



Inner Sustainability

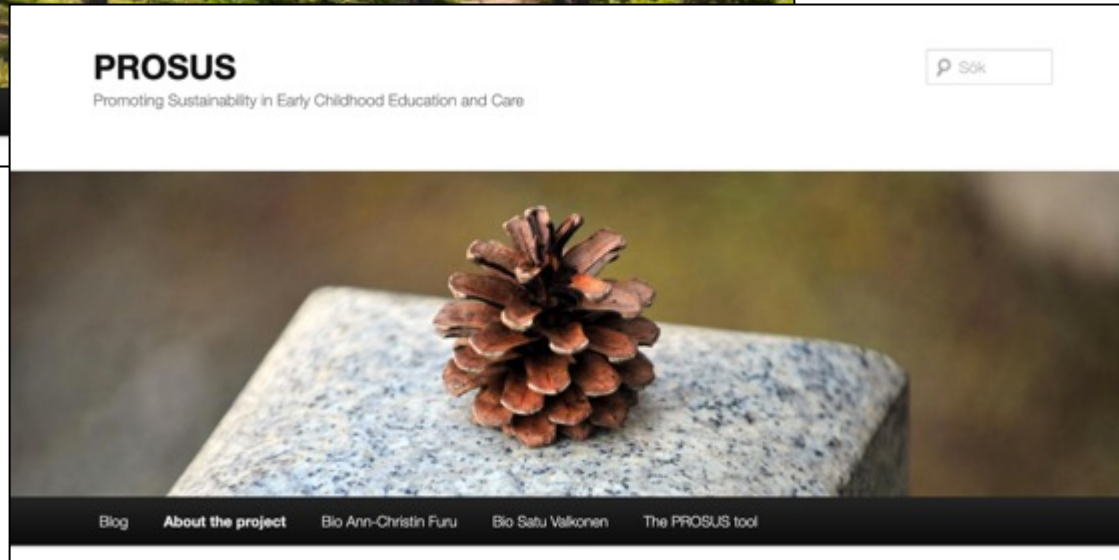
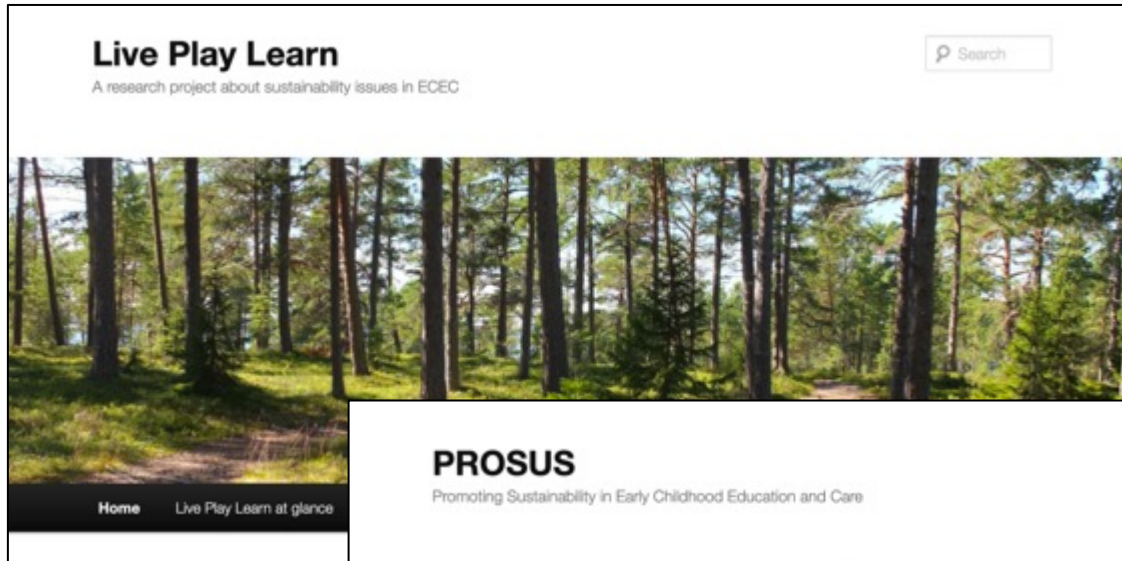
– the core of education for sustainability

BUP Teacher's Day

18th of April 2023

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SUSTAINABLE STORIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

Traditionally, Sustainable Development is based on three pillars: the ecological, the societal, and the economic sustainability. But in order to be aware of these, your **inner transition, or inner sustainability**, is of importance. How do you understand, feel and relate to all the things that are happening around you? Both on the local and the global scale. Are you feeling well and self-confident, you will also be able to feel empathy and secure to act for a better world.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing war in Ukraine are factors that are affecting us all. Some more than others, unfortunately. To keep the **courage, energy, and enthusiasm** both in your profession and in your private life, you must take care of your inner sustainability.

This is an online session that focuses on inner sustainability as a vital part of sustainability education in contemporary higher education. **What is inner sustainability? Why is it important? How can it be strengthened among students and teachers?**

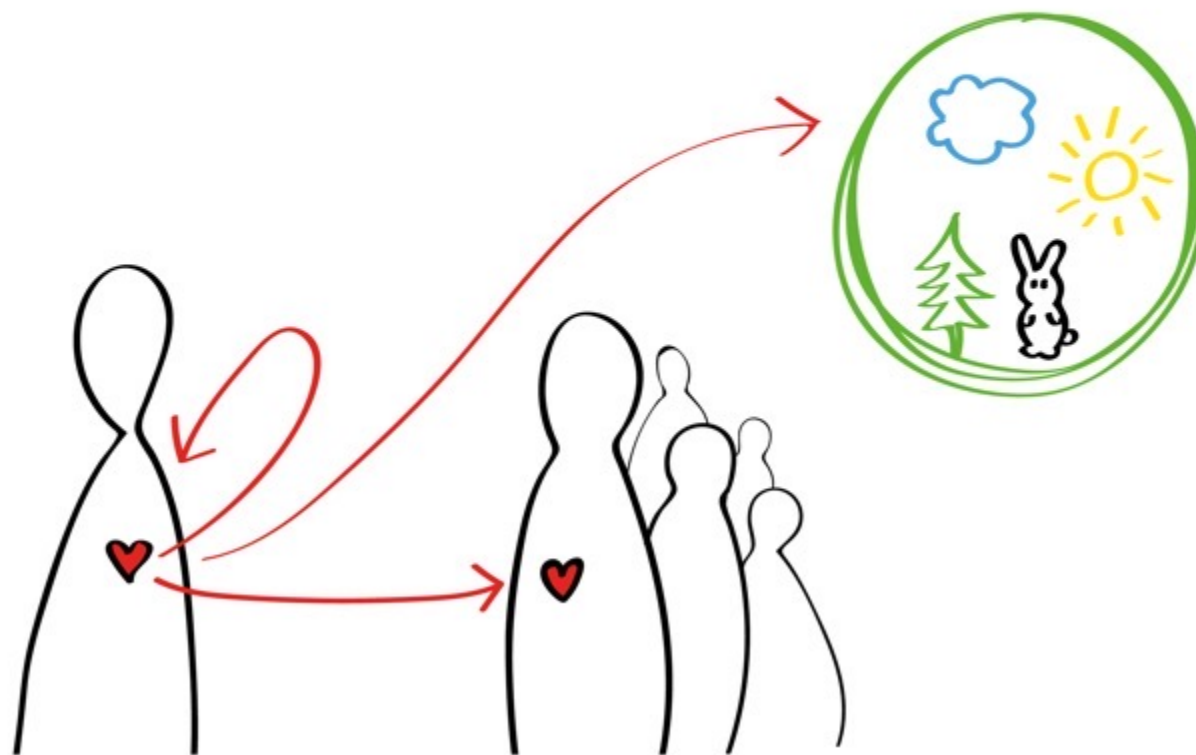
During the session, participants get the opportunity to develop a **blueprint for integrating inner sustainability into both their teaching and their own lives.**

What is inner sustainability?
Why is inner sustainability important?

