

Moving Leaders: What insights do experienced leaders develop by training the language of the body through a combination of dance and phenomenological-inspired leadership stories?*

Helle Winther

University of Copenhagen

Michael Højlund Larsen

Zealand - Academy of Technologies and Business

Abstract

Our bodies sense and communicate throughout our daily lives, and research shows there is a clear connection between embodiment and leadership. This project was carried out in a publicly approved course in leadership education through an innovative collaboration between a leadership philosopher and a dance researcher. We investigated what insights experienced leaders developed by training the language of the body through a combination of dance and phenomenological-inspired leadership stories, which were both written during the movement sessions and in situations from their daily leadership practice. Twenty-nine leaders from two different groups participated in the project that included expressive and improvisatory dance teaching, which mirrored communication dynamics in the leaders' everyday practice. This article portrays the development processes of these leaders, who went through a challenging and touching journey. They became more conscious of their own feelings, physicality and sensuality, and learned how the combination of dance, leadership stories and an increased awareness of the language of the body could nourish their embodied leadership competence.

Even though learning from a course is in no way as complex as learning that takes place in everyday leadership experience, this project can contribute to the innovative research streams on movement, art and aesthetic practices as well as to understanding of the important role of experiential learning in the development of leadership.

Keywords: body language, embodiment, emotions, movement, feelings, fear, joy, anger, sorrow, love, phenomenology, aesthetic practices, artistic, embodied leadership competence

* The authors would like to offer their special thanks to all of the leaders who have been co-researchers, The authors would like to thank as well the anonymous peer reviewers for fruitful feedback on earlier versions of this article. Finally, the authors would like to thank Lynn Freligh for invaluable language assistance.

Moving Leaders: What insights do experienced leaders develop by training the language of the body through a combination of dance and phenomenological-inspired leadership stories?

The language of the body is an important sensual phenomenon in all human relationships, and in all organizations embodied communication is an unavoidable part of daily life. Research shows that leadership practice originates in and is informed by bodily experiences, which are situated in both social, cultural, and deeply personal contexts (Melina, Burgess, Lid-Falkman, & Marturano 2013). Research also shows that there is a clear connection between embodiment and leadership in daily practice (Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2010; Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Winther, 2013). Current research streams indicate that leadership can be trained through art-based learning such as dance, performance, music, and increased awareness of the language of the body in various professional areas (Biehl, 2017; Chemi, Kawamura, Passila, & Owens, 2020; Zeitner, Rowe, & Jackson, 2016; Sutherland, 2012, Winther 2013; Winther 2020). This article is part of a current educational effort and an innovative collaborative project between an academy of business and a university, and between a leadership philosopher and a dance teacher and researcher. Throughout the project, we investigated what insights experienced leaders developed by training the language of the body through a combination of dance and phenomenological-inspired leadership stories.

Twenty-nine experienced leaders in two different teaching groups participated in postgraduate leadership and coaching courses of three months duration as part of a two-year publicly approved leadership development education (Diploma in Leadership), a publicly approved course of further education in Denmark. The courses focused especially on the language of the body, and the project was in both theory and practice rooted in a holistic view of the body and the theoretical concept *embodied leadership competence* (Winther, 2012;2013). The project included expressive and improvisatory dance teaching, mirroring communication dynamics in the leaders' everyday practice. The leaders were regarded as co-researchers. Throughout the courses they wrote first-person phenomenological-inspired situated stories about both their dance processes and everyday experiences from their own leadership practice.

The findings show that these leaders went through a challenging and instructive journey; they evolved and gained an increased awareness of the language of the body. They also became more familiar with feelings such as fear, sadness, anger, joy and love, acknowledging them as important parts of their embodied leadership competence. The leaders evolved insight and gained important tools through dance. Dance helped the leaders to pay attention to the processes in their own bodies and the bodily communication in situated leadership contexts, but they needed to write about this reflectively in order to evolve consciousness and further develop abilities in their daily leadership practice. Their phenomenological-inspired stories also show that even short, intense situations from their daily leadership experiences have a richness and complexity that contain the potential for a continual learning process and a nuanced embodied consciousness.

Here the leaders found that the writing became an invaluable tool for deep reflection and further development of their personal leadership skills. Thus, this project shows that precisely the unique *combination* of dance and reflective writing, and the common developmental kaleidoscope that the course participants created together, can contribute to knowledge about new arts-based approaches to leadership development. The project contributes to the innovative research streams on movement, aesthetic practices and leadership development. It also opens up for new questions and collaborative and creative practices in future leadership development, with focus on the embodied and practical wisdom of leaders.

State of the Art

Embodiment and leadership

In some leadership contexts, leaders are seen as disembodied (Melina, 2013). Nevertheless, current research streams focus on the natural connection between embodiment and leadership (Brown, 2018; Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2010; Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Biehl, 2017; Diddams & Chang, 2012; Guastella Lindsay, 2013; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Winther, 2012; 2018). Also contemporary leadership theories inspired by transformational leadership emphasize that both leaders and followers communicate both verbally and through the moving body (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; Avolio & Yammarino, 2002; Zeitner, Rowe, & Jackson, 2016).

The body is always communicating through a sense-based language of which we are often unaware (Winther, 2013). The language of the body is the primary language, and despite cultural differences, it is as Halprin (2006) states, the mother tongue for human beings all over the world. Thus, the language of the body is also of great importance for self-contact, communication reading, emotional understanding, and leadership in professional practice (Winther, 2012; 2013; 2018; Dasborough, & Ashkanasy, 2002).

Art, dance and leadership

Around the globe, there is also a growing interest in and acceptance for including arts-based learning activities in leadership programs, as arts-based learning can provide transformative experiential learning possibilities (Zeitner, Rowe, & Jackson, 2016; Ladkin & Taylor, 2009; 2010). In this context, music and dance are also emerging as arts-based learning methods (Biehl, 2017; Ladkin & Taylor, 2014; Jansson, 2018; Sutherland, 2012).

In the paper *The Sound of Leadership*, Hall (2008) writes that the universal, intriguing and complex nature of music allows a unique framework for helping individuals to learn about leadership, and it can contribute to the development of one's leadership style. In a study by Gardersøe & Larsen (2014), 20 leaders participated in six music workshops for the purpose of using musical training, an aesthetically-based learning method, as an element in their development of leadership. Summed up, the study indicates that there is a unique educational potential in musical training for leaders. Especially musical-philosophical pedagogy seems to be able to give leaders a "free space" where they can form themselves as leaders in a safe and joyful atmosphere. They can develop leadership both through common training in rhythmic interplay, and through the direction of the interaction. Also the link between organizations, dance, and the felt, sensual and emotional body has become increasingly more relevant in leadership research (Biehl, 2017). The use of dance as a metaphor for understanding leader and follower roles has been used in various innovative leadership contexts in the past years (Burge, Bachelor & Cox, 2013; Springborg, 2010; Biehl-Messal & Springborg, 2016). Studies in this field show that dance workshops can provide a safe play space for creating awareness of body language, and that dance activities can influence communication competence and physical presence (Zeitner, Rowe, & Jackson, 2015; Biehl, 2017; Springborg, 2017; Winther, 2020). Working with an embodied aesthetic agency, leaders can enhance their leadership skills when they stay with their senses (Springborg & Sutherland, 2014).

