

Experience of presence as an inner shift towards a more holistic approach of innovation?

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Abstract. This article focuses on experiences of presence and their potential to increase creativity. The question posed is about whether singular experiences of presence are constituents of creativity and innovation, and if so, what we can learn from them. The material studied includes descriptions of the experiences of presence of 418 around in Finland. Certain main characteristics were found between the experiences, such as finding new perspectives, being connected, and meaningfulness. Many experiences recalled in the descriptions, and the three main themes, seem to be related to the inner shift, which is the necessary part of the new approaches of creativity introduced in this paper. Due to the interconnectedness of the founded themes of the experiences of presence and also to the more broad and multifaceted approaches of innovation, it is possible to think that the experiences of presence could be one of the key factors towards more creative, and more sustainable future.

Keywords. Presence, Experience, Creativity, Holistic approach, Innovation, Sustainability.

1 Introduction

“And while I stood there, I saw more than I can tell and I understood more than I saw; for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being.” - Black Elk –

Previous quotation describes the moment when the holy man of Sioux, Black Elk as a child, got the insight of the structure of unity of all living (DeMallie, 1984). Correspondingly, there is a description among the data of this research based on a diary-note of young Finnish girl: “I stopped to admire a drop of water glimmering on a birch leaf. I looked at the drop and suddenly I realized that I was seeing the structure of the whole universe in that drop. I realized that the pattern repeated itself and extended everywhere...” (Woman, 27 years, Student of Health Care)

The both experiences have happened when one has contemplated nature by being conscious and present at the moment. The visions tell about integration of the various dimensions of life into a single whole, about the bigger picture of living systems. In Black Elk’s larger vision, there is also an ability to connect strong individuals and groups as a unity, and integrate the various dimensions of life together. The unification of different groups as a unity and the integration of different dimensions are two aspects that can help us to understand what sustainable development really is (Bopp and Bopp,

2011; Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Senge, Scharmer, and Winslow, 2013).

The purpose of this article is to compare the existing literature of new, more holistic approaches of creativity and innovation to the Finnish individual experiences of presence, whether there are connections between peoples' descriptions and new theories of organizational creativity.

1.1 The need of a more holistic point of view

Nowadays, we are living middle of the global challenges, which are linked with ecology, society, economy, and culture. The specialists of the holistic innovation development and managerial thinking introduced in this paper (such as Katrin Kaufer, Otto Scharmer, Peter Senge, Kathryn Goldman Schuyler, and Karl-Erik Sveiby) are convinced that the next great opening of a new, creative worldview will have to be an internal one. The next level of human development is the stage about bringing back the interior to be in balance to the exterior (Kaipa, 2007; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013), as the shift in the social field, and as the important part of the needed innovation ability (Scharmer, 2009). By becoming aware of your mind construction by observing it, you may learn a lot about yourself, others, and creativity (Goldman Schuyler, Skjei, Sanzgiri, and Koskela, 2017; Kaipa, 2007; Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). World economist Brian Arthur has said: "Every profound innovation is based on an inward bound journey; ongoing to a deeper place where knowing comes to the surface" (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers, 2005, p.13). Consequently, solving global crises requires new kinds of creativity and more sustainable innovativeness instead of old paradigms and patterns (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Moss, 2012; Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer, 2010; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006). We will not be able to solve our problems if we disregard the global problems facing our planet and if we do not reconsider our approach consciously towards the fundamentals that uphold life, the unity of all living in the planet. Peter Senge calls this kind of aware moment of presence as participating in a large field for change: "When this happens, the field shifts, and the forces shaping a situation can move from re-creating the past to manifesting or realizing an emerging future" (Senge et al., 2005, p. 13-14). It is necessary to change a reductive kind of awareness that is based on alienation and separation to one of co-creation (Senge et al., 2005). This is a new point of view to the Western technological thinking, which has its roots in Judeo-Christian traditions, where nature is considered to be separated from human beings, and instead it exists for the benefit of humanity (Klemola, 2004; Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Singer, 1993; Varto and Veenkivi, 1997; Varto, 2011). In many indigenous cultures, nature has been the critical factor for the production function (Kaipa, 2007; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, 2011; Varto and Veenkivi, 1997).

This article focuses on the phenomenon of Finnish presence and its links to the new, holistic approaches of creativity and innovation. For this qualitative study, there were analyzed and thematized 418 subjective descriptions of individuals' recollections of experiences of presence, and the founded themes were looked through the new sustainable waves of creativity and innovation. The aims of the research was to find out three different things: 1. How the Finnish awareness of being at the moment manifest itself? 2. What variation there are between different experiences? 3. Whether the

experiences are linked to the needed holistic creativity and innovation of our time? The results of this paper will show how the experiences of presence can be seen through the three different main themes, which are strongly linked to creativity and also to some new, holistic approaches of innovation. It seems that a singular experience of aware moment of presence could be an important part of broader space of human interaction, managerial thinking and creativity. Or like Scharmer and Kaufer (2013) explain the gist of this framework: "The quality of results produced by any system depends on the quality of awareness from which people in the system operate" (p. 18).

1.2 The birth of this research

The idea for this study was born during the year 2011 when I got an insight about the common need of being at the moment, the ability of being present - middle of chaotic working life. At that time, I was working in an innovation unit of university, and my work was to facilitate practice-based innovation sessions and try to develop more creative work community together with the members of different organizations. As a long-term community facilitator (also as a theatre pedagogy which is my profession), I soon noticed that many people do not truly have time, space, or tools to encounter each other in their daily communication at work. This situation is apt to deliver "bottlenecks" of interaction, which profoundly affect the entire organizational system, increase uncertainty and decrease creativity. After this grassroots' observation, I started to contemplate if the experience of presence could be used to alleviate this issue. That was the birth seed of my dissertation research, the first step to research people's individual experiences.

1.3 The progress of the research and the research questions

The first participants for this study were collected through social media (Facebook). I asked for 300 people, if they were interested about the experiences of presence. There was about 10% of them (exactly 28 people), who wanted to answer my research questions by sending me self-written narratives about their individual experiences. Some people asked me to interview them, because they found it easier to talk than write about their tacit experiences. That is why there are also many interviews in a data. It was important that people could describe their individual experiences with their own ways and words. For methodology, I chose phenomenology because it prioritizes direct experience (Bentz and Rehorick, 2008; Cunliffe, 2009; Halprin, 2003; Van Manen, 2016). After the collected narratives and first interviews, I had a possibility to start collect experiences of presence in the innovation workshops at my work as a facilitator, and as an art based -tools experienced community trainer. Therefore, my research is also extensively process-based and developed by en route. The 'certain human experience' (the nuclear of phenomenological studies) that I wanted to understand, is the human experience of presence, the ability to be in the present moment, how people experience and describe it. Being a phenomenologist requires a mindful engagement with phenomena, which may be the lived experience of self or others. (Simpson, 2008; Van Manen, 2016.)

The main research questions have been the same from the very beginning: What are the individual experiences of presence like? How do people describe them? In addition, do the experiences of presence have any connections to innovation and creativity?