15 min BREAK

How can inner sustainability be strengthened among students
and teachers?

Relational ontology by Martin Buber



The personal
&
The professional

Sustainability Education

“embraces the development of a **critical and transformative responsiveness to issues of people and place**. In such an approach, sociocultural, ecological, and economic sustainability, as well as socioeconomic and environmental justice, could be addressed in grappling with the challenge of **rebalancing human–environment and human–human relations**.”

Robert B. Stevenson (2022) Approaches to Education for Sustainability.

What is inner sustainability?

SDG & The 3 Pillars of Sustainability



How do we reach these ambitious goals?

- Sustainability is created inside out
 - Emotional engagement
 - Meaningful experiences
- Transformation happens based on values, beliefs, attitudes, worldviews
 - Personal values – motivation and meaning
 - Cultural values – behaviors and identity

(Horlings, 2015; Pisters, Vihinen & Figueiredo, 2019; Woiwode et al, 2020; Wamsler, 2020; Ramstetter et al, 2023)

Inner Sustainability

“Yet, our external environment is a manifestation of deeply held **beliefs, values, attitudes, and perceptions of the world**—the inner dimensions of sustainability.”

Berejnoi Bejarano et al (2019)

“...it involves self-reflection and acknowledgement of actions led by experienced feelings, emotions, and needs. Acknowledgment can be guided by self-reflection of one’s internal values and principles — the result is an exercise to promote inner development, which inherently affects our perspective of external states.”

Berejnoi Bejarano et al (2019)

Inner transformations should help build capacity for both cultural and systemic shifts.

Cooper & Gibson (2022)

Personal reflection 1: Core values

What are your core values? What gives you motivation and meaning? What drives you to get up and get to work?

Personal reflection 2: Core values

What are the core values of your local/regional/national culture? What makes your community or country thrive?

BREAK OUT ROOM 1 – 10 minutes

What thoughts and feelings do the concept of inner sustainability arise? Does it make sense to you? Why? Or, why not?