Thus, the fields of music and dance do not only contribute a different pedagogy, but also a different form of comprehension – namely aesthetics, which can be a supplement to more reflective and language-based approaches to leadership development. In the world of music and dance there is thus a growing amount of attention being given to gaining inspiration from how, with relatively simple means, one can contribute to a heightened feeling in the senses and develop a number of central understandings, values and skills relevant for leadership.

Even though there is a growing international research field showing the significance of both the connection between embodiment and leadership, and the possibilities for using art and dance as leadership training, this is still an emerging field that has a need for more studies so that more impact may be created in this area. As this article is focused on both aesthetic and embodied practices, as well as being based on written phenomenological-inspired leadership stories, it can be seen as a contribution to the current growing innovative research stream in this field. So this research moves into a "research gap" as well, in which the unique combination of embodied leadership, dance, and the leaders' reflective writing are core components. Therefore, the leaders in this study were seen as co-researchers, and their experiences will be shared as valuable data throughout the text.

Methodological Approaches

Context and participants

The study is connected to a current research effort at the University of Copenhagen comprised of several research projects on the language of the body and embodied leadership competence in various educational settings and professional practices (Winther, 2012; 2013; 2018; 2020a, 2020b; Winther, Grøntved, Gravesen & Ilkjaer, 2015;). This article is part of a collaborative research project between an academy of business and the previously mentioned university, and describes an innovative educational effort combining philosophy, coaching, leadership development, embodied learning, and dance. The leaders who participated in the project were all experienced leaders from the fields of, for example, pedagogy, health, education, administration and business.

The first group of nine leaders consisted of three men and six women. They participated in the coaching course, which is the primary empirical basis for this research article. The present authors were lecturers in the courses, which we developed together with the participants through a particular focus on the language of the body including senses and feelings in their leadership practice. Therefore, the leaders also took part in a dance laboratory especially designed to be a safe space for them. Together we could train and mirror embodied communication and themes from their everyday leadership practice

The second group consisted of twenty leaders who participated in a later and similar course in which the practices from the first part of the study were implemented. As the first group makes up the primary source of empirical data for this article, we have chosen to include only the stories from this group as quoted material in the analyses. Thus, the empirical data from the larger group of twenty participants is not concretely visible in this text. Nevertheless, their stories constitute an important underlying sounding board for the findings in our article. And their stories have contributed to sustainability in the project

In order to inquire what insights the leaders developed by training the language of the body through the combination of dance and leadership stories, we chose to work with methodological approaches using the leaders' own reflective writing as core elements.

Phenomenological and narrative approaches

As the leaders' voices and lived experiences are very important for this project, we chose to work with inspiration from practitioner research and qualitative and collaborative research methods. These examine developmental processes through stories from practice (Sparkes, 2002; 2016; Todres, 2007; Groundwater-Smith et al., 2013; Winther, 2015). Inspiration also came from phenomenology, narrative approaches and *The Sensual Revolution*, which includes embodied multisensual and multimodal ways of knowing (Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Todres, 2007; Sparkes, 2016, p. 343). Phenomenological-inspired research does not assume that our experimental reality is rational or logical. It is rather, as van Manen (2016) writes, sensitive to moments of taken-for-granted-ness and moments of insight, or even moments of confusion, uncertainty, strangeness, or disorientation. Phenomenological research is thus also about sharing stories that can be both poetic, truthful, and evocative,

and that bring our understanding further (Todres, 2007). This point is also underlined by Springborg, who wrote that what characterizes an interesting study in both art and leadership is *"an experientially-grounded and aesthetically-informed reflexivity, and the ability to hold, not collapse, the more disturbing aspects of our experience"* (Springborg, 2010, p. 253). This quote has also been inspiring for the methodological framework of this project, as the research space was regarded as an aesthetic laboratory where all forms of experience could contribute to embodied learning, deep reflectivity and change.

Researching lived experience - phenomenological-inspired stories

The leaders were invited to become co-researchers. Each leader wrote personal reflections and stories about insights gained from movement learning experiences, their daily leadership practice, and their own developmental processes. These texts are rich, situated, first-person phenomenological stories written with the leaders' subjective voices (Winther, 2015; 2018). Phenomenological-inspired stories are written in the first person in the here-and-now, and focus on the co-researcher's lived experiences, not on objective facts. Even if not all stories are visible in the text, they form the basis of this paper. The text quotes that are used have been carefully selected in order to illustrate both individual issues and shared essential themes. The themes and quotes in this article are therefore not to be regarded as generalizations; they are more like, as van Manen (2016) writes, "knots" in our world of experience around which certain lived experiences are lived through as meaningful wholes. All of the leaders have given written informed consent to their stories being part of the project. For ethical reasons, the leaders' professional areas and names have been changed.

Critical methodological reflections

The learning and development processes that the leaders go through in this project can be understood and explained by the theory of Experiential Learning developed by David Kolb drawing from the intellectual origins of experiential learning in the works of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin and Jean Piaget. The underlying structure of the learning processes explained by Kolb is based on research in both psychology, philosophy and physiology (Kolb, 1986, p. xi).

Kolb explains the process of experiential learning as a four-stage cycle involving four adaptive learning modes: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (Kolb, 1986, p. 42). When the leaders wrote phenomenological-inspired leadership stories, including their personal reflections in both the dance workshops and in their daily work life, the development of their personal leadership can be understood as a combination of concrete experience and reflective observation. The learning process combines an experience grasped via comprehension and transformed through intention, which Kolb termed *Divergent Knowledge*. Kolb's central idea is that learning requires both a grasp of figurative representation of experience and some transformation of that representation. Either the figurative grasp or operative transformation alone is not sufficient. The simple perception of experience is not sufficient for learning, something must be done with it; and this is precisely the function of the personal stories used in this research project.

Phenomenological-inspired practitioner research may be criticized for its lack of possibility for objective and general findings. On the other hand, both researchers and co-researchers, by the strength of their subjective involvement, have the possibility to grasp dimensions of processes and meanings that could only be discovered by qualitative and perhaps long-term involvement. As Taylor (2004) states, most writing in western society has both presentational and propositional aspects. However, research is often pushed towards the propositional end of the continuum with a focus on clarity and precision, away from ambiguity, richness, contradictions and the "messiness" of the felt meaning. In this article

we try to embrace The Sensual Revolution, which includes embodied multisensual and multimodal ways of knowing (Sparkes, 2017).

Thus, the credibility of this research lies in a collection of complex, dynamic and context-dependent stories, which echo with others and are *true to life* (Sparkes, 2002; Todres, 2006). The trustworthiness of the phenomenological-inspired stories of the leaders may therefore also be understood in relation to the *resonance* that the text may elicit in other leaders or in those who read their stories (Todres, 2007; Winther, 2015).

Theoretical Background

Embodied leadership competence

In order to inquire what insights the leaders developed by training the language of the body throughout the project, we chose to focus on the concept *embodied leadership competence* as a broad, concrete and kaleidoscopic theoretical framework for the dance laboratory. Therefore, this theory developed by Winther (2012; 2013) became a concrete tool for self-insight and practical training throughout the whole project. It is also an underlying consciousness in the leaders' own stories, so this will also be used in analyses of the article's findings.