2 Literature

According to Francisco Varela (Scharmer, 2000) the problem of Western science is not that we do not know enough about the brain, the problem is that we do not know enough about our experience (practice), about the importance of taking seriously first-person experience (Goldman Schuyler et al., 2017). We have had a blind spot in the West for that kind of methodological approach, which is in other words: consciousness (Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013), or, the process of becoming aware (Carroll, 2007; Scharmer, 2000; Senge et al., 2005). Western science and Eastern Buddhism have this common fingerprint: they both examine human experience through observation, analysis, and empirical experience (Goldman Schuyler et al., 2017; Bruce and Davies, 2005). The human experience is related to every single human being's capability to innovate, which must be nurtured since birth along with the values like liberty, responsibility, solidarity, and compassion (Tribolet, 2013). According to the literature, an organization that has encourage, free, diverse, and collaborative culture of open communication increases creativity and innovation. Information flows are dependent on organizational culture. An organic and communicative organization facilitated greater creativity and innovation compared with a mechanistic one. (McLean, 2005.) In addition, self-knowledge is possible only if the relation between people and creation is understood to be a dialogical relationship. In human encounters, there is the space where the creative processes take place. (Yaron, 1993.) Individual creativity is at its best, when human mind experiences the unity, the whole, and is keen on to solve the problem of the world (Varto, 2008). The essence of organizational creativity and innovation is to re-create the world according to a particular mission and value (Takeuchi, 2006).

This paper is a qualitative study with phenomenological approach to discover the different ways that people experience presence and how people's experiences are connected with the literature of organizational creativity and innovation.

2.1 The nature-connected lifestyle as an example for a more holistic point of view

Many indigenous tribes of humanity have (or have had) same kind of holistic and phenomenological approaches to life, the aboriginals are no strangers to their own experiences (Varto and Veenkivi, 1997). For example, Karl-Erik Sveiby and Ted Skuthorpe (2006) have researched Australian aboriginal culture, where the "recipe" for sustainable progress happens in a deep connection with the inner and outer world. This selective way of creative act consider consequences before introducing new technology into society (Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006). The aboriginals' daily actions in nature is led by the ancient all-encompassing creativity and intelligence (Hidalgo, 2015; Sveiby, 2011; Varto and Veenkivi, 1997). A lucid example of the sustainably society is one of the world's oldest (and longest-living) cultures, the Australian Ngunnabarra (Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006). The main difference between Western society and the society of the ancient Australian Aboriginals lies in the perception of being connected with nature. Western people, "Homo Economicus", have used nature as a property and a source of produce to be possessed and to be sold (Hidalgo, 2015; Louv, 2011; Macy, 2014; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006) whereas aboriginals have been aware of their connection with it. In their language there is no word for 'time', instead past, present and future

are the same - existing in the present moment. Innovation is perceived as being the discovery of ideas that have always been there, you just have to pick it up. For the indigenous Australians, the effect of actions depends on the “innovativeness” of people in their own community in interaction with other communities and the environment. The “recipe” for sustainable progress, which happens always in a deep connection with the inner and outer world, is to be selective and to consider consequences before introducing new technology into society. (Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006.) Certain indigenous myths include the conceptions of the visible and invisible worlds and entities being brought firmly together without any dichotomy (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Varto and Veenkivi, 1997). Anthropologists, such as Paul Radin and Mircea Eliade, have noticed similar universal ideas of contemplative thought focused on meaning (as opposed to calculative thought and resultorientation) everywhere and at all times (Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992). Certain American Indian legends also speak of a simultaneous future which has already happened (Bopp and Bopp, 2011; Louv, 2011; Varto and Veenkivi, 1997).

The mental and holistic aspects of individual creativity and innovation ability have so far only been researched marginally. However, during recent years, the subject has slowly aroused more interest for example in some studies into biomimicry that draw inspiration from admiration and respect for nature. Nature is “not an enemy to be vanquished, but our design partner; not the problem, but the solution” (Louv, 2011, p. 190), even it is still often seen as something to travel to – not something, we are dependent upon for our physical, emotional and mental health (Baker, 2009). According to international studies, the power of nature and connection with the natural world are fundamental for human intelligence, well-being, spirituality and survival (Frumkin 2001, Louv, 2011), and the observations of nature can evoke a sense of spirituality (Louv, 2010) and a desire to protect the environment (Chawla, 2007). Previously, there are even found many relations with nature and creativity in the new research (Williams, 2017).

Some theorists in the field of sustainable innovation suggest or talk about the ‘bigger picture’, the holistic model that portrays the interdependencies and interconnectedness between economy, society and environment (Bopp and Bopp, 2011; Draper, 2013; Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Seebode, 2011). The economy depends on society and the environment (although for many people, society did and still does exist without a formal economy). Nature will continue to exist without humanity and human activity. The holistic view breaks down barriers between sectors and disciplines, because it allows diverse, currently unaligned and even competing players to work together. This interconnectedness is seen to be the important key to sustainable development. (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Seebode, 2011.) This task of interconnectedness is typical for evolution. Modern quantum physics teaches us that all living creatures and elements are connected in this kind of creative way (Bopp and Bopp, 2011.), and the most creative learning happens in groups (Robinson, 2010). For example in a world, where children play in their local green space and are welcomed to do so, they become part of the community, understand more, feel and behave better, are healthier, and work more cooperatively (Moss, 2012). There is a lot of new studies that emphasizes that being outdoors and the contact with nature inspires and increases creativity, and decreases stress and depression (Louv; 2009; Louv, 2011; Williams,

2017). In some of these research, it is found that children exposed to nature improved their awareness, reasoning and observational skills; did better in many school studies; were better at working in teams; and showed improved behavior overall (Moss, 2012). Sir Ken Robinson highlights (2010) that according to the large international studies we all have the capacity of “genius level” until kindergarten age. When we go to school and become educated, the level of this creativity decreases year after year. Robinson criticizes our modern Western education about too mechanistic thinking, and calls for that we have to start think differently about human capacity. Creativity, the process of having original ideas that have value, is nearer very little children who are still open to the world with all their senses than educated adults. (Robinson, 2010.)

2.2 The difference between creativity and innovation

Creativity and innovation are closely related constructs, but not the same phenomenon. In the fields of organizational studies, the difference between creativity and innovation is often described that innovation is part of creativity. Words associated with the definition of creativity include for example idea and invention, when innovation is on taking a creative idea and bringing it to fruition. There are many ideas that never see the light of day in organizations. A useful idea, which is processed from concept to market, must be recognized for its potential in many various ways. This important process is referred to as innovation when talking about creativity in the context of organizations. McLean (2005) highlights that in the context of organizational development creativity without innovation is of significantly diminished value and the same vice versa, without creative ideas the innovation is an engine without any fuel. Another intrinsic difference between creativity and innovation is that the focus of creativity is usually on the individual, when the focus of innovation is more on interactions, and dynamics among parts of the organizations and its environment (Martins and Terblanche, 2003). (McLean, 2005.)

There are many unutterable ways to understand innovation. Innovation is often understood as a new idea, device, method, or a process of introducing them, and one of the main characteristic for the birth of innovation is the ability to co-operate, collaborate, learn collectively, and create trustful and creative atmosphere with the people who are participating in the process (Harmaakorpi and Melkas, 2005). Another way to understand the innovation ability is a situation, when there is found new solution for the problem by considering the phenomenon in a new point of view, and by developing new tools and methods for this necessity (Melkas and Harmaakorpi, 2012). Organizational culture is a critical factor in the success of any organization. The basic elements of organizational culture and interaction are for example shared values, beliefs and behavior. All those factors influence also creativity and innovation. If the organizational culture supports creativity, it encourages innovative ways of finding solutions, too. According to the literature, one of the best approaches to describe organizational culture is based on open systems approach, which offers a holistic perspective that allows the investigation of the interdependencies and interaction of the different sub-systems and elements in an organization. The organizational interaction between people, technology and the external environment represent a very complex environment, where creativity and innovation can be influenced by several variables. For example, the values, beliefs and behavior of individuals and groups that play a role

in organizational creativity can either support or restrain creativity and innovation. Personnel must feel emotionally safe and trust to be able to act creatively and/or innovatively. Open communication between individuals is an important key for that. (Martins and Terblanche, 2003.) Creativity is a dynamic and interactive process that is linked with the peculiar ideas and value, and it is often born in interaction between different views (Robinson, 2007). Nowadays there have been started to consider the multidimensional character of innovation also in all human and organizational interaction and relations (e.g., Darso and Hoyrup, 2012; Elkjaer, 2004; Nilsen and Ellström, 2012; Pässilä, Oikarinen, and Vince, 2012).