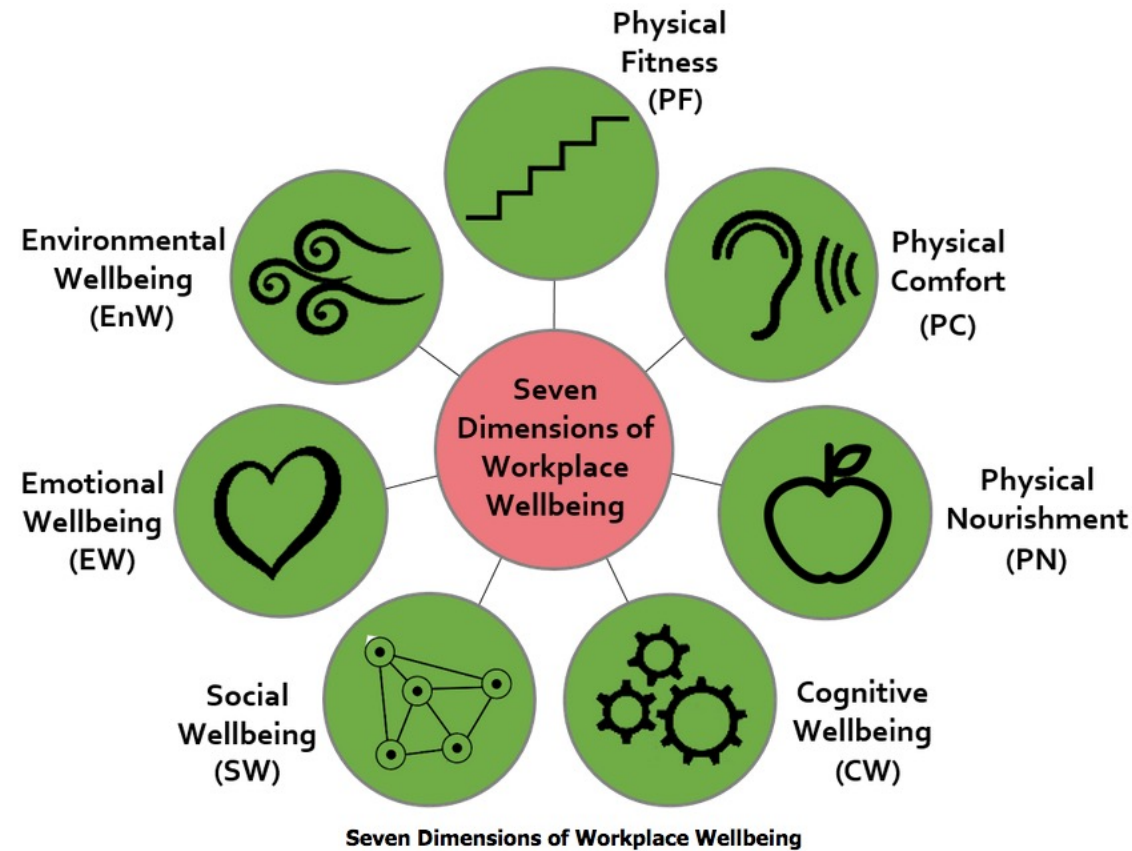
Linked to resilience

The capacity to meet change, challenges, and adversity in flexible ways.

Physical, emotional, cognitive, and social.

(Furu & Heikkilä, 2022)

Linked to well-being



TAKE A BREAK

Why is inner sustainability
important?

In order to create genuine transformation towards sustainability on the planet (future oriented).

In order to lead a good day to day life and contribute to the sustainability of my community and society (present oriented).

How can inner sustainability be strengthened among students and teachers?

How do we create inner sustainability?

Strengthen compassion

Create connection

Promote creativity

(Pisters, Vihinen & Figueiredo, 2019)

”Notably, climate anxiety had a significant inverse association with **mental wellbeing** in 31 out of 32 countries. In contrast, it had a significant association with **pro-environmental behaviour** in 24 countries, and with **environmental activism** in 12 countries. Our findings highlight contextual boundaries to engagement in environmental action as an antidote to climate anxiety, and the broad international significance of considering negative climate-related emotions as a plausible threat to wellbeing.”

Ogunbode et al (2022)

Building hope among children and youth

Share thoughts and feelings with grown ups who take you seriously

Conduct everyday pro environmental actions together

Ojala (2007; 2012; 2017)



HABITS
VALUES
WORLDVIEWS

BREAK OUT ROOM 2 – 5 minutes

Is the link between inner and outer sustainability visible in your day to day life?
Share some examples within the group.

FOOTPRINTS



HANDPRINTS

What habits can enhance inner sustainability?

reflective practices
mindfulness, yoga, meditation, prayer
collaborations
nature connectedness
cultural experiences

A close-up photograph of a green four-leaf clover with white text overlaid. The clover is the central focus, with its four leaves clearly visible. The background is a dense field of similar clovers, slightly out of focus. The text is white, bold, and sans-serif, arranged in five lines in the center of the clover.

SLEEP
MOVEMENT
NUTRITION
STRESS MANAGEMENT
RELATIONSHIPS

Individual mindfulness is linked to motivation to take climate action and to pro-environmental behaviors.

Wamsler & Brink (2018)

Nature

Spending time in nature is linked with enhanced well-being, connectedness with the Web of Life, sense of purpose, and pro-environmental behaviors.

Furu (in progress)

Furu & Wiklund-Engblom (in progress)

Culture

Hope and action grows in narrative and arts-based learning processes.

Furu & Kaihovirta (2020; 2021)

Furu, Kaihovirta & Ekholm (2022)

Personal reflection 3: Daily habits

I need to have less of.....