Embodied leadership competence is a research-based concept developed through movement psychological and phenomenologically inspired research, as well as yearlong experiences from practice (Winther, 2012; 2013). It is defined as a holistic-oriented concept combining three interrelated principles, which are always present, visible, and felt in almost all professional spaces and contexts. It is also rooted in a holistic view of the body (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2006). Embodied leadership competence is a constantly evolving and very personal competence which may be developed, made conscious and matured. Embodied leadership competence is also an ever-present phenomenon in the leaders' daily lives. The three interconnected principles in *Embodied leadership competence* include, respectively:

1) **Self-contact and somatic awareness.**

"The ability to have contact with one's own body and personal feelings; the ability to be focused and present; the ability to include one's heart and still keep a professional focus and a private boundary"

2) **Communication reading and contact ability**

"The ability to see, listen, sense, and notice; the ability to "read" both verbal and bodily communication; the ability to create trustful contact with others; the ability to contain and manage conflicts" ().

3) **Leadership in groups or situations**

"Professional overview, radiation, centering; clear leadership of the group or situation; the ability to enter or hold a space or room with a healthy and body-based authority" (xxx, 2012, p. 80; 2013, p. 223).

Self-contact and somatic awareness can be experienced as a calm and present state in which contact with others feels straightforward; an experience of surplus and balance. In the language of everyday life, we can say "being in contact with oneself." Contact with oneself is also connected to what in dance therapy, the martial arts, and yoga is termed *grounding* (Winther, 2012). Grounding is also connected with our nervous system, muscles and emotional state. In the deepest sense, grounding is about being in contact with one's own body and breathing, and having the feeling of being balanced and *down in* the body (Lowen, 2006; Winther, 2013). Grounding is a tool for being able to stay calm and balanced also in challenging and emotionally intense situations. In challenging situations, even experienced leaders lose contact with themselves. It can feel like being absent and outside

the here-and-now, to "lose oneself" or be "beside oneself" (Winther, 2012). Many professionals experience that their breath and muscle tone in the body changes, when they are in a challenging situation where they lose their calm sense of contact with themselves. The better the leaders know themselves and their own bodily signals in various situations, the easier it will be to keep or recover grounding – and thus self-contact and somatic awareness. Even though self-contact is an important part of embodied professional competence, even experienced leaders are not always able to have complete inner calm. All professions are full of unpredictable challenges and interpersonal processes that arouse our vulnerability .

Communication reading and contact ability. Each person and thus also each leader has their own unique way of communicating with the body. Many leaders have experience in being able to "tune into" whatever or whoever they are working with. Being able to tune into another person is also termed resonance (Winther, 2012; Sabetti, 1986). Resonance means "swinging with" or echoing, reverberation. Here too a sense of time, sensuality and opening bodily signals come into play. As in music and dance, it's also about leaders and co-workers constantly finding, creating or renewing the resonant space. It's also about *timing* and *precision*, about eye contact, touch, and the leaders' and co-workers' constantly moving body language signals and their placement in space relative to one another. And about feeling the communication and the small body language movements' *emotional tone*.

Leadership in groups and situations. In body language terms, it's about both being able to create, enter and hold a room or space, and at the same time being aware of both self-contact, communication reading and contact ability. Here, it's about daring to be there, as well as being able to cope with a disturbed bodily communication, so as to be able to negotiate leadership in the room through the body. In connection with performances, one often works with the concepts of *stage presence* and "*being on*." It's also about how we carry our body, and where we place ourselves in a room; but also about presence, energy, and personal radiation and timing. Many leaders also have use for being able to *hold* a room. It can be useful in vulnerable situations, or in meetings where there are feelings in play. Here it's important for the leader to be able to fill the room with presence, while at the same time giving space to others, and inspiring confidence.

The three principles of embodied leadership competence are thus closely connected. Therefore, the ability to create leadership in the space in question will also be affected by the leader's own perception of their own self-contact and somatic awareness.

As feelings are also embodied phenomena and included in embodied leadership competence – and became very important for the participating leaders – a special focus on emotional awareness evolved throughout the project. In the leaders' own stories, especially sadness, fear, joy, anger, and love emerged as very important. That is also why these five feelings will be featured in the following text, and why these emotions were included in the movement training.

Emotional awareness

Emotional processes are felt and expressed through the body. They are relational phenomena and, in spite of cultural differences, known to people all over the world (Denzin, 2007). They are also often present in organizations and in relational processes between colleagues and between leaders and co-workers. Feelings are also often present in the individual leader's self-contact and somatic awareness.

Sadness is basically connected to crises, or to loss of trust and love (Sabetti, 1986; Lowen, 2006). It's about "letting go," and tears are the releasing emotional expression. Sadness is also often present in organizational contexts when leaders or colleagues are touched by work situations or relationships, or touched by something from their private lives.

Fear often has a bodily felt energy that is rapid and rising (Winther, 2016). Fear causes the body to stiffen by contracting the muscles. Evolutionarily the feeling of fear has the basic function of making the individual capable of predicting or fleeing from dangerous events in order to seek protection and safety. It is also inevitably associated with personal development. Fear is often present in leadership contexts where there are conflicts, unpredictability, an experience of loss of control, or changing situations.

Joy. Smiling and laughter are emotional bodily expressions that can create feelings of fellowship in all cultures (Winther, 2016; Lowen, 1995; 2006). Joy may create a sense of community, freedom and release. It may contribute to creating appreciation. In an organizational context, the feeling of joy can also be important for creating togetherness and an acknowledging and trustful atmosphere.

Anger may vary from momentary irritation to rage (Lowen, 2006). The energy of anger is felt and expressed through the body and may be connected with a healthy limiting power which helps the individual to notice and set boundaries (Lowen, 1995; Sabetti, 1986). In leadership situations, anger can also be felt as irritation or frustration in the contact between leaders and co-workers. Anger is also important for development. As Brewis and Bell (2020, p. 1) write: "*Welcoming provocations that seek to acknowledge and embrace strong emotions such as anger as generative of learning enables us to keep the door open to critical reflection about the purpose of knowledge creation and its material and social effects.*"

Love. Leadership and authenticity are closely related, and here there has also been increased focus on loving and openhearted leadership (Hildebrandt, 2014). Love in professional work is an experience of that which Galvin and Todres (2009) term *openheartedness* – love for the fellowship of humanity. Also Taylor's text, *Open Your Heart* (2014) is about the physical activity of leaders' openheartedness. Openheartedness thus involves the professional person's bodily presence, their ability to be there for others, and also importantly – the ability to act situationally (Galvin & Todres, 2009; Taylor, 2014). In relation to embodied professional competence, this means that leaders must be able to *include their heart*, communicate clearly, and show bodily noticeable leadership even in difficult situations.

Findings

Dance as a space for leadership training

In the following, the leaders' stories and insights will be mirrored and reflected onto the three levels of embodied leadership competence and the emotional processes which the leaders experienced in the dance space and especially in their everyday practice. In the following text, the word *dance* will be used as a *concrete* concept about experiences in the dance space, and as a *metaphoric* concept in relation to the leaders' everyday practice. First, we will enter the dance space and meet the leaders in movement.

Training self-contact and somatic awareness through dance

In both dance laboratory and the space for everyday leading practice many leaders experienced important insights about the first principle of embodied leadership competence: self-contact and somatic awareness - and here, especially grounding and presence. Amanda wrote the following in her story.

I experience myself as a leader with a busy everyday life, one with many impulses. Sometimes I can experience being caught in a game of a myriad of activities and meetings, and that I therefore sometimes don't get grounded in

myself. Instead, my thoughts fly away. This can cause it to be difficult for me to stay focused and present.

In the beginning of the course, many of the leaders often experienced that they lack calmness, focus and presence in their leadership life because they were required to be many places at once. Therefore, they could also recognize the experience of "being everywhere and nowhere," and like Amanda, feel that they lack grounding while their thoughts are flying. Such grounding processes influence the leader's sense of self-contact and somatic awareness, and can have significance for the leader's ability to manage intense situations.

In order to highlight and intensify the dynamics of embodied leadership competence and emotional awareness, dance was used as an experiential, aesthetic, safe and still challenging play space, which gave the leaders time and space to train their body language together with others. Movement occurs in space and time, and dance has a fleeting nature. It's difficult to control. It's constantly evolving, inducing new actions and dynamics (Biehl, 2017). In many communicative and expressive dance forms, it is important to be present, "in tune" and have a feeling of self-contact and somatic awareness. It can also be a space where leaders can experience how to find their grounding, calmness and bodily presence, as well as intensifying the kinesthetic processes which are also found in the bodily communication between leaders and colleagues in everyday life (ibid.; Wintheret al. 2015). For the leaders in this project, dance was filled with pleasure, presence, joy, and challenges. It was training in being *in movement*. From the first moments, we saw two main processes. There were leaders who from the very beginning loved the moving communication in the space. And there were leaders who felt challenged and still learned a lot. Here the stories of Tonny and Sally enlighten these different processes.

Sally writes:

We are going to dance. I get full of expectation. Notice a lightness in my body. First we dance opposite each other, sometimes changing partners. We mirror each other. It feels like fun, I'm smiling. We change partners. Now we're holding each other's hands...

Tonny writes:

I'm on my guard, and try to be in control. I'm looking out for myself. I tramp in time with the music. I'm tense and uneasy in my body. Several of the others wave more with their arms, or just dance. I'm more monotonous in my movements. I smile, but lock my body. I'm uneasy. Gradually I loosen up, am less tense. Get more at ease in my body.

At the start of the sequence, there was an instruction about noticing one's own body, being in the present, seizing the moment, and then: catching small, confidence-building bodily signals of great importance. The group also worked with timing and the *felt sense* of movements. Therefore, both Tonny's and Sally's processes are interesting. As Sally experiences that the dancing and bodily contact awakens joy and lightness in her body, Tonny feels that he should look after himself and therefore "has his guard up." In relation to embodied leadership competence, the dance quickly creates a *felt sense*, of self-contact and somatic awareness (the first principle) for Sally, while Tonny in fact experiences being disturbed, and thus loses self-contact. He goes through a process in which the unease he feels in his body in this – for him – challenging situation, can be loosened up and transformed into calmness through grounded movements. Even though what Tonny describes are only short moments in a dance, he is going through a process: from unease, control, self-defence and tenseness, to more self-contact, somatic awareness and thus, calmness. In this way, this could be regarded as a training, as reflecting on everyday processes could also give him the possibility of being more prepared, calm and present in a situation that he experienced as unknown and uncontrollable.

As Sally's descriptions relate, the dance also especially focused on the importance of the body for contact. This also included trust-building communication, timing, tempo changes and alternating "leading and being led."

Training communication reading and contact ability through couples dance and improvisation

The group also worked with inspiration from couples dance and improvisation. In these improvised couples dances, it's important both to be grounded and feel the self-content, and be *in tune* with one's dance partner. Moreover, this heartfelt embodied communication is very focused, and everyone must be aware of the momentary, ever-changing, small bodily signals of the others. Therefore, it opened up a space where the principle of communication reading and contact ability could be trained. In these processes, the leaders became aware of how much eye contact or even small movements meant to their feelings of trust, courage, and ability to feel open and creative among others. Other leaders became aware of how easy it was for them to communicate with persons they were naturally in resonance with - and how much they had to work in order to "find the tune" with others.

Tonny writes:

I notice that we are very different types of people around. We each have our profession, and our private lives..... There are some that I feel good vibes with, and others who are further away. I give all of them space, and believe they have the best of intentions. We can all in our own way contribute to development - that's why it makes sense. I notice warmth and ease in my body when I'm around the people that I feel good vibes with, and a little unease in my body with others - just getting used to them.

Sally writes:

Without thinking about it, I stop thinking about my body, about what I'm going to do. I feel no longer tense in my body. I've become warm. I feel light. Natural. I feel that I'm part of a whole. I'm not thinking about what I will do or what I'm doing. I feel present. I'm in a good mood, the music makes me cheerful.

In this situation, Tonny experiences much more self-contact and somatic awareness. His description relates also that his communication reading and contact ability are strongest with the people whom he's "in sync" with immediately. Therefore, the others at the course with whom Tonny is not immediately "in sync" give him a unique training possibility, as it's useful for him as a leader to be able to keep calm and communicate in many unpredictable contexts.

When Sally describes that she feels light and natural, this can be regarded as a process in which she is both in contact with herself, and has an intuitive connection to the principle of communication reading and contact ability. She too releases tension, and when she stops "thinking about" what her body "is doing," she gets in contact with the body's intuitive wisdom - a feeling of being part of a whole. In such a form of self-contact, somatic awareness and presence, it's possible to listen, communicate and act resonantly, quickly and competently in the always-present perceptible communication in an interpersonal space. On the other hand, Sally might have a learning process that is about her not disappearing so much in the dance that she loses sufficient overview to be able to lead a process while consciously being able to predict the next step. This is connected to the third dimension in embodied leadership competence - and processes about leading and being led.

Training leadership and followership through dance

In connection with the third principle of embodied leadership competence, we worked with processes in which the leaders two-by-two alternated leading and being led. Here it was important to use only bodily expression to indicate the direction of, and to embrace "the co-worker." We also worked with a dance in which the leaders alternated leading a larger group by only bodily expressions, and worked very concretely with "taking a space", "securing a space" and "holding a space." For some leaders, it was simple to take a space, as it was easy for them to "carry" a larger-than-usual bodily attention from others, while for others it was challenging to dare to embrace their "natural pride." Even if the dance space was sometimes challenging, it can also be seen as an open, trustful space for multiple processes of leadership training. The processes in the dance space gave both Tonny, Sally and the other leaders a deeper awareness of the leadership space also being full of multidimensional communication processes, which can be compared to and seen as small, everyday dances; processes which are much more emotionally challenging in the leaders' daily practice. As time passed and the leaders wrote their phenomenological inspired stories and shared these with their peers, we also observed that their individual stories contained common themes. The leaders wrote repeatedly about how, as the course progressed, they became aware of how much their physicality is in play in even small, unpredictable everyday situations. Especially in the reflective writings, small everyday episodes came into view from everyday leadership practice.

Dancing with emotionally charged situations in everyday leadership practise

In the situated stories from the leaders' everyday life, they were attentive to features of embodied leadership competence and underlying phenomena when they wrote about experiences focusing on the language of the body and their "dance" with their co-workers. Here their stories show clearly that especially being in the emotional universe, with its tones of the basic emotions: sadness, fear, anger, joy and love, is moving, developing and challenging. Because many of the leaders' everyday stories were about how feelings influenced the three principles in embodied leadership competence, the following text is organized around the themes of sadness, fear, joy, anger and love. In the following, dance is used as a *metaphor*.