To understand creativity in all of its richness is to emphasize pluralism and different theories, assumptions, and methods. There is no need to emphasize any theoretical perspective at the expense of others. The more complex the system, the more freedom there is for individuals. Freedom is necessary for ideational variation and creativity, which usually needs also divergent thinking. Sometimes too much divergence may lead to ideas, which are not creative in the sense of originality or usefulness. (Kozbelt, Beghetto, & Runco, 2010.) Creativity has also the shadow side on it: some people may be unaware or unwilling to anticipate the dark side of their creative work. They may blinding themselves to evil consequences, because for example of the prospect of money and fame or the manipulation of a dominant principal. (Cropley, 2010.)

In organizations, creativity also need abilities to facilitate so called 'open spaces'. These situations need that facilitators will have exhibit to sense people and things around, and inside yourself. Peter Senge calls this ability as a work of an artist. (Senge et al., 2013). One intrinsic role of leadership is to facilitate the dynamic and continuous knowledge-creating processes and understand them (Nonaka, Toyama, & Konno, 2000).

In this paper, the focus is in the individual experiences of presence and its interrelation with creative thinking, and with more holistic way of innovation, which presume factors like the ability to interact collectively and create open relationships between the innovating partners in order to solve collective problems (Harmaakorpi, 2006; Kallio, 2012).

2.3 Presence – the inner ability of being at the moment

In this article the concept of 'presence' - 'the state of condition of being present' – as defined by the Illustrated Oxford Dictionary (1998), is used to signify a combination of sensing and being present. Presence is described as being fully conscious in the present moment when one no longer waits for the following moment to fulfill this current one (Senge et al., 2005; Tolle, 1999), and to be connect with the source of the highest future possibility and to bring it into the now (Scharmer, 2009). The roots of phenomenon of presence are in the Buddhist Philosophy wherein the emphasis is direct experience in the here and now (Bruce and Davies, 2005; Scharmer, 2009). The understanding of the phenomenon has spread to the Western world through different approaches of meditation, yoga, mindfulness, and contemplation. Presence can be defined as a quality of awareness, a flexible state of conscious (and mindful) mind that includes the intentional ability to pay attention non-judgmentally to the present moment, and notice new things (Bishop, 2002; Kabat-Zinn, 1996; Langer, 2000; Takanen, 2013; Tugend, 2013). In the mindful moment, people are more aware to what

is happening at the moment than they were a moment before by being highly attentive to one's experience and surroundings, so their attention is focused on present-moment both externally and internally (Dane, 2010). Over the last decade, much research in this area has been carried out under the label of mindfulness (Dane, 2010; Grossman, 2010; Grossman, 2011; Grossman and Van Dam, 2011; Rinpoche and Swanson, 2012; Weick and Putnam, 2006). The recent leadership research support the perception that leaders need to be self-aware and present to those whom they lead, and to the emerging situations (Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013; Senge et al., 2005; Weick and Putnam, 2006). There is still lack of research that would investigate whether presence, or mindfulness, matters – for example from an organizational standpoint (Dane, 2010).

In phenomenology, presence may be seen as an actor that makes every moment appear constantly new and fresh, reorders itself every moment and changes individual denotations of phenomena (Varto, 2011).

2.4 New waves of innovation - the sustainable, holistic approach

Humanity is now facing global challenges (climate change, hunger, pollution, economic crisis etc.), which need new perspectives for our outdated technological and organizational thinking. There is need to build new patterns of creative thinking and innovation in relation to all life forms on the planet Earth (Bopp and Bopp, 2011; Macy and Brown, 2014; Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013; Senge et al., 2005; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, 2011). For that, we have to see and consciously recognize our own, individual and experience-based ways of thinking: we have to be aware of our blind spots (Flipse, Vrieling, and van der Sanden, 2015; Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). Blind spot is the part of human thinking and doing that is usually invisible, or, the inner place of source from which a person operates, and the part which matters most (Scharmer, 2009). These blind spots have their influences in innovation economy as well; they have an impact on the environmental and societal consequences of new products. Innovation is not always 'good'. According to such organizational thinkers as Peter Senge et al. (2009), Otto Scharmer and Katryn Kaufer (2013), and Karl-Erik Sveiby (Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, Gripenberg, Segercrantz, Eriksson, and Aminoff, 2009) there is needed more discourses on desirable and undesirable consequences of innovation, because we face today the problems, which are the result of thinking whose time has passed. There is need to invent the institutional innovations that will upgrade the economic operating system from 'me to we', from ego-system to eco-system logic and awareness (Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). This kind of innovating as an attitude towards the world (Tribolet, 2013) includes many elements of sustainability (Prud'homme van Reine, 2013; Senge et al., 2009; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006), but it also needs the individual awareness of one's acts and attitudes, the 'social technology of presencing', as Otto Scharmer describes it in his Theory U (2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). This signifies realization a new, more conscious way of understanding meaning that especially leaders need to take into consideration wider perspectives, such as inner development towards the common values that uphold all living on our planet in order to cope (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Santorelli, 2011; Scharmer, 2009). New tools, approaches, and ways of collaborating and innovating are needed across boundaries by shifting the current leadership culture of into a culture of empathy, and transparency. The way for that is to

become more aware of what is happening - inside of yourself - and outside in the world. This is also a one way to find creative solutions to humanity's tricky challenges. (Drader, 2013; Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013; Senge et al., 2005.)

Many new approaches of sustainable innovation want to take different systems in a new direction - beyond 'business as usual': systems which are more resilient, more equitable, and able to continue into the future (Drader, 2013). These kind of approaches are related to the way of life where the goal is to achieve more sustainable and interactive development in every dimension of the organizational, living systems (Bopp and Bopp, 2011; Hidalgo, 2015; Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Senge et al., 2009; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, 2011). Nature is an integrated entirety, full of colors, shapes, circles, and an immense diversity of relationships that hold different systems together. This diversity is also an expression of practical and sustainable problem solving. If people had better ability to understand the complex natural system that support life on Earth, then they would be more likely to respect the limits of the system and to create communities that operate in balance with the natural world. This is the key requirement of sustainability. (Hempel, 2014; Juniper, 2013; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006.)

In this paper, there is contemplated and analyzed through the practice-based experiences, whether the ability of being present at the moment could be one approach, or method, to the new kind of creative thinking in organizational development and innovation.

2.5 Scharmer's ways of listening as a model for inner shift and for more creativity

Scharmer claims that the old paradigm of government aid is simply inadequate to the challenge, because the crisis of our time reveals the dying of an old way of thinking, and enacting collective social forms (Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). Many participants of this research are the frontline professionals, like managers, teachers, nurses, physicians, laborers, entrepreneurs, and artists who share the current reality where they can feel the heat of an ever-increasing pressure to do more work in a spinning hamster wheel. Scharmer (2009) believes that inside of the hamster wheel there is rising a new form of presence and creativity that starts to grow spontaneously: "... a different quality of connection, a different way of being present with one another and with what wants to emerge" (2009, p. 4). It is a different social field, which manifests through a shift in the quality of interaction. In that shift, people can connect with a deeper source of creativity by stepping into their real power of their authentic self. Scharmer calls this change as a shift in the social field, in which there are four different levels of projecting, or the levels of listening. The organizational creativity and leadership need all those levels together. (Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013.) The four levels of listening are seen in the Table 1.