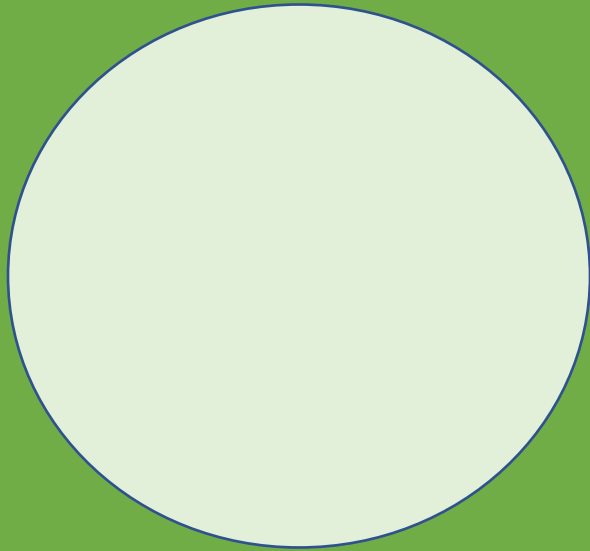
I need to have more of.....

HUMAN HAVING

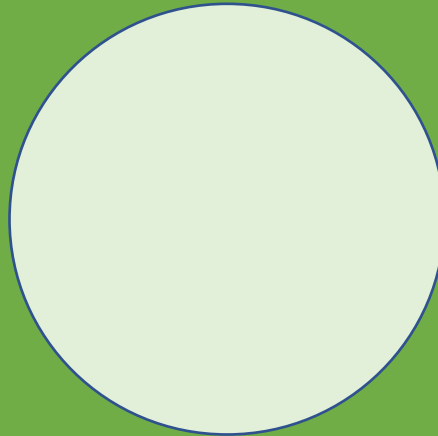
HUMAN DOING

HUMAN BEING

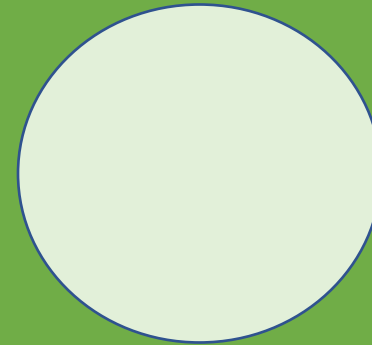
Personal reflection 4: Living in alignment



YOUR BASIC VALUES



YOUR WEEK



YOUR DAY

BREAK OUT ROOM 3 – 10 minutes

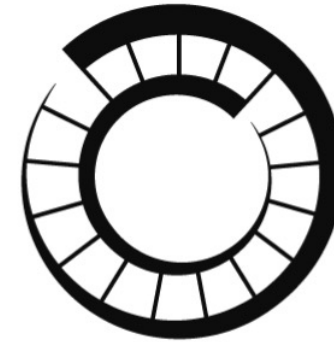
What insights does the personal reflection on living in alignment give you? Does it make sense to make it with students? Why? Or, why not?



Inner Development Goals

- Being – relationship to self
- Thinking – cognitive skills
- Relating – caring for others and the World
- Collaborating – social skills
- Acting – driving change

individual and collective
skills and capacities to contribute to
reaching AGENDA 2030



INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Transformational Skills for Sustainable Development

Stiftelsen Ekskåret, 29 K, The New Division,
Stockholm University, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm School of Economics,
Lund University & leading international scholars in adult learning

1

BEING —
Relationship to
Self

Inner compass

Integrity and
Authenticity

Openness and
Learning Mindset

Self-awareness

Presence

2

THINKING —
Cognitive Skills

Critical thinking

Complexity
awareness

Perspective skills

Sense-making

Long-term
orientation and
Visioning

3

RELATING —
Caring for Others
and the World

Appreciation

Connectedness

Humility

Empathy and
Compassion

4

COLLABORATING —
Social Skills

Communication
skills

Co-creation skills

Inclusive mindset
and intercultural
competence

Trust

Mobilization skills

5

ACTING —
Driving Change

Courage

Creativity

Optimism

Perseverance

Personal reflection 5: A blueprint for change

In my private life, I will...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

In my professional life, I will...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Key take aways?

What is your vision of life in 6 months from now?

What is your next step?

What habit can you incorporate today?

“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.” — Chief Seattle





THANK YOU!

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