be missed.

Activation of body and emotions is very important and interesting learning aspect for the purpose of personal development, where folk high schools have unique practical experience. Very interesting data are from Denmark, where you can find good examples, how even theoretical study content can be expressed with body help.

In total immediately the fact pays attention that in Denmark and in Latvia teachers stand out with their body activation, adding that to their lectures – they use lot of gestures and facial expressions, make various sounds, sit down on the floor, play musical instruments, actively move and see everything around. As well as the students are active and free in their body expression - they assume a comfortable pose, put into action their hands and feet, express their emotions, joke and laugh.

Since in both countries body development is included in teaching program, the students have the opportunity to start their own senses and to reflect them, as well as to use their bodies as an assistant in the learning process. Denmark is a good sample, how you can go deeper, and offers to teach the students not only to reflect, but also to experience, requiring them to express the study content through themselves.

Learning for personal development, with activation of the body and emotions requires the following aspects:

* Study content is expressed/enliven through the body (Denmark): *“All students are taken into a gym, they put a table and a chair on it and every student is able to have some power. One student sits on a chair, then another goes and stands on a table to be able to be higher, then other students sits down on a floor and points out the finger to him. To make students feel each other in a way of having and losing the power. The students got chairs and go back to the classroom and got a presentation about “Justice” – why we need justice?” “The student asks and shows it in a position of his body – rises up and walks a little big with bended legs”. “Some students start to walk in a circle and speak to each other. The students speak about characters, they find during the exercise: “I walked like white 17th century who try to fight with own father. He is very evil and drunk”. “The students stand up and go away of the room for 6 minutes, because teacher told them to feel the autumn with their body, because later they will write a story about autumn. The students are grasping grass; eat leaves, hugging trees and touching grass and bushes”. “The teacher asks the students to imagine that the dining room is a space shuttle with what they will go from the Earth”. “And then the teacher comes to the student shows how to put flowers – takes, cut and puts inside”. At the beginning of evening all participants were dressed up as determined images (a wolf, a goat, a man with his wife, a stork, etc.), and we went to sing old songs and dance around the fire”.*

* Study content is supplemented with bodily feelings: *“The teacher says that now we will improve our mind activity, and gives to smell the oils. Now lay down your fingers and look - if there are gaps, it means that the money will not remain for a long time in your hands. What do you see?”- All students look at their fingers and laugh”. „All students stand up, sing, laugh, and shake their hands – Danish language lesson”. “The teacher asks if a student can play – the student says ‘Yes’, takes the guitar and play”. “Processes – the students stand up in a circle and tickling each other, than stretching.” “The students sing and move from one leg to other in a circle”. “The first exercise: to take a paper and in 30 sec. draw other person face, but do not look on a paper. All students laugh”. “11 students in a room walk around, look at pictures and write down their ideas inspired by the pictures”. “The teacher takes a guitar and sings a song. And then she says – willianooo....” “The teacher says that now we will play Bingo and gives some*

coins to every student". *"The teacher says that today is a pleasant summer evening, we can hear grasshoppers. Then the teacher pulled the drum, hit 3 times, a pleasant sound is heard". "The students drink tea that is prepared by the teacher"... Beautiful music is heard (ring bells)".*

* Reflection about own feelings is taking place: *„The teacher: (writes on blackboard) Mhm. And "Active citizenship". What did that give to you? Or what has that given to you, to get that feeling?" "The teacher says to the students to think, how they feel about that". "The teacher: Yeah. Trust. (writes on blackboard) And what did that trust give to you? That you felt that trust". "How and what and after this the things were... not too clear for me. So, a little bit I was confused. But then it was very good". "And you can have the, or maybe it's a strong feeling inside that "Yes, this was good" or "I have learned a lot" or something." "If you should put this into feeling, what is it in you?" "Other student tells about his experience – my feet was...I didn't know what direction to choose" – you explore right path of your foot – The teacher says. "One student tells about what kind of pictures he saw during singing". "The teacher says: "Did you see some pictures?"..."*

* Put emphasis on the necessity of having feelings (Denmark): *"The teacher says that we discuss about something not just to bla bla bla, but really to be in a role and to feel it". "The students try to speak through emotions and try to speak according to the position of determined person". "Then the teacher asks how the students feel now". "The teacher says to the students to feel peace of nature, and then to write about it". "The teacher says to the student not to talk, but only to taste". "The teacher says to the students to think how they feel about that". „The teacher says that now the students will feel that he energy flows through their bodies".*

* Body as an assistant of learning (to the students): *"The student comes to blackboard and underlines 3 most important words". "The students show in gestures what is going on". "One student had difficulties to express in English, and run to write on a blackboard to make it easier." "Teacher says - Try to sense... and then start to make a sound..." "The students raised fingers – 1, 2 or 3" "The students start to express their ideas and show it in posers, then they look at each other". "One student reads his text load, other listens and gives his expressions; he shows his thoughts with his hands". "The students begin to ask questions to each other (the teacher and the student tell „Din, din".*

* Body as an assistant of teaching (to the teachers): *"The teacher shows her feelings, with finger shows her crying". "The teacher usually sits down squatting". „The teacher acts actively – a lot of gestures, put hands up and down". "The teacher: Try to... it doesn't have to be [makes a whipping sound, as if cutting something of sharply]". "Clap hands to pay attention to her speech". „For example, how do people in America (she shows wide smile) – all laugh". "The teacher asks one student to lie down, other students have to tell something about the body position" "The teacher tells story about Astronomy and shows that with hands – that actually Sun is in the centre". "Then the teacher sits on the floor, turns round and asks if students can do the doll with all hips in this pose". "The teacher speaks and draws some pictures on a blackboard". "The student sits down and the teacher tells about him". "The teacher by her eyes shows how a man is looked then he looks up or looks down". „For example, when I was a child, I took up my hands and then I thought that Sun is small" - and takes up hands and shows how it is looked".*