Table 1. The new levels of listening by Otto Scharmer (2009, p. 11-13)

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1. – "I-in-me" –attitude, where the conversation reconfirms what you already knew: "Yeah, I already know that". This approach depends on the "past" and customary ways of doing things where the matter and source are separated each other. This is still the most used way of human behaving in many organizations.
 2. Factual/Seeing/Suspending – "I-in-it" –attitude you disconfirm what you already know and notice what is new, an ability to see things with fresh eyes: "Ooh, look at that..."

- This is called open mind, which mirrors new facts, ideas and views. This is typical level for research and education.
3. Empathy/Sensing – “I-in-you” –attitude is seeing the situation through the eyes of another: “Boy, yes, now I really understand how you feel about it”. This is called open heart, capacity to empathize with others. The space between two separated worlds (I and the Other) starts to shift and open up – like a new landscape.
 4. Generative/Presencing – “I-in-now” –attitude is reflecting the power of silence where you are no longer the same person you were when it began: “I can’t express what I experience in words. My whole being is slowed down. I feel more quiet and present and more my real self.” This is called open will, which operates creating from the Source and helps you step into the Field of Future. It is an ability to access authentic purpose of self.
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According to Scharmer (2009), and Scharmer and Kaufer (2013) most organizations, institutions and larger systems still remain on the levels 1. or 2. because they are not capable of cultivating these capacities on a collective level. In the ideal circumstances, when the three first attitudes (I-in-me, open mind and open heart) are connected in the experience of open will, it will access spiritual intelligence, i.e. the authentic purpose of self, and carry you to the possibilities of your future potential. The most important tool in new organizational leadership is the last one, open will as a connection to our real source of presence, yourself, purpose, creativity and power. Open will is a turn inside of ourselves, by silencing our minds and observing our expressions – by come in, emerging future identity and purpose. (Senge et al., 2005; Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013.)

The contribution of this qualitative article (with practical implications for further research) is recognizing a Finnish experience of the presence and benefitting from it as a factor contributing to more holistic and sustainable approaches of creativity and innovation.

When going through all the data with phenomenological thematic analysis, it is seen that the most described meanings of the experiences may be separated for three main themes. They are a new point of view (inspiration, insight, change, understanding the other’s point of view, etc.), feeling of connection (with nature, another person, or oneself), and meaningfulness (or bigger picture of your work, life, or mission). All these aspects of present moment are connected both with the inner shift and with different approaches of holistic innovation, creativity - and with the leadership capability (Goldman Schuyler et al., 2017; Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016).

Common elements in different experiences suggest new approaches towards holistic ways of thinking, which encourages further research into the phenomenon of presence, which could become a necessary tool for a new, more sustainable way of thinking and acting.

3 Data and methodology

The data of this paper include 418 Finnish experiences of presence. The data has been collected during the years 2011 - 2016, it comprehends 36 free-written narratives, 16 interviews, and 366 post it -notes from presence-workshops or -sessions. The whole data are seen in the Table 2.

Table 2. The data.

Data material	When collected	Where	The amount of participants
Self-written narratives	2011 – 2012	Through social media from different parts of Finland	36
Interviews	2011 – 2016	In Tampere and in Lahti	16
Free-written post it -notes	2011 – 2015	In innovation workshops. Finnish organizations of public, private and third sectors.	366

The structured questions in collected narratives and interviews were:

1. Where/In what situation have you experienced a NOW-moment/presence (and in some cases there was also asked contrary: In what situation you have not been present at the moment)? Describe your experience with your own words.
2. How do you think your experiences have been affected to you?
3. Is this topic important to you? If it is, describe the reason? If not, why do you feel it is not significant?

The main questions in workshops - during the practice silencing your mind - were:

1. Where/In what situation have you experienced a NOW-moment/presence? Look at your experiences, pick a one, and re-examine it in all its details.
2. How did your experience affected to you?

In the workshops (after becoming acquiring and warm-up -practices) I asked people to silence their minds (with the help of basic meditation practice) by focusing with breathing at the moment. The next, and the most important exercise after meditation, was an image practice, where people were facilitated to remember several individual experiences of presence, and to pick a one of them: What kind of details was seen in the experience, what was it like? Who were present in that moment, where did it happen? What was the weather like, what time of the year or a day it was? How did the experience affected? What is the effect of that experience here and now? After these reflecting exercises, the participants of the workshops wrote down their experiences to the post it -notes. In the last part of workshop, there was a common session where people shared their memories, experiences, and insights together. It is called the 'common space of sharing', the space of equally shared knowledge, which may also be a space of new perspectives, ideas, or in some cases even social innovations - depending on the group and their goals.

Later in this paper, I will mention two workshop processes, which were both part of the data, and connected to the birth of social innovations - such as a social enterprise and a new collaborative tool for social work. The contemplative, art-based exercises - and the experiences of presence - were the main tools for collecting the business ideas (Konsti-Laakso, Koskela, Martikainen, Melkas, and Mellanen, 2016). There is a strong link between the arts and community innovation and development (e.g., Skippington and Davis, 2013). It has been shown that art- and experiences -based tools may increase creativity and innovation, and challenge organizations to broaden their roles to include active support of the development of social and human capital in communities

(Scharmer, 2009; Skippington and Davis, 2013). Artistic, mindfulness and contemplative capabilities have also been shown to be valuable in creative community development including decision-making, creative problem-solving, design skills, interaction, reflection and evaluation (Koskela, 2012; Scharmer, 2009; Skippington and Davis, 2013). In all the workshops in this study were used contemplative, art-based, and experiential exercises, and the most important of them was the moment of silencing your mind, the moment of being present, and the image practice after that which asked participants to 're-member' their experiences of presence.

Because there were larger numbers of participants in this research, I entered the data into a database according to the phenomenological thematic analysis headings by using a facility to extract and compare both participants' descriptions and narratives, my research notes, entries, and theoretical emphasizes. This also enables data entered under different headings to be compared, particularly useful to identify relationships between different themes. (Lester, 1999.) The workshop post it –notes and singular interviews were transcribed verbatim. The purpose was to investigate so distinctly as possible the manifold of people's experiences by using their own words, descriptions and phenomenological analyses. Phenomenological analyses is a useful tool to discover the differences between understanding and experiencing certain phenomena (Marton, 1986; Van Manen, 2016) concerning the relationship between people and the world as well as to describe them (Hasselgren and Beach, 1997). Both positive and negative side of the phenomenological theme analyses is its living nature; it is challenging, or even impossible, to describe strictly the lived experience, which cannot be captured in conceptual abstractions (Van Manen, 1998). In this article, the phenomenological analysis is used to categorize the different, individual experiences of presence to pick up the most popular of them. In the next chapters, these main themes of the individual experiences is introduced more in detail.

4 Results

“Being present in the now provides the only way to silence inner speech, which along with conscious thinking, keeps the mind restless. (Woman, 42 years, MA)

The collected experiences of presence were thematized based on the perceptions that people had of their experiences, and the types of qualitative differences. Most people used the word 'connection' to describe their experiences of silencing the restless inner speech, but their connections were different. When I had gone through the data several times by using phenomenological analysis I could separate and thematize three main characteristics with different emphasis between the narratives: 1. Finding a new point of view, 2. Feeling of connection (with oneself, another, or nature) which in many cases seem to lead to 3. Connecting with meaningfulness. All those three themes were linked to Scharmer's definitions of the states of open mind, open heart, and open will. The themes were also partly familiar with the theories of creativity and more holistic, sustainable innovation.

