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Centret för  
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VID ÅBO AKADEMI OCH YRKESHÖGSKOLAN NOVIA

# Transformative learning

Education for resilience and sustainability\_ERASMUS Learning and teaching event \_1.12.2021  
Margaretha Häggström & Ann-Catherine Henriksson

# Agenda

- Our preunderstanding of the concept transformative learning
- Theoretical background
- Transformative learning – for pupils
- Futures literacy and resilience



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# Perceptions

Link to the Padlet

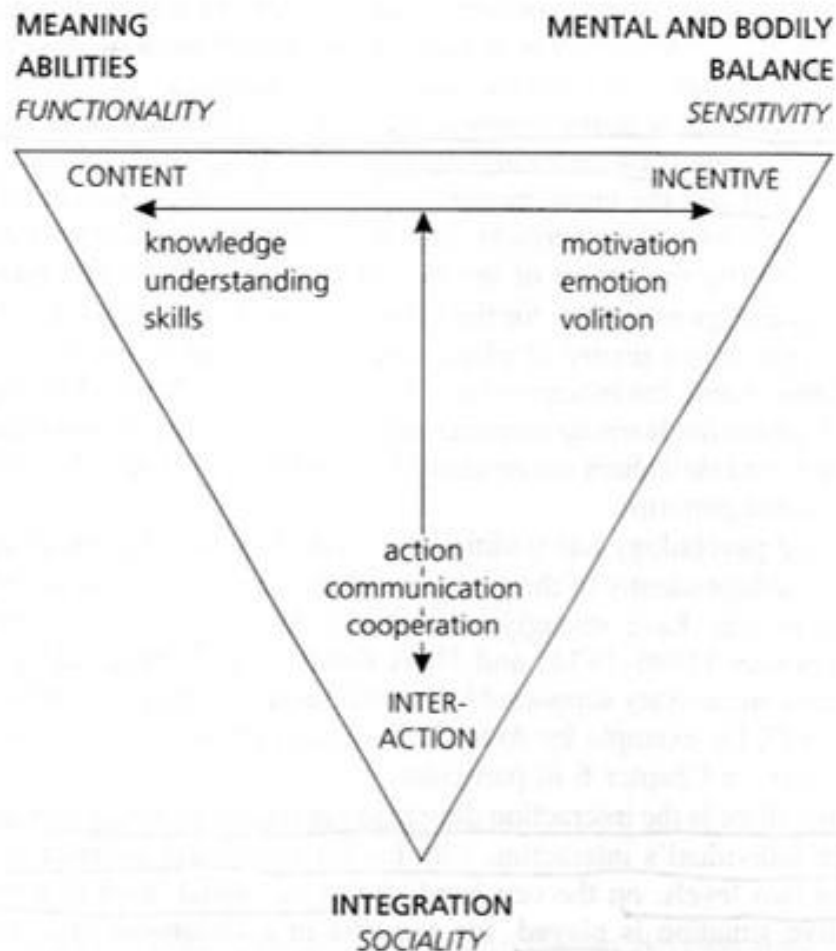
<https://padlet.com/Fortbildningsteamet/ta7usy51d0lji69o>



# What is *learning*?

"Any process that in living organisms leads to permanent capacity change and which is not solely due to biological maturation or ageing"

Illeris, 2007



# Four types of Learning

- *Cumulative* or mechanical learning
- *Assimilative* or learning by addition
- *Accommodative* or transcendent learning
- *Transformative* or expansive learning

Any change, even a change for the better, is always accompanied by discomforts.

Arnold Bennett







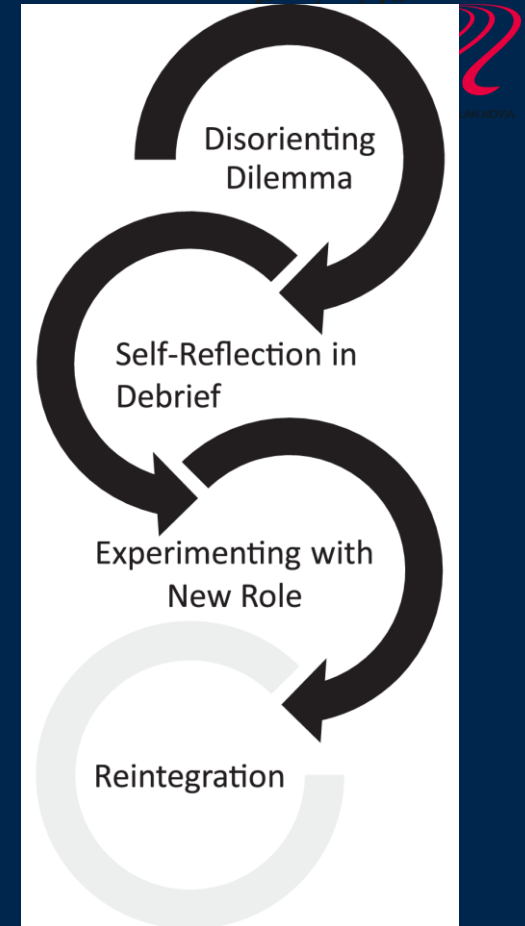
# Barriers to learning

- Defence mechanisms
- Identity defence
- Ambivalence

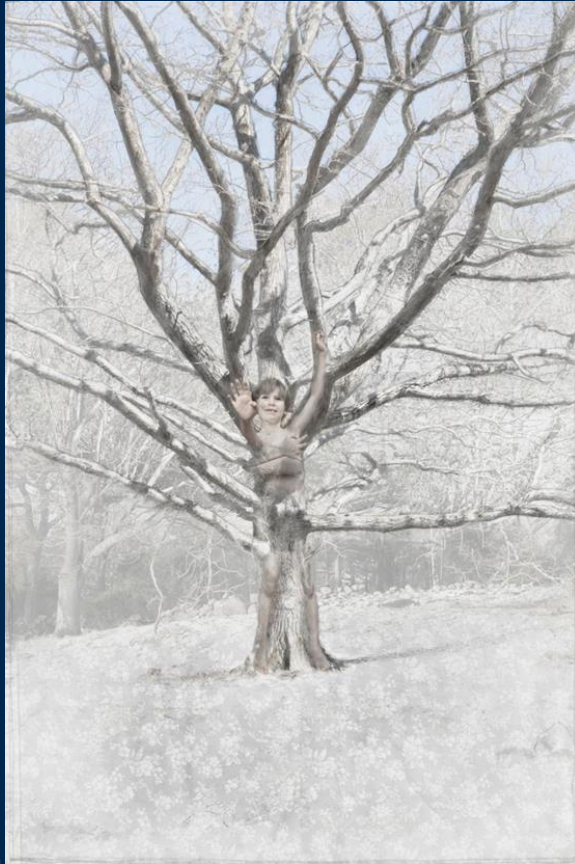


# