

Metaphors of Inclusion

Modelling Friendship in Inclusivist Leadership

Introduction

- I'll take a Western and Christian perspective.
- the author is leading in different organisations and institutions on different levels.
 - includes the supervision of paid employees (scientific organisation) as well as funded staff (NGO).
 - number of employees and staff goes from a few to up to more than fifty.
 - no experience on a strongly economic market oriented directorate or leadership.
- reflections are ethnographic in style, following the emic [from inside] perspective of participant-observation (Bernard 2006:342-345).
- Topic: Inclusivist leadership is considered an encounter of equals described as "friendship".
- Approach: Social constructivism is based on an anthropology of leadership, which describes a mutual relationship of learning and teaching.
- Principle: The Golden Rule as a inclusivist leadership metaphor.
- Bernard, H. Russell 2006. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 342-386. Oxford: AltaMira Press.
- Spradley, James P. 1980. *Participant observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Overview:

1. Introduction
2. Framing – Inclusion, Disability Studies, Metaphor and Leadership
3. Towards Friendship as Inclusive Leadership
4. The Discourse of Dis/Abled – "Otherness" versus "normalcy"
5. Leadership as Friendship – The Metaphor of the Golden Rule

Framing - Inclusion, Disability Studies, Metaphor and Leadership

- *Inclusion*
 - United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (2006; CRPD; German UN-BRK; Germany, UK, US ratified it in 2009),
 - replaces and overtop “integration” and “participation” - focus too much on the “normal” against the “otherness” of people with impairment,
 - from Object-orientation “they” to Subject orientation “we, all of us” by equal partners, **BUT** people with impairment need the political, physical and psychologic support of the Abled.
 - “Inclusion” is understood as the human right to access information, participate fully and equally in public life and get best assistance and support to education on all levels.
- *Disability Studies; models of disability* – *medical* model (basic), the *social* model (UK, mixes medical model) and the *cultural* model (US, what people make out of it!). Concept behind: The Abled profit from the Disabled. Metaphor “Not about us, Without us” as a management slogan of the Disabled (peer group approach).
- *Metaphors* are understood as linguistic symbols to express one kind of thing in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnsen 2003:5), meaning reaches from “metaphors have an explanatory function” (Jäkel 2003:58) to, “**all thought is metaphorical, thus all is metaphor**”. In religious contexts “metaphor” is understood as a placeholder for a religious key concept.
- *Leadership* is no clear cut term, a relationship in where there is a leader and followers that are led (Irritation ranges from either those that “lead” (“What is leading?”) up to missing investigations of the followers.
 - *Heroic* and *positive* understanding of leadership is basic: The leader is defined by status and has traits to get the task done.
 - *Post-heroic* and *deconstructivity* approach takes context(s) into account - the whole of leadership.
 - Leadership as a *social* construct, what societies, cultures or peer groups make out of it. *Management* (administrative focus) and *coaching* (together through a process of learning) are different.
 - Recent tendency to “shared”, “distributed” and “post-transformational” leadership = “involves a process of mutual learning of how to work together in a productive way” (Fletcher & Käufer 2003).
 - Ambiguity in leadership is covered by a shadow, the *dark side of leadership* (e.g. power concentration, arrogance in authority etc.).

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Towards Friendship as Inclusive Leadership

- Inclusion is a discourse for inclusivist leaders of different life-worlds aiming at mutual understanding. Inclusive leadership is given by Abled as well as by Disabled, both struggle with inclusion due to limited expectations (Abled) or negative experience and biases (Disabled).
- The metaphor of “friendship” as inclusive leadership is an attempt to approach the other as a human, equal in rights and dignity but different in appearance and dependency (human/social diversity principle).

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The Discourse of Dis/Abled – “Otherness” versus “normalcy”

- Inclusion is a strongly politically progressed approach (resilience by Church). Underlying assumption is towards a change of society, not just by physical arrangements but also by deeper lying thought processes that will arrive at a shift of what is considered “normal” or “standard”. Opposite sociological benchmarks are “discrimination”, “marginalization” and “exclusion”. Research demonstrates that physical handicap (bodily and mental), as a derivation from the “normal”, leads to reactions that range from ignorance, turning away, disgust, or nausea to shock (Cloerkes 1985:2).
- Leadership on all levels (e.g. scientists, teachers, managers, NGO heads etc.) are those crucial segments of society that above all are communicating these social benchmarks and implementing change. Leaders think holistic in regard to their audience, their goals and the transformation of society by their influence. It is the by-going effect of inclusive leadership that signals inclusion as a directive (and opposite towards exclusion).
- The intuitive *social constructivist approach* is based on the *charismatic*, the *symbolic* and the *attribution* model. Used in education of translators to stimulate a mutual process of qualitative improvement. Same in leadership. A “shared” or by “consent” driven approach such as social constructivism is helpful as partners with different social prestige or status are longing for goals that all would profit from. NOTE it is the disabled partner that is not able to change his environment or the mindsets of the Abled.
- Metaphors about *The Others* as “cripple, gimp” (for lame people), “derp, moron, dimwit, idiot, (re)tard, schizo, (dick)head” (for mentally handicapped), “dwarf, midget” (for small in stature), “mole” (for blind people) or endless others are used to generalize people affected. These swearwords complement the terminology of political correctness in so far as both could be used positively or negatively regarding the context(s).

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Leadership as Friendship – The Metaphor of the Golden Rule

- The Golden Rule - the law of reciprocity is known as a religious or cultural directive.
 - “One should treat others as s/he wants to be treated”, or
 - as negative approach that “one should do nothing that s/he does not want to be done to her/him”.
 - A third more emphatic form “wishes for others what you wish for yourself”.
 - The basic principles are *respect* and *empathy* to others (stated in many religions).
 - Lately defined by Jesus of Nazareth as a summary of the Jewish Law (Torah), “Do to others what you want them to do to you. This is the meaning of the law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets” (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31).
- Examples: Zoroastrism/Parsism: “Keep hold of your eyes, your hands and your loins” (Near/ Middle Eastern or Asia). Sometimes reduced to “keep hold of your hands and mouth” (e.g. Egypt).
- A conveyed basic Humanist condition of equality of all persons. An inclusivist leader as *primus inter pares* (first of equals) is addressing the needs of the followers. In an inclusive context the leadership is asked to deal with
 - own (the disabled leader), or by the leader given, or aided in assistance (e.g. a care person, mobility or sense supporting aids) as well as the effort of reflection to recognize if the task was understood and how it best is realized by the person addressed to.
- The metaphor “Not about us Without us” is thus put into practice as the physical or mental impairment is taken into consideration without putting pressure on the party relying on special needs.
- The gain is in insights by the crossing of the different life-worlds (also in cross-cultural team settings – intercultural leadership).
- Leadership as Friendship aims at trust-based and authentic relationship(s). Trust is the essential factor and equality secondary. Authenticity is the main trust-building factor. Based on real interest in the counterpart. It is a metaphor for mutual communication, reflection and empathy. This discourse is a long-term process.
- The *social constructivist* approach starts with a so called progress plan. Initiated and maintained by the leading party - mutually developed - multi-stage monitoring mechanism, each step asks for mutual evaluation of the process and the relationship as such
- Power and authority of controlling and leading is shared to some degree, additionally in inclusive Leadership the process also.

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