The three main themes are categorized in table 3. and compared with the levels of listening in Scharmer's theory of a new social technology (Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer

and Kaufer, 2013).

Table 3. The main themes of the data compared with Scharmer's three levels of new social technology of presence: Open Mind, Open Heart and Open Will (See Table 1.)

1. *New point of view:* Like a fresh look, perceiving objects and facts, observing from another perspective, uncontrolled thoughts, moving to the border of your comfort-zone, curiosity towards new things. All these characteristics are typical for an Open Mind in Scharmer's Theory U (2009).

2. *Feeling of connection:* Like connection with nature, connection with another person, connection with oneself: connection with harmony and stillness/empty mind, flow (bodily/mental connection), connection with synchronicity in everything (inside and outside of oneself) and feeling of respect and responsibility (towards oneself or the Other). All these characteristics are typical for Open Heart in Scharmer's Theory U (2009).

3. *Meaningfulness:* Like finding your roots, revelation, receiving comfort, love, grace or gratitude, "I know now" -intuition, "bigger picture" of everything, finding your mission and finding an answer, a solution. All these characteristics are familiar with Charmer's (2009) Open Will.

According to the data, people describe presence as a state where they are in touch (or connection) with themselves; their minds are relaxed and "off" yet focused although not on a task. Being sensitive to one's own mind in a state of relaxed alertness opens the mind to all possible options, sources of new viewpoints, in the current situation: "I was looking at a straw swaying in the wind and suddenly it happened: The moment became lucid. I could feel it all around my body as if I could feel all my cells and atoms...---...In a way I disappeared and in a way I was present more than ever before." (Woman, 24 years, Drama Student)

The experience of presence is often kind of a new awareness of your daily being. The participants of this research find both new perspective, feelings of different interconnections, and meaningfulness from their experiences. Several of details of these three themes are mentioned often in the data. There are lot of self-reflections connected for example with one's emotions, attitudes, interaction, and behavior - in other words: increased consciousness, or inner shift. Peter Senge, systems scientist and founder of the Society for Organizational Learning, describes this reflected process of increased awareness: "There is this Peter who is talking and one who is observing. It is kind of a binocular vision. You have to be in yourself talking, and also have that awareness of standing to the side of yourself. I think part of it is not being attached to your self. We all started to kind of disassociate ourselves from our mind strategies -- like if I do this, this will happen as opposed to just being present and saying whatever happens is fine. It is about really supporting our intentions and supporting people who are there." (Peter Senge's Interview by Kaipa, 2007.)

Creativity thinking in novel ways is facilitated when people are to put in up-front time to think in new way (Sternberg, 2006), from different points of view (McLean, 2005), or to share a common oneness with other people where the focus of that common oneness can be all inclusive or very specific (Bopp and Bopp, 2011). When individuals and environments are related to each other, the problematic situation can only be studied as a united whole. It is researched that when we understand experience as a transaction between individual and environment, we understand such experience both

as a process and a product where intuition, emotion, and body are important part of it, important part of organizational knowledge. (Elkjaer, 2004.) For creativity, and for innovative solutions, people need environments that are supportive and recompensing of creative ideas (Eaton, Hughes, and MacGregor, 2017; Moss, 2012; Sternberg, 2006).

The remarkable part of the experiences of the presence in the data happened somewhere outside in nature. One approach of creativity is found from the Australian aboriginal culture, which followed sustainable recipe for society tens of thousands of years in a nature-connected living-model where all are connected (Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, 2011). Even today, it is possible that society is in balance with its various environments, respecting all living as having the same value, a sense of connection with life as holy (Macy and Brown, 2014). This kind of mental attitude towards nature is largely found through the data, especially in people's free-written narratives. Many participants have get ideas, inspiration, and insights to both their work and private life when they have been wandering around woods, parks, or lakesides of their cottages.

In the examples of the next chapters is described more deeply how the main themes of the experiences of presence are intertwined both the conceptions of open mind, open heart, and open will, and the other approaches of creativity and more holistic or sustainable innovation.

4.1 Experiences of presence as sources of new viewpoints and incentives to change (Open Mind)

Open mind can be seen as an attitude or a point of view, which may change one's attitude and perspective to see things for example with new eyes: "----... when being alone by myself, I do not control my thoughts or what I say to myself. It is easier to drift to a situation and a state of mind where something grabs my attention, empties my mind of all thoughts and I no longer see my surroundings the way they are." (Man, 45 years, Stage Worker)

Or in some cases people open themselves for everything what shows up from the mind by giving space for emptiness: "The most important insight about my experiences of presence has been kind of orientation of opening, not exclusion. When I am first accepting all the noise of my thoughts and images, even the dirtiest emotions, I may get space for emptiness". (Woman 34 years, counselor of social services)

Sometimes the experience is like a space which expands or appears during the challenging moment of a concentration: "Sometimes when I am writing, not any fiction but for example the financial aids, or some other official writings when you just have to justify your application. It is like you are detaching yourself during the work...and same time you may 'know' that 'this will be good'. This flow." (Woman, 52 years, Academic Degree Unemployed)

According to the data, it seems that opening your mind is the art of opening the space for something still unknown by letting go the old. Creativity needs opening oneself to new, sometimes even strange and foreign ideas (Senge et al., 2009). These kind of experiences are difficult to describe by words: "Actually, words cannot describe my experience; I do not believe that there is any way to describe that moment." (Man, 37 years, Project Manager)

The Western people usually are used to target, set goals and get benefits. But often,

when you try too much to force something, it fails. This is also mentioned in the data. It seems almost impossible to capture presence. In Western thinking, the focus – also in innovation and creativity – is often on individuality, individual rights (and wrongs), and self-determination – in myself. The difference between Eastern and Western thinking is that when the East generally encourages personal inquiry into the relationship between self and cosmos, the West encourages and value belief. (Jones and Mason, 2009.) An open state of mind is “a window away from oneself” (Scharmer, 2009, p.11), from the ego - like at the moment in the data when a couple is waiting for a birth of a first newborn: “...-----time stopped. There was nothing else, no baby yet, only my husband and me. There was no need to rush anywhere. We were there and waited for something to happen, but because we did not know what it was, we could not rush.” (Woman 32 years, Research Scientist)

In creativity research, the shift of perspective can contribute to original insights and be useful for creativity, but not if the change is so extreme that ideas have no connection to the problem at hand (Kozbelt, Beghetto, and Runco, 2010). According to the data, the experiences of presence seem change many people’s perspectives, attitudes, and preconceptions – by opening people towards the new world and experiences. The open mind may lead to boost out from the individual comfort zone, help to find new points of view, increase curiosity and activity, and in many cases, lead to change insights into future choices.