Tensing up or sitting calmly – being with sadness as a leader

Several of the leaders described situations in which they could consciously use their embodied leadership competence and their skills in self-contact and somatic awareness, contactability and "holding a space" when a co-worker expressed sadness.

Maria writes here about what she experiences as a difficult meeting with a colleague. Before the meeting, she is already affected by the thought that the co-worker might begin to cry.

I collect my papers and get ready to go the meeting. My first thought is, "Let's get it over with," and I breathe deep down in my stomach; after that, I manage to think, "Now you must contain your negative feelings and get up into your head, so you can stay professional, and if she starts to cry, she just has to be given time – you don't have to fix this."

She also writes:

Even before the meeting, I'm very aware of my earlier experiences of dissonance with this colleague, which I also physically notice in my stomach.

It's interesting here that in fact Maria starts with grounding and trying to notice her self-

contact and somatic awareness. Then she says to herself that what she experiences as "negative feelings" can best be contained by "getting up into her head." This upward movement is however, she writes further, connected to an experience of her own body "tensing up" - so that she then loses the ease of contact with herself. Even though Maria is aware of her own process, she is - both before and during the meeting - challenged by previous experiences. This is a complex process, which also has left its mark in her living body. Thus, experiences from the dance space don't give her the tools to be able to release the tension in her own body and then find ease and grounding again in this - for her, challenging situation. But by writing the personal story, she gains insight and awareness about bodily felt processes; about feelings not being able to be steered by going up into her head - and that being professional can also be connected to the ability to be present in a situation that's full of emotion

Tonny, who through his dance experiences gained important learning about and awareness of the importance of grounding and resonance, writes a story in which he "rests" in his own body in the course of a conversation with an elderly woman:

I have a calm feeling in my body, and rest well in myself. I feel a good atmosphere and energy in the room. The woman has tears in her eyes several times. Then she shakes a little, and cries - but it's under control. I sit calmly in the chair. I get a bit warm in my body. I feel that I'd like to give her a hug and say that I'll help her, and that things will be all right.

In this situation, Tonny is fully present in his self-contact and somatic awareness. The ease and warmth in his own body, and the good resonant energy in the room that he and his co-worker create together, give him the possibility to *hold* the room. When he writes about the feeling of wanting to give the co-worker a hug, the situation did not result in a concrete hug - but more in an energetic dance, in which he could embrace the co-worker's sadness with calmness, presence and empathy.

The story does not tell us whether or not Tonny's process can also be connected to his basic leadership values. Several of the leaders, including Claire, were indeed surprised that events lasting only a few minutes can be shown to be based on their basic values. In the following story, Claire is not feeling calm, warm and present. She is moving back and forth. Followed by Kristin - from behind. The leader's thoughts are swirling, she is busy, not listening, and she experiences fear. It's a situation that develops into a game of "catch" rather than a dance.

Swirling around - the fear of not being a good leader

I'm just done with a whole pile of writing assignments and a PowerPoint-presentation for the personnel meeting. I notice the busy-ness in my body and the feeling of wanting to get done "now." I load up with 26 newly made Power Point copies, two cups of pens, and take the projector under one arm. I walk resolutely toward the room where the meeting is to be held.

Kristin walks behind me while she says something. I notice that I'm not listening; my thoughts swirl around: "I don't have time now/what is she saying?" But I nod, smile and say, Hmm, and start to walk forward. I now focus on the weight of my arms and all the things I am carrying. Kirsten talks on and follows me. We get to the room and I put the things down. I become aware that I don't really know what she is talking about, and think. But this is important, I take a deep breath. And slowly try to notice my feet. I focus on Kristin and we get eye contact....(...). We exchange a few words, and agree to talk about all this on Tuesday. Just as I turn around again, I say: "Excuse me Kristin, I was a little....". But Kristin has already disappeared into the meeting

room. Back in my office, I exhale and think, "Damn it, what bad timing, why couldn't I say it?"

In this situation, Claire describes something that many leaders might recognize. She's busy - going somewhere, and a co-worker invites her to "dance" at the same time. But their rhythms are not synchronized. Kristin is trying to catch her on her way and reach out for a moment of contact from behind. Claire literally has her arms full, and her thoughts are swirling while her feet are moving forward. It's only at the moment when the leader becomes aware of this, and grounds herself as well as she can in the situation, that they can tune into each other. Their eyes meet and another dance can begin. But it's interrupted again in a moment. Even though this is a small everyday situation, it represents an important transformational turning point for Claire. It's not only the rush that's the issue. From the writing process, and from coaching, she discovers that this situation is also connected to her values and to the fear of not being a good leader.

She writes further:

Afterward I have the feeling, "You didn't do that well enough." After some reflection about this incident and a coaching session, I've discovered that what's at stake for me is my need for recognition of being a "good leader," one who listens, who "sees," is present, and takes each co-worker seriously. Which in this instance I did not experience that I did.

I get "caught" on the way. I'm not open in my meeting with Kristin, as I'm in movement and have my arms full. Kristin comes walking in back of me and talks to my "back." In this moment I want most to flee or freeze. If only I could run away and hide. I am thinking, which basic feelings were active in me then: maybe fear and anxiety about not behaving properly?

In relation to embodied leadership competence, in this situation Claire is in movement – but she is not experiencing self-contact and somatic awareness. Therefore, both her communication reading and contact_ability, and her feeling of leadership are affected. Nor is the feeling of being trapped and underway due only to being rushed, but also to the basic feeling of fear: fear about speaking up, and anxiety about not trying, and about being good and proper. Fear can, as she also writes, start a physically noticeable freeze or flight process. Claire has the desire both to get away and to hide. But she stays. And even though it takes a little time, when she reacts to her own lack of presence, she pauses. Here, she consciously succeeds in focusing and increasing her own somatic awareness by breathing, grounding, and making eye contact with Kristin. After this, she can both speak up and gain self-contact, communication reading, contact ability and leadership; thus opening up for bringing all three levels of embodied professional competence in resonance. Many of the leaders can recognize stressful situations like this one. Here it's much more difficult to keep a feeling of calm and resonant leadership than in joyful situations with a "we" atmosphere.

A sprouting feeling of joy - the free feeling of leading in a "we" atmosphere

In one of her stories, Martha describes how a successful meeting for reflection between herself and two co-workers makes her "bubbly" happy. And strengthens her feeling of leadership.

I smile, laugh a little and notice a sprouting feeling of joy. I feel like a Leader. There is silence. I can see they both are thinking. I'm glad. I notice I'm bubbling inside. I feel we're going in the right direction. I have a good feeling in my body. A feeling of being happy and filled with energy. I have started something. My head is already filled with new questions I can ask at the next reflection meetings. If I can only remember them. I'm already looking forward to it. I notice a feeling in my body that's an eagerness to go further.

I'm glad, and feel free and contented.

I have a good feeling in my body. I feel proud, light and present.

Here Martha experiences harmony between all three principles of embodied leadership competence. She notices presence and ease in her own body. She sees and senses her co-workers. They create an energetic atmosphere together. Martha both takes and holds the space. She feels that she's a leader. Here there is a deep harmony between spoken language and the language of the body. Feelings of joy, energy, pride and freedom can in many ways be compared to Sally's joyful dance experience, which created a sense of freedom: she could let go of disturbing thoughts and feel like part of a whole. Martha also describes working with a "we" – a community which moves in the right direction, as in a "dance." And this can create trust and courage for both co-workers and leaders to open up for new understanding. Both joy, a feeling of freedom, and caring and nurturing one another are also experienced by the other leaders as moving, and closely tied to their embodied leadership competence. While leadership can be felt as an easy, pleasant dance in a joyfull room, it can be felt as quite another dance in a space where anger is sensed, felt and expressed through embodied communication in a quite usual meeting.

