

A CULTURE OF LEARNING DIALOGUE

by Simone Helmle

What can be harnessed from the potential of the learners and the learning environment? How do different people stimulate each other in a learning context? How can their experiences provide answers to your own questions and process? How can we cultivate a fruitful culture of learning dialogue during biodynamic training and beyond? This not only between students, or between students and teachers, but also between teachers, with the different actors on the farm, and finally - after the course - with people in their own field of activity. In the following, I will go through some of the dialogue pairs and use mirror points to highlight the potential of these different learning encounters.

How to support a culture of learning dialog between students & trainers/ teachers:

- Allow questions to be asked and explored by learners and teachers. In particular, questions to which there is no ready answer, but where answers are based on experience, practice and knowledge of the themes at hand.
- Work with tasks that stimulate activity. The tasks arise from questions from the learners.
- Reviews during and in the transitions of learning units support the learning process and contribute to a trusting working atmosphere.
- Build an atmosphere of mutual respect and equality, where people trust each other's skills and abilities.

How can trainers cultivate a culture of learning dialogue among themselves?

- Looking beyond your own topic and working with colleagues on the basic topic of a course.
- Reporting to each other and sharing the subjects and approaches of colleagues.
- Hold trial lessons and arrange to observe each other. It is fruitful here to discuss concerns, needs, perceived uncertainties, increased knowledge, etc. in advance.
- Select and read texts together.
- Practicing supportive attitudes, giving mutual feedback.

How does a culture of learning dialogue continue in the student's field of activity?

- Viewed from the perspective of a learner, the farm is a field of activity, a field of experience, a testing ground and a pool of knowledge.
- Returning from a course with fresh skills and ideas, your heart full of enthusiasm. What kind of respect and awareness is needed on both sides to create space for new things and to allow suggestions and questions that learners bring with them to become fruitful?
- The dialogue between learners and the farm (as employer) requires a special agility. It includes opportunities for awareness and renewal and freedom for the individual.

What activities support a culture of learning dialogue in the course group?

- Discover and utilize individual expertise of the participants.
- Teamwork, dialog walks, listening, exchange of experiences.
- Exchange on specific questions in small groups or in plenary sessions.
- Speeches and presentations by participants.
- Finding common topics and projects, especially for longer courses and learning contexts that take place in several modules separated by time.
- Mutual support for progress, helping each other and practicing together.

How can trainers and people related to the farm (or course locations) cultivate a culture of learning dialogue?

- Showing interest in each other.
- Allow theme-specific tours and unusual insights into farm life to support the learning process.
- Enable open lessons / work shadowing.
- Invite people from the host farm or the surrounding farms to development discussions with the learners.

Learning dialogue culture as consent with oneself

- Learning requires that I accept myself. In learning, I meet myself. I encounter my breath, my warmth, my experiences, my capacity of reflection, my sensations, my gifts or talents.
- Discovering your own question, taking a fresh look at it, allowing yourself to be surprised by it and deciding how far you are prepared to go as a learner in a specific context is a moment of freedom.
- In moments of stress, impatience, ambition and perfection, it is worth accepting yourself lovingly in your own inadequacy.