4.2 Feeling of connection (Open Heart) to inner and outer nature

The most used word in the descriptions of the presence was ‘connection’. Connection to yourself, for example to your physical body and to your emotions (which are not always positive) was one of the most experienced ‘presencing’ at the data. A female worker of the child welfare organization writes about the experience when looking through the reports about children taken into custody: “Reading those stories for the first time I felt black blood flowing through my vessels.” (Woman, 37 years, Customer Coordinator Manager)

Many experiences of presence have happened when people are feeling connection with other people, for example by encountering customers: “Presence has remarkable role in social work...Only by being present in certain situations gives you the possibility to encounter customers as best as possible.” (Woman, 34 years, Social Worker)

Another typical feature in the data is that during the experiences of presence people are feeling more compassion for each other: “When I have listened to another person’s sorrows, I have felt completely dissolved in the moment and present with my full potential...” (Woman, 27 years, Student of Health Care)

Open heart as listening with empathy means capacity to connect directly with another; the world is seen through someone else’s eyes forgetting one’s own agenda (Scharmer, 2009). The authors of the Presence (2005) write that the key word in this state of connection is “we”. When the ‘theys’ go away and the ‘we’ shows up - without blaming others for every problem - people’s awareness - and capability to do things - change. (Senge et al, 2005). The act of authentic sharing and co-operation of ‘we’ is the stone foundation of community development (Bopp and Bopp, 2011; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006). According to the literature, when workers perceive

that an organization has their best interest in mind, when an open debate is in place, and when trust exist among interaction between people, employees can take more risks and put forth creative ideas (McLean, 2005). In one workshop process, during the years 2011-2012, all the workers participate to this research by trying to increase their abilities to be more present with their customers, one female social worker describe the workshop collaboration and sharing like this: “Self-guidance of the group is a useful technique to incorporate. It would not be meaningful to be working with something given from outside. The group dealt with issues that were relevant and came up with positive development ideas.”

According to all the collected data the presence in interaction between people is a skill, which is not hierarchical. It is often created in the state of equality, in the place of open dialogue, which can be facilitated with the help of art-based tools. Presence is a multi-dimensional capacity that involves releasing, accepting, surrendering and letting go, even if we don't exactly know what it is like or how to describe it. 'Presencing' can only be learned through personal experiences and awareness – like reflecting learning by doing, which is one of the most important part of learning for example for the leaders or whoever, who have to take charge, make decisions and be responsive to other people (Taylor, 2005). If we started championing instead of worshipping competition, our thinking would improve, and we would stop to crucify each other's courageous thinking. If we transformed the “killing meetings” with heightened awareness, we would stop to kill all energy, initiative, innovation and insight in them – by equal listening and talking. (Kline, 2015.) Organizational culture that supports open flow of communication between people will be more likely to have more creativity and innovation, when organization that encourages control will result in diminished creativity and innovation (McLean, 2005).

Some experiences have happened also during the strong connection with things, or with doing something with a focused intention: “When you are concentrating on what you are doing, time seems to disappear and you experience that you are fully present.” (Woman, 62 years, Journalist)

Identifying with nature. The most common place of connection of the data seems to be a concrete one: outside nature. Nature is present in almost 90 % narratives. People tell for example how the mindful experiences in nature have helped, provided insight, changed direction, given perspective, taken people back to their roots, induced retrospection, empowered and inspired creative processes, and assisted in making the right decisions regarding the future as well as given meaning to life and a sense of spirituality. The scale of inspirational influence of being in nature is huge through the data. It is obvious to perceive that the outside nature is substitute of kind of supportive environment that is essential element of creative thinking (Sternberg, 2006). When by contemplating the elements of the nature, it may wake up your emotions and help you to find a connection between yourself and the creature. In that meditative state of mind, it is possible to experience and identify how the tree is breathing, and how liquids are flowing inside of it. (Hidalgo, 2015.) This kind of coalescence and emphatic identifying with nature is common among the participants. Connection with nature seem to help to get connection also to yourself, your intuition and insights. In many experiences, nature has been the source of inspiration and ideas: “I breathed deeply and suddenly I noticed that I was at one with nature. The feeling was marvelous! I was no longer conscious of

time but everything around me was powerfully healing. I could not distinguish my body from the natural surroundings; I was ultimately at one with it. ...when resting there I had a vision that I need to repair the summer cottage that I had inherited...nature has an important, invigorating effect and a message, too – whenever I am ready to hear that message.” (Woman, 40 years, Interpreter)

Nature can lead a person deeper into the meaning of why he or she is here, and be a place of awareness (Macy and Brown, 2014; Senge et al., 2005; O’Donohue, 2010).

The results support the idea of nature’s positive impact on people’s senses and intelligence (Louv, 2011; Sveiby, 2011). People’s experiences in nature seem to be subjective in the same way how the landscape may be seen through its own natural subjectivity and self (O’Donohue, 2010). In the nature, it is easy to forget all the daily problems: “When I am in nature, I always feel fully present because I cannot or do not want to think about anything but the beauty of the nature when I am there.” (Woman, 35 years, Economics Student, Employed)

Nature is something to be respected in its own expressions, to be experienced with its own spirit. Interaction with landscape may be individually healing, or it can also return its pain to human being if he abuses or damages it. (Louv, 2011; Macy and Brown, 2014; O’Donohue, 2010; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, 2011.) Hempel thinks (2014) that developing emotional connections to the natural world (to wild places, wildlife, plants and natural beauty) is as important for protecting the nature as for example breakthroughs in environmental science or policy. According to the data, people honor nature as a place of awareness, and an idea-refinery temple. ”Then, what a hell we are doing here inside of our box offices and staring our computers if we really are creative and innovative outside in nature?”, asked one adult student in a leadership education workshop, where people were sharing their experiences of presence together. According to the collected narratives, the experiences of presence when happening in nature are singularly inspiring, stimulating, and assimilated. Many participants can reach new depths of understanding about themselves, their abilities and their relationship with the world inside and around them. Nearly all the studied narratives include the elements, which are familiar with the worldview of nature-connected indigenous cultures (Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby, 2011; Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992), where people’s holistic approach of life, ideas, emotions, and actions are interconnected. Their nature-connectedness may be perceived also as a messenger: “All morning voices surrounded me. My mind was filled with an overwhelming brightness and a happiness that came with it: this is your life, this is the purpose of your life, what you should do and protect with your life.” (Man, 37 years, Project Manager)

In the aboriginal recipe of sustainability, all - people, animals, plants, ancestral spirits - live together equally in timelessness world, which is mirrored on earth everywhere. Similar elements of nature-connectedness is seen in the data of this research. Nature helps people to connect with their real selves and with other living beings. Nature also serves people as a metaphor for insights, “right answers” and gives paths to follow. (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006.) : “The only thing that bothered me was that I could not find the right location [for a certain sequence in her first short film]...After the day’s filming I decided to find the right place. I went alone. When I left, I felt being present in that moment and connected to nature...I was walking around in the woods for about an hour and I was confident that I

would find the place I was looking for. I changed direction at random when it felt right. Then I started to hear steps behind me, I didn't turn to look, but continued. The footsteps were following me but not very close by, I understood that it was an animal. I concentrated on listening to the steps and stopped when they stopped. I turned to look behind me and I saw an elk that turned and started to walk away from me. When I turned around again I saw that I had arrived at the perfect location for my film.” (Woman, 41 years, Film Director)

In ancient Australian stories, nature is full of symbolic images like a physical map that remind people about creation, and leads the way home, the way to back yourself (Sveiby & Skuthorpe, 2006). Mindfulness, the one description for ability to be at the moment, is also described to be a path which may lead you deeply into an authentic way of being (Tugend, 2013), or way 'back to home' as many participants describe it. A modern example of this kind of “map” is the experience of a young woman who used to be a drug addict. She had been off drugs for two months and was sitting on a bus looking out of the window when she suddenly noticed: “Has the world always been this bright? I looked at the pattern in the ice on the window of the bus and I was moved to tears by its beauty... Has the world always been this beautiful?” (Woman, 29 years, Therapist of Chinese Medicine)

According to Karl-Erik Sveiby (2016), our modern society may learn a lot about the holistic approaches of aboriginals, for example in making corporations and governments develop more ecological key production methods. A needed new focus for innovation includes social consciousness and global ecological responsibility. (Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006; Sveiby 2011.) The ancient “recipe” for sustainable progress is “to be selective and to consider consequences before introducing a new technology into society” (Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006, p.193). Scharmer finds also similarities between aboriginals and Finns in the concept of power-places, “simple cabins in the woods” where parents teach their children to listen to the forest. He thinks that this kind of heartfelt relationship with the presence of places in nature is special, and it may have contributed to the many successful technological innovations in Finland. (Scharmer, 2009.) For example, different kind of reflective and contemplative practices can build the capacity for discernment, and respect human relationship to nature and environment (Eaton et al., 2017). “Forest bathing” is standard preventive medicine in Japan, where also is an own term for death of overwork, which is *karoshi*. People come out from cities, go to the landscape and shower in the greenery in Japan and South Korea. With the help of the nature, they are able to become relaxed and feel all their five senses in authentic way. Their blood pressures decrease, and people find balance for their hectic life. Nature-connection and its benefits are natural for Japanese people because of their long tradition and culture, where nature belongs to their minds and bodies through philosophy. All things are relative to something else, when in Western thinking, all things are absolute. (Williams, 2017.)

According to the data, there is still some aboriginal spirit living inside the Western individual. Maybe we can learn from the first peoples, both in terms of sustainable environmental practices and in terms of more equal leadership (Sveiby, 2011), but also in terms of trust for our own senses and intuition. Creativity needs to stem from ethics and values that respect all life understanding the laws of nature and being at one with them (Macy and Brown, 2014; Moss, 2012). By connecting with nature, one can see

oneself as a part of a larger whole, of a unity (Scharmer, 2009; Sveiby and Skuthorpe 2006), and as a part of the possible future (Moss, 2012; Senge et al., 2005).

4.3 Meaningfulness – experience of presence as homecoming, seeing the bigger picture, or a spiritual experience (Open Will)

Presence is also appreciated as deep listening, of being open beyond one's pre-conceptions and historical ways of making sense by seeing the importance of letting go the old identifies and the need to control (Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013; Senge et al., 2005). Open will as generative listening means often that "I am connected with something larger than myself." (Scharmer, 2009, p.12). It can be understood also as a phenomenological space of interface, the experience of human existence, which is monistic state in which spirit is present in every part of the body (Varto, 2011). In interface, man is one with the world and opens towards it (ibid.). In the data, many experiences of presence appear in the shape of interface or coalescence, or as remarkable spiritual experience of "homecoming": "In those moments, the world is not out somewhere, but it comes up. I can't say that I am a part of nature, universe, or anything else, but I feel that I am home." (Man, 37 years, Project Manager)

The meaningful understanding of you 'Home', seeing the 'Bigger picture' of your life, or feeling the existence of something larger than yourself may lead sometimes to an insight, which may change your life: "I remember it very clearly, although I was drunk at the time. Enlightenment struck me like a lightning bolt and woke me up from a dream. It felt like I saw everything for the very first time, although I was in the middle of the place (a pub), where the people and everything were actually too familiar for me. Everything around me was strange and I no longer felt the communal spirit that I had thought there was." The woman, who had been frequenting the pub for many years, wandered around and kept asking everybody: "Why are you here?" People looked at her as if she had lost her mind. "In my mind I understood it crystal clear. This was not what I wanted and this was not my life." She felt that she was given instructions from "above" and she obeyed them. The incident made her realize that she was in charge of her life and made her own choices, and "As a consequence of the night, I went to rehab and started to take care of myself and my life....—...I understood distinctly that I cannot steer my life with my own power. It was my first humbling experience as well." (Woman, 31 years, Social Worker)

The main key factors towards the more creative thinking are a compelling vision and sense of deeper purpose that means something to people they will commit to, the level of openness and reflection so that people are challenging their ways of thinking. Through that process, people are getting better at seeing how they are depending on and part of the larger systems. (Goldman Schuyler, 2016.) The kind of spirituality acts important part in some cases of the data. According to research, spirituality is the anchor of ethics and social morality for most people. In work life, it removes bottlenecks and barriers and eradicate us-against-them mentality between employees and employers. It increases the effectiveness of teamwork and induces a creative culture. Being in touch with your inner spiritual being enables people to identify and use their best qualities such as confidence, alertness, courage, trust, commitment and hope. Recognizing subordinates' spirituality would help leaders to motivate and inspire their subordinates and to intensify the unity of the group. (Fairholm and Fairholm,

2009.) The data shows that understanding the meaning or the bigger picture of the value of your action is an important experience. To becoming aware of your ability to be present at the moment may mean that you become conscious about the values and truths you are involved, for example in your daily work. Like one woman describes about her experience: “Presence means that you know yourself as a worker, too; what are your strengths, and in what areas you still need to develop. This way you may benefit from your own resources as a worker and not burn yourself out. The presence has a big influence on the work community. Presence affects well-being and the structures of the (work) community.” (Woman, 35 years, Social Worker)

5 Discussion

When comparing the main themes of the data and the concepts of new approaches of organizational creativity and sustainable innovation (for example Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013, Sveiby and Skuthorpe, 2006), it seems that there are parallels between them. If the more holistic innovation ability needs a shift in your consciousness, the experience of the female social worker is a good example for that: “I have been more present by myself; I am more aware of my body, senses, attitudes and emotions... What could this mean in working life?” (Social worker, 37)

Many experiences seem to be similar to the kind of presencing that Scharmer (2009) and Senge (Senge et al., 2005) see as essential for addressing complex societal issues that are resistant to resolution within existing organizational structures. A capacity to intentionally bring oneself into the present moment is fundamental as the most exciting organizational change being undertaken aiming toward global change (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Goldman Schuyler et al., 2017; Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013; Senge et al, 2005).

Both creativity and innovation are present in this paper, because they seem to be connected with experiences of presence in various ways and levels. The individual experiences of presence may include such actors of creativity as a new point of view, better communication, empathy, understanding the bigger picture, meaningfulness, nature-connectedness, or broader awareness of what is going on. In addition, the experience of presence also include different possibilities be used in the development of innovation sessions in groups. By using such tools in a group as silencing your mind for the present moment (meditation or contemplation exercises), or sharing your experiences, for example of your work creativity by listening and telling consciously, may in some cases lead your group or society to a new social innovation (Konsti-Laakso et al., 2016; Koskela, Oikarinen, & Melkas, 2015). In this case, creativity is found to be connected with an individual experience of presence, when innovation seem to be connected with a creative group working. According to literature, the focus of organizational innovation is more interrelationships, interactions, and dynamics among actor and environment (McLean, 2005). Nevertheless, this result will need much more practice-based experiences in the working field, 418 people is still a little amount of participants. Peoples’ capacities for reflection are essential for their meaning-making about their world and their participation in it, and the ability to pause, step above the fray, and imagine alternative futures can help them think more creative and systemically (Eaton et al., 2017). Through the experiences of presence is seen that

human flourishing is not a mechanical process; it is an organic process – like creativity in itself (Robinson, 2010).

The multifaceted experience of presence has a plausible role both in a state of individual awareness (as an inner shift), and in a communal innovation ability. The ability to calm your mind has its role also in the significant change that is happening now both around us, and inside our organizations and societies. Meeting the global challenges requires more sustainable and holistic tools and ways, to innovate, and become agents of practical change (Mateus-Berr, 2015; Sveiby, 2009; Sveiby, 2011). Global leaders need to shift from “ego-system awareness” to “eco-system awareness” (Scharmer, 2011; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). But the shift in society and organizations will not happen before the individuals will change. The change has to be happen first in the individual level, and after that, it will spread to society and its organizations (Hidalgo, 2015; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). We could concentrate more on our experiences of aware moments of presence which help us to ask such questions like "Who am I?", "What am I here for?", and "What is my direction?", because the path of real innovation is that you do what you love and you love what you do (Scharmer, 2013).