Next step in an angry dance – using the felt criticism as an open door.

Grethe writes:

I am focused and prepared. I am tense, and notice a restlessness and movement in my body. Co-workers and the leader are sitting around the meeting table. I try to create contact and presence in the room. Say something about the purpose of the meeting. I sense that I'm giving an extra amount of attention to the movements and expressions of the others at the meeting. We are to agree on how to formulate an advertisement/a notice for a position in the organization. A dialogue has started. I see that Karl has crossed his arms, and is the only one who hasn't said anything yet. My thoughts are concerned with his attitude. I feel that I must act on this. I continue noticing.

I'm irritated, and notice a bit of insecurity as to how I'll intervene in the situation. I ask Karl, "I'd very much like to hear your thoughts?" He answers, arms still crossed, "I don't have so much to say." After a short pause, he continues, "In my opinion, the notice should have been posted long ago."

I'm a little taken aback and pause for a moment.

I notice my pulse, and take a deep breath.

Then I ask Karl again for his opinion.

I see that he is no longer crossing his arms.

He answers, and I experience that he starts to be more curious about the advertisement.

This situation too takes place in a very short amount of time, and even though there is a verbal dialogue going on, Grethe's attention is very much focused on Karl, who is not saying anything - but still speaking. Loudly. With his body. This is a difficult dance for Grete to lead. It irritates her, and challenges her feeling of leading the room. It knocks her a little off course, but she notices it. And regains both herself and her leadership by breathing, taking a short pause while she is giving attention to her own self-contact and somatic awareness, and to a clear, tuned-in and consistent contact with Karl. The situation

is not new to Grethe. Actually, it is a well-known pattern, and she writes further:

In this situation, I can see a recognizable scene. I experience that in pressured situations I can be inclined to have my attention out in the room and get distracted, and that I can direct less attention inward. In this situation, I wanted to react to a co-worker whom I experienced as disengaged and passive. Here I can see a "basic feeling" of anger, which on the part of both Karl and myself was expressed in frustration and irritation. This means that in the course of the conversation, I must "collect myself" and consider what my next step is, without hastening the situation. I can keep the conversation going, and we end up with a good result that we can work with further.

Many of the other leaders also experience that bodily expressions of anger or irritation in both themselves and their co-workers is a difficult field of communication to be in as a leader. Even though the above situation was far from comfortable for Grethe, it was still a teaching moment in containing and meeting both her own and Karl's irritation. And a learning about how to stay grounded with this feeling and still invite contact and a more open and curious atmosphere in the room, using the felt criticism as an open door. With that, Karl could drop his arms.

When leaders succeed in consciously regaining their self-contact and somatic awareness, they often experience that what they experience as difficult situations can be transformed into grounded, resonant meetings where the participants dance in rhythm, and where their co-workers can have warm, acknowledging and respectful contact with each other.

Being a loss for words - caring love and openheartedness in the leadership space

Even though the leaders do not directly write the word *love*, many of them notice a great degree of caring and an openheartedness in their work. This is especially true in situations connected with joy or sorrow. One of the leaders feels that her "*heart beat extra beats*" when she senses that a colleague has a need for important support.

Belinda too becomes aware of noticing tension in her body when she feels challenged. In the following experience description from an intense meeting, she writes about and gains insight in a situation in which there was touching, grateful and openhearted energy between a co-worker and herself. Slowly a quiet dance evolved.

Kate sits in front of me at the conference table. I'm a little tense, but feel at ease with Kate. I ask her the next question, "How does your work suit you, do you like it?"

I have eye contact with Kate and notice that I'm working at being present and in contact with her.

I move in the chair and wait for Kate to say something. She says, "I get along very well here, I like it." Then there's a little pause, and I catch a glimpse of some moisture in her eyes. My awareness is sharpened.

I notice a little uneasiness in my body. Kate says further, "I'm surprised how open I can be to you." While Kate speaks, I can notice that I'm emotionally touched, and I notice that my body becomes more tense and that I get uncomfortable. I search for words – what to say. It's hard for me, and I notice a little lump in my throat. But I manage to stammer that I'm grateful for her inviting me into her story, and that I don't really know what to say just now – I'm at a loss for words. I take a deep breath and calm down again. The conversation continues, and I notice that we are in good contact with each other.

Belinda's story gives us insight into a leadership situation in which she manages to regain and keep her presence and self-contact while being with their shared gratitude and feeling of being touched. Even though Belinda feels a bit challenged, she grounds herself by breathing deeply. Thus, she manages to *stay* in the calm, open and trusting contact that has been created between herself and her co-worker. In relation to the third level of embodied leadership competence, here Belinda has both led, created and kept an open space in a quiet "dance," one in which her courage to guide and be in an openhearted situation while being emotionally touched may be regarded as a leadership strength.

Caring and openheartedness are also important for Steven, who writes that, as a leader and as a person, it's important for him to be real and authentic. This is a basic value in his leadership. Therefore, it's also important for him to include his heart in his leadership work. In one of his descriptions, he wrote about a day when he had to give a co-worker, an older man named Max, a very sad and personal message, and he knew that Max would be shocked and very upset. Steven experienced then a bodily noticeable strength and decisiveness to take the lead and take responsibility for the situation. He also noticed feelings of great calmness, and was very aware of giving the message with respect and a warm, caring attitude, and as professionally and dignified as possible. Therefore, it was important for him to show his co-worker that he cared, with both eye contact and touch, so as to create as secure and tolerable a situation as possible. Some time afterward, the co-worker, Max, came up to his office.

Steven writes:

Max expresses gratitude for the way the situation had been handled. In that specific situation, Max experienced both anxiety and sadness. I think that we as humans often experience either a feeling of connection and trust, or a feeling of insecurity and frustration when we come across people's basic feelings. After this, I have experienced that Max and I have a very trustful cooperation and social relationship at our workplace.

As also Steven's description illustrates, love, trust and respect are closely related and are registered and sensed through the language of the body. Therefore, this is also an important part of embodied leadership competence as some of life's most difficult times can happen at a workplace. And what happens in the moment is carried further into the relationships between both leaders and co-workers, and in their lived memories.

Conclusion and Future Research

In this study, the co-researchers have shared both joyful, resonant, disturbing and frustrating aspects of their leadership experiences. The research question focused on what insights experienced leaders developed by training the language of the body in a combination of dance and phenomenological- inspired personal stories. Throughout the article, the leadership stories have shown how these leaders went through a transformational journey. They moved and were moved in both the concrete dance space and in the metaphorical dance in their everyday practice.