* Exploration and development of a body is included in study content: *"The students are making gymnastics" "The teacher says: Listen to your body and open breath". "The teacher says: Try to do manasti position, if you can". "The teacher says: "May be touching your face, relax... Feel your body...right hand, left hand...fingers..." "The teacher reflects about students' experiences from that exercise – that it is good for your body to know yourself,*

and that it may be strange for the first time, but then you feel like you know yourself better and better". "The students participate in singing lesson". "The students stand in a circle, doing some Yoga exercises". "Meanwhile the teacher speaks how students should concentrate on their body, about what part of body to think, relax". "On the blackboard a face with the lines, how to use the cream, is drawn". The teacher says it is necessary to take into consideration your face – how wide is it, how thick are your hair and only then to decide what eyebrows should be done". "The teacher says: And now we will work with the balance – at the beginning we will consider a stork and then a tree. The students determine their weight, the teacher gives the balance to determine the changes in weight since the last meeting".

Discussion

Learning for personal development in folk high school can be considered as the integration between Grundtvig and Kold, Maslow and Rogers, Jarvis and Illeris ideas. Folk high school is a place, where adult can find the opportunities to improve himself in bodily, emotional and mental dimensions, based on his interests, as well as to feel himself valuable in line with improving his moral qualities.

Despite the fact that learning in folk high schools is not widely studied in recent years, there are plenty of interesting investigations in the field of comprehensive learning theories and humanistic approach.

In relation to the facilitation of personal development it is hard to point out the use of particular methods, except the necessity to promote the ability to reflect. At the same time it is important to pay greater attention to the environment and the relationship "teacher-student, student-student" as the most crucial factors for personal development. According to this finding the importance of relationship based on cooperation and communication is discussed in Knud Illeris (2004; 2009) approach of three dimensions of adult learning, where interaction between a person and environment (teacher or other source of knowledge) is one of two main processes necessary for person to learn in comprehensive manner. Not the methods, but ability to work together is crucial.

In both countries as an important factor that is related to the personal development is the perceiving student as a value, which is the basis of humanistic approach and is Grundtvig's firm belief. Latvia is a good example, how this aspect could be improved - the students also can support each other in learning process and value positively each other. Čehlovs (2008) in his study calls this perspective as person being in the center of learning. According to his position this kind of learning contains two aspects – humanization and humanitarization. The first one represents respectful and in moral values grounded relationship, and the second one means integration of high human values into all aspects of learning and teaching. Meanwhile, Veugelers (2003, p. 8) sees that as a crucial aspect nowadays and identifies it as 'personal development in relation to others', when students try to help each other in their process of development.

In relation to high or democratic values, it can be seen that in Denmark students not only reflect about it (that mainly takes place in Latvian folk high schools), but most important is that these values get enliven in practise, involving the body and emotions that can help to consolidate them. This aspect goes together with the comprehensive learning theory approach represented by Peter Jarvis (2006; 2010), where adults are not only constructing their personal meaning into cognitive level, but they are developing 'as a whole' – transforming themselves through body, emotions and mind. Of course, Denmark is one step up and is an excellent example, how general study content can be felt deeply, using the body and emotions, that according to Jarvis (2010) can help to make deeper changes in a person's experience.

In Latvia's folk high schools the learning process includes topics that are important for students, affect their lives and the methods are developed well, how one can work with the person's values. While in Denmark this aspect is not so emphasized, putting more attention on the "other", global values.

Different manifestation of this aspect in two countries correlates well with opinion of Venter (2010), who is speaking about increasing influence of globalization and also actualization of highest Maslow's self-transcendent level in our society. Venter (2010) points out that people who have achieved self-realization can go to the next level – self-transcendent, where a person can help others to achieve self-realization. Thus, it can be assumed that in Denmark, the country with long democratic traditions the adults in folk high schools are promoted not only to think about themselves, but to think more about the possibilities to help others.

Summing up in Denmark adults have more emphasize on knowing themselves, expressing their feelings through different activities, objects, trying to discuss, that is why often the discussions take place on various aspects of life and person, not focusing so much on the experience of the student. Whereas in Latvia the adults' personal development is understood more as self-realization and improvement of their lives. Adults come to folk high school with the purpose to improve the quality of life or a particular dimension of his personality. That is why the teachers take into consideration things that are close and important to students' life.

Conclusions

Adult's personal development in folk high school can be defined as a learning process, in which the students are supported for the work with themselves or with important things for themselves – in bodily, emotional and mental dimensions.

Learning process for adult's personal development in folk high school is highly humanistic and comprehensive. Humanistic basis is included in the integration of three main aspects – person as a value, person's values and high-/democratic values. It means that it is important in learning environment to create the experience, in which an adult and his activities get positive evaluation, the reflection on important things for adult is ensured, as well as high-/democratic values fulfil an integral part of study content and are expressed in practice.

Personal development in a whole takes place, ensuring the opportunities of active reflection, as well as including the tasks, in which study content is expressed/enliven through the body feelings and emotional experiences. It should be noted that the same reflection takes place in three dimensions – on specific ideas, feelings and body expressions.

Valuable experience is developed for Denmark and Latvia, which can enrich the functioning of folk high schools in both countries. Denmark shows a good example, how high-/ democratic values can be felt and expressed in practice, while Latvia has good examples, how to organize learning process, based on adult values, and to create an environment, in which the students support each other's values.

The authors sincerely hope that this research paper will help the teachers, who work in adult audiences, and have a desire gradually to make a step forward to more comprehensive approach, in which an adult develops as a whole with his body, emotions and mind.

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