The experiences of presence are not necessary positive experiences; they can be also evil ordeals of negative emotions, or pains. They varies in many ways and levels, from a small everyday detail of cooking to the strong apparition of one’s professional mission. Essential for the experiences of presence is that the participant is always aware of her or his experience. She is so conscious of it, that she can easily remember it afterwards, because it is one way or another special and memorable.

Connections to the practice-based innovation research. The data shows that understanding the meaning or the bigger picture of the value of your action is important experience for many. Today, when organizations list values they do not really live (Kline, 2015), becoming aware of your ability to be present at the moment may mean also that you become conscious about the values and truths you are involved, for example in your daily work. This is useful ability also for today’s leaders (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Goldman Schuyler et al., 2017).

In the workshop session during the year 2011 in a child-welfare organization, one female worker got an individual insight about the experiences when she was not present at her work. This insight led to a collective process, which changed something in the workers working style in that organization. They noticed that inside their work is a huge “natural” spiral of negative thinking and connotations, which increases strain and disharmony and decreases presence. It is the reports about the customers. The reports the workers read all the day are full of negative testimonies of bad backgrounds of the children. The workers and customers (children) have to repeat repeatedly these bad upsetting past experiences. The collective idea during the process was crystallized in one worker’s sentences: “Our goal should be the presence. We need to be more courageous to change our old myths, routines and limits.” After that, the workers changed the ways to report for a more positive. They wanted that all the reports should include also positive, or neutral, information about their clients, not only negative one. The workers noticed also how the formal, social-worker-based education of the foster families should be changed towards the contents produced by the customers; the education should be more individualist, more child-based, and more interactive. This was a significant and creative shift in the daily routines of the child-welfare

organization (which includes to the data of this research). I have described this case more closely in one conference paper of the European Evaluation Society (EES). (Koskela, 2012.)

Another case example of practice-based social innovation connected to this research by using the individual experiences of presence of the participants, was the participatory design process for a new social enterprise in the Lahti (Päijät-Häme) Region, Finland, to employ rehabilitates of mental health. There were many people with entrepreneurial interests and skills, but there was a lack of concrete business ideas. The innovation process was implemented between the years 2012-2013 with the help of presence-workshops and the participants' experiences of meaningful acts. Business ideas were collected through co-creation, co-learning, and ability to be present and reflect your experience. This social innovation process of the common business ideas is described more closely in the journal of *WORK* 55 (Konsti-Laakso et al., 2016). In organizations, it is possible to create social innovation in workshops and groups with the help of aware collaboration (Koskela et al., 2015).

When people share experiences with each other in a community, there is also a possibility for the community to turn to its highest ideals (Bopp and Bopp, 2011) or towards its future potential (Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). Unfortunately these kind of practice-based workshop-processes, which could be essential 'living labs' to test, develop and formalize the experiences of presence as a tool for a more creative and sustainable work inside the organizations, need real interest, time and resources. If we want to change our working routines, we first have to be aware of them, then to search and develop them, after that change them, and finally we have to adjust them to our daily work. It is not an-one-afternoon -process. I think this a larger problem in the area of innovation and development projects inside the Finnish organizations. Conscious change is not a quick trick. This is also one of the limitations of this research; there should be needed more and longer periods of practice-based experience in the field for proper results.

Fortunately, I have had also an opportunity to compare these results to the corresponding international studies, too, from the point of view of sustainable leadership (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016). From the year 2012, I have had an honor to work and study in this issue together with Professor Kathryn Goldman Schuyler and her colleagues who have been interested about almost the same theme, but described it as the "waking up" –moment. Our first, common paper was presented in the Academy of Management Conference in Philadelphia, 2014. After that, we have written couple of published papers (included also in this study) together.

6 Conclusions

And as the result of this paper, I may countenance myself to say that one possible new path for the more holistic approach of innovation could be an individual experience of presence, the inner shift, which may help you to get new perspectives, connections, or meaning to your daily life and work: "... There is now more room for listening both to myself and to others. Maybe these experiences have given me creativity and courage that I can use in my art." (Woman, 37 years, Visual Artist)

According to the most common themes of the experiences of presence, it is seen that when a person has opened one's mind to a new point of view, it is also easier to open one's heart to connect with somebody, or something. Then, after opening one's heart, a person has more space and possibilities to achieve the state of open will, the level of aware and authentic purpose of self. (Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer and Kaufer, 2013). It is also possible to facilitate and create open, common spaces of shared experiences in organizations with the help of contemplative or creative methods. These kind of spaces, which have been involved in this study as the presence-workshops, are near to the 'ba', the shared context for knowledge creation (Nonaka, Toyoma, and Konno, 2000). If the tacit, experienced-based knowledge, which is an important part of organizational capital, is shared and deferred together, it will be increased the organizational creativity (Koivunen, 1997; Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

In this research, I have tried to show how the processes of presence, which in many cases are also parts of the creative insights, could also be the seeds of new social innovations and a more aware (sustainable) approach of leadership (Koskela and Goldman Schuyler, 2016; Goldman Schuyler et al., 2017). It is still crystal clear that it is needed more research for that. In the huge and international field of the studies of organizational creativity and innovation, the amount of 418 Finnish individual experiences of presence is still too few for the prominent and comprehensive results.

In the middle of the global challenges, we as humans, leaders, and workers face issues that require us to slow down, and need to start really paying attention, listening, sensing 'what wants to happen', reflecting, and connecting to our inner source of knowing (Scharmer, 2010). Experiences of presence could provide a holistic anticipatory perspective to meet, for example, organizational challenges, but unfortunately, it cannot be obtained just like that. Presence as a phenomena is hard to handle. Ability of presence cannot be controlled, nor induced, forced or learned from textbooks. Only possible is to live it through with the help of your own experience. Even so, the experiences of presence are constantly shifting, fleeting and momentary; they are never at a standstill, but always on the move like a flow – like the whole evolution or a human mind. Moments of presence come without planning and effort by just being there: "The flow was gone. Then some of it returned. Oh, I wish I had the courage to be/do/paint what I actually feel without rationalizing! ... Desiring it is a problem. You cannot experience a moment of presence by will or way... If you have a clear idea, desire or goal etc. you will not be relaxed and your mind will become rigid." (Woman, 37 years, Visual Artist)

Researching experiences of presence is particularly challenging, because the subject is new in the field, the literature is hard to find, and the experiences are fleeting. There is not much research to be found of this topic. Further research into actual experiences of presence will be needed as well as developing methods of being present at work situations and studying through practice-based experiments whether the awareness of the present moment increases creativity and innovativeness in organizations. One-step for the daily testing could be to be more aware, to be an observer of the singular experiences of presence, and share them together in a bigger group, in the center of the organization's interaction. The singular experiences of presence could help us to understand more about ourselves, others, and the spaces and connections in our societies and environments.

Now, going back to the second poetic experimental citations of this paper, and read forward the last words of the experience of fourteen-year-old girl: “After that experience, I understood everything much more clearly. I understood why dreams and physical reality so often are mixed up in my head, why I experienced time both merged and as fluttering shards. I understood that everything was one and the same, a reflection and a shadow of the universe.” (Woman, 27 years, Student of Health Care)

On the other hand, like Peter Senge, et al. (2009, p. 50) state: “The revolution is not about giving up; it’s about rediscovering what we most value. It is about making quality in living central in our communities, businesses, schools, and societies. It is about reconnecting with ourselves, one another, and our fellow non-human habitants on earth.”

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