The dance space became an experiential, aesthetic, safe and still challenging play space, which gave the leaders time and room to train the language of the body together with others. Through dance, the leaders gained insight and concrete tools for grounding, synchronization, feelings, eye contact and sensual communication. They also became aware of how much their physicality is in play in even small, unpredictable situations, and how their leadership, followership and ability to create, hold and take a space can be trained through dance improvisation and elements from couples dance. Even though these leaders developed insight and gained important tools through dance, their stories also show that even short, situated events in their daily leadership practice have a richness and complexity

that contain the potential for a never-ending learning process and a nuanced embodied consciousness. Here the phenomenological-inspired leadership stories became an invaluable tool for deep reflection. By writing about experiences from both the dance space and their daily practice, these leaders gained insight into an increased awareness of the language of the body. They learned how this could nourish their embodied leadership competence and have an impact on even brief situations in their everyday leadership practice. They also became more familiar with feelings such as fear, sadness, anger, joy, and love, acknowledging them as important parts of their embodied leadership competence.

Thus the phenomenological approach and practical wisdom, which as van Manen (2016) states requires living relationships and shared situations became a natural source of insight for these leaders. By writing situated leadership stories about moments of taken-for-granted-ness and moments of insight, the stories became not only personal but also part of a collective learning process. The leaders gained a rich benefit from writing these stories, and many of them have continued writing in their leadership practice after the project. This can be an ongoing discovery and perhaps a many-years-long "dancing journey." Especially openhearted leadership demands maturity, courage, and deep human insight and a bodily noticeable grounding and centering, as well as the ability to be able to protect oneself. It cannot be learned in a few months. This is why a course focusing on the language of the body using phenomenological-inspired leadership stories and dance in no way prepares leaders to be able to fully cope with all the situations they will encounter in their work life, as their embodied leadership competence will be challenged again and again. Increased awareness and collective training can open up for the development of important wisdom. It was also a consistent dividend for the leaders, who participated in this course, in which the combination of dance and writing leadership stories turned out to be both challenging and of great significance.

Even if dance taught these leaders to pay attention to their own felt, sensual and emotional bodies and the bodily communication in situated leadership contexts, an important critical implication is that short-term dance training can only open the door. Sustained involvement and practice could teach leaders the somatic awareness and embodied self-contact that they would need for sustainable development. The findings also show how and why those leaders needed to combine dance with reflective writing in order to evolve consciousness and develop embodied abilities in their daily leadership practices.

The results of this project also indicate that an experientially-grounded and aesthetically-informed reflexivity, which as Springborg (2010) writes can hold the more disturbing aspects of our experience, helps the leaders not only to develop their personal leadership through reflective observations but also helps them learning through an everyday active experimentation leading to concrete experiences (Kolb, 1986, p. 42).

By focusing on the importance of the sensual and emotional language of the body and the combination of dance, everyday leadership situations and phenomenological-inspired leadership stories, this article contributes to current creative streams on art-based learning, aesthetic practices, leadership development and the existing innovative research in the field (e.g. Biehl, 2017; Chemi, Kawamura, Passila, & Owens, 2020; Zeitner, Rowe, & Jackson, 2016; Sutherland, 2012). Nevertheless, this project shows only a small part of an endless leadership landscape. A leadership journey is not a fun guided tour. It is a deep and unpredictable journey that continues long after its formal conclusion. Therefore, more international research is needed in this area. Perhaps it is precisely through untraditional cooperation between leaders, educators, researchers and teachers with a dance background that new waves of thinking about leadership may arise. This might open up for more new, embodied and creative research-based practices in future leadership education. So that leaders, artists, teachers and researchers in education can invite each other to move and dance. Together.

References

- Ashkanasy, N.M. & Dasborough, M.T. 2010. Emotional awareness and emotional intelligence in leadership teaching. *Journal of Education for Business*, 79(1), pp. 18–22.
- Ashkanasy, N. M. & Tse, B. 2000. Transformational leadership as management of emotion: A conceptual review. In N. M. Ashkanasy & C. E. Härtel (Eds.), *Emotions in the workplace: Research, theory and practice* (pp. 221–235). Westport, CT: Quorum Books.
- Avolio, B., Walumbwa, F. & Weber, T. J. 2009. Leadership: Current Theories, Research, and Future Directions. *Management Department Faculty Publications*, 37.
- Avolio, B. J., & Yammarino, F. J. 2002. Transformational and charismatic leadership: The road ahead. Amsterdam: JAI. Chicago (Author-Date, 15th ed.) directions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60, pp. 421–449.
- Bass, B.M. & Avolio, B.J. 1990. Developing Transformational Leadership: 1992 and Beyond, *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 14 No. 5. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090599010135122>
- Biehl, B. 2017. *Dance and Organization Integrating Dance Theory and Methods into the Study of Management*: London. Routledge.
- Biehl-Missal, B. & Springborg, C. 2016. Dance, Organization, and Leadership, *Organizational Aesthetics*: Vol. 5: Iss. 1.
- Brewis, D., N. & Bell, E. Provocation Essays Editorial: On the importance of moving and being moved (2020) *Management learning*. Volume 51 Issue 5. 533-535.
- Brown, S. D. 2018. Authentic Leadership, Embodied Leadership, and Followership from a Multi-cultural Perspective. In D. Cotter-lockard, *Authentic Leadership and Followership International Perspectives* (pp. 193–214). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Burge, J. Bachelor, R. & Cox, L. 2013. Shall I Lead Now? Learner Experiences of Leader–Follower Relationships Through Engagement with the Dance in The anatomy of leadership. In: L.R. Melina, G.J. Burgess, L. Lid-Falkman, & A. Marturano (Eds.), *The embodiment of leadership*, 1st ed. (pp. 175–193). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Chemi, T., Kawamura, T., Passila, A., & Owens, A. 2020. Embodied Performative Approaches: When workplace and theatre innovate together for organizational sustainability. *Organizational Aesthetics*, 9(3), 1-8. Retrieved from <https://oa.journals.publicknowledgeproject.org/index.php/oa/article/view/159>
- Cullen, J. & Turnbull, S. 2005. A Meta-Review of the Management Development Literature. *Human Resource Development Review*, 4(3), pp. 335-355. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484305278891>
- Dasborough, M.T. & Ashkanasy, N.M. 2002. Emotion and attribution of intentionality in leader–member relationships The Leadership Quarterly, Volume 13, Issue 5, October 2002, pp. 615-634
- Denzin. E. (2007). *On understanding Emotion*. Routledge.
- Diddams, M. & Chang, G.C. 2012. Only human: exploring the nature of weakness in authentic leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, 23, pp. 593–603.

- Ellis, C.; Adams, T. E. & Bochner, A. P. 2010. Autoethnography: An Overview. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1), <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1101108>.
- Galvin, K & Todres L. 2009. Embodying nursing openheartedness. An existential perspective. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*. 27 (3), pp. 141-149
- Gardersøe, A., Larsen, M.H. (2014): *Musikalitet og lederskab*, Paper presented at Det Danske Ledelsesakademis årskonference 2014.
- Guastella Lindsay, S. 2013. The anatomy of leadership. In: L.R. Melina, G.J. Burgess, L. Lid-Falkman, & A. Marturano, eds., *The embodiment of leadership*, 1st ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 5–22.
- Groundwater-Smith, S., Mitchell, J., Mockler, N., Ponte, P., & Ronnerman, K. 2013. *Facilitating practitioner research: developing transformational partnerships*. London: Routledge.
- Hall, J. 2008: The Sound of Leadership: Transformational Leadership in Music *Journal of Leadership Education* Volume 7, Issue 2: Special Issue.
- Halprin, D. 2006. *The expressive body in life, art, and therapy: working with movement, metaphor, and meaning*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Hildebrandt, S. 2014. Forord. I E. Bech (Ed.), *Professionel kærlighed - er der plads til følelser i professionelle relationer* (pp. 7-9). Dafolo. København.
- Jarvis, P. 1999. *The practitioner researcher. developing theory from practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Jansson, D. 2018. *Leading musically*. Taylor & Francis. Routledge.
- Kolb, D.A. 1986, *Experiential Learning*. Prentice Hall.
- Ladkin, D. & Taylor, S. S. 2009. Understanding Arts-Based Methods in Managerial Development, *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, Vol. 8 (1). Pp. 55-69
- Ladkin, D. & Taylor, S. S. (2010). Enacting the true self: towards a theory of embodied authentic leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, 21(1), pp. 64–74.
- Ladkin, D. & Taylor, S.S. 2014, Introduction: The Physicality of Leadership: 'Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe'. *The Physicality of Leadership: Gesture, Entanglement, Taboo, Possibilities (Monographs in Leadership and Management, Vol. 6)*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 1-13.
- Lowen, A. 1995. *Joy. The surrender to the Body and to Life*. Penguin Compass
- Lowen, A. 2006. *The Language of the Body: Physical Dynamics of Character Structure*. Alachua, Fla: Bioenergetic Press.
- Major, C.H., Harris, M.S. & Zakrajsek, T. 2016. *Teaching for learning: 101 intentionally designed educational activities to put students on the path to success*. London: Routledge.
- Melina, L. R., Burgess, G. L., Lid-Falkman, L. & Marturano, A.Eds.) 2013. *The embodiment of leadership*, 1st ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass,

- Merleau-Ponty, M. 1945. *Phenomenology of perception*. Reprint 2006. London: Routledge Classics.
- Reichard, R. J. & Avolio, B. J. 2005. Where are we? The status of leadership intervention research: a meta-analytic summary. In W. L. Gardner, B. J. Avolio & F. O. Walumbwa (ed.), *Authentic Leadership and Practice: Origins, Effects and Development*. Pp. 203-226. Oxford, UK: Elsevier Sci.
- Ropo, A. & Parviainen, J. 2001. Leadership and Bodily Knowledge in Expert Organizations: Epistemological Rethinking. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 17(1). Pp. 1-17.
- Sabetti, S. 1986. *Wholeness principle*. Sherman Oaks: Life Energy Media
- Stevens, C.J., Dean, R. T., Vincs, K. & Schubert, E. 2014. In the heat of the moment: Audience real time response to live music and *dance* performance. In K. Pil Hansen, Bettina Bläsing - 2017 - Performing Arts
- Sparkes, A. 2002. *Telling tales in sport and physical activity: a qualitative journey*. Leeds: Human Kinetics.
- Sparkes, A.C. 2016. Researching the senses in sport and exercise. In: B. Smith & A.C. Sparkes (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise*, 1st ed. (pp. 343-355). London: Routledge.
- Springborg, C. 2010. Leadership as art - leaders coming to their senses. *Leadership*, 6(3), pp. 243-258.
- Springborg, C. 2017. Teaching Co-Creation in Higher Education Through Dance Exercises. 10.1007/978-94-6351-119-3_4.
- Springborg, C. & Sutherland, I. 2014. Flying Blind? Teaching Aesthetic Agency in an Executive MBA Course, *The Physicality of Leadership: Gesture, Entanglement, Taboo, Possibilities (Monographs in Leadership and Management, Vol. 6)*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 37-58. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-357120140000006003>
- Sutherland, I. 2012. Arts-based methods in leadership development: Affording aesthetic workspaces, reflexivity and memories with momentum. *Management and Learning*. Vol 44, Issue 1. page(s): 25-43
- Taylor, C, Cornelius; J & Colvin, K. 2014. Visionary leadership and its relationship to organizational effectiveness. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 35 No. 6, <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-10-2012-0130>
- Taylor SS. Presentational Form in First Person Research: Off-Line Collaborative Reflection Using Art. *Action Research*. 2004;2(1):71-88. doi:[10.1177/1476750304040493](https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750304040493)
- Todres, L. 2007. *Embodied enquiry: phenomenological touchstones for research, psychotherapy and spirituality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan & Human Kinetics.
- Zeitner, D., Rowe, N., & Jackson, B. (2015). Embodied and Embodiary Leadership: Experiential Learning in Dance and Leadership Education. *Organizational Aesthetics*, 5(1), 167-187.
- van Manen, M. 2016. *Phenomenology of Practice. Meaning- Giving Methods in Phenomenological Research and Writing*. London and New York. Routledge.

- Wicks, P.G. & Rippin, A. 2010. Art as experience. An inquiry into art and leadership using dolls and dollmaking. *Leadership* 6 (3).
- Winther, H (red.) 2012, *Kroppens Sprog I Professionel Praxis: om kontakt, nærvær, lederskab og personlig kommunikation* . Billesø & Baltzer, Værløse.
- Winther, H 2013, Professionals are their bodies: The language of the body as sounding board in leadership and professional communication. i LR Melina, GJ Burgess, LL Falkman & A Marturano (red), *The Embodiment of Leadership*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, Building Leadership Bridges, s. 217-237.Xxx 2012.
- Winther, H, Grøntved, SN, Graversen, EK & Ilkjær, I 2015, 'The dancing nurses and the language of the body: Training somatic awareness, bodily communication, and embodied professional competence in nurse education', *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, bind 33, nr. 3, s. 182-192. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010114561063>Xxx 2013.
- Winther, H 2015, Praktikerforskning. i LF Thing & LS Ottesen (red), *Metoder i Idræts- og Fysioterapiforskning*. 2. udg, Munksgaard , København, s. 172-189.Xxx 2015.
- Winther, H 2016, 'Grundläggande känslors liv och funktion i undervisningen i idrott och rörelse: en ständig möjlighet till lärande', *idrottsforum.org*, s. 1-20.
- Winther, H 2018, 'Dancing days with young people: An art-based coproduced research film on embodied leadership, creativity, and innovative education ', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, bind 17, nr. 1 (Special Issue: Exploring Innovations in Elicitation Methods), s. 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918789330>Xxx 2018.
- Winther, H 2020, Let's move: Embodiment, leadership, and dance in education. i MB Tin, F Telseth, JO Tangen & R Giulianotti (red), *The Nordic Model and Physical Culture*. Routledge, London, Routledge Research in Sport, Culture and Society, s. 51-67. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429320187>Xxx 2020.
- Zeitner, D., Rowe, N. & Jackson, B. 2016. Embodied and Embodiary Leadership: Experiential Learning in Dance and Leadership Education, *Organizational Aesthetics*: Vol. 5: Iss.

About the Authors

Helle Winther is Associate Professor, Ph.D. in dance and movement psychology at the Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports, University of Copenhagen. She is also a trained dance and body psychotherapist. Her research and teaching focus on dance and movementpsychology, and the language of the body in leadership and professional practices. She has educated generations of university students and has worked with leaders, teachers, nurses and other professional fields for many years. Helle has published eight books and numerous research articles about her work.

Michael Højlund Larsen is Programme Manager, M.Sc., M.Ed. at Zealand – Academy of Technologies and Business. He has educated and trained leaders and worked with many different organizations for more than 25 years with a special focus on leadership and philosophy. Michael has published several books and articles on philosophical practice in both leadership development, organizations and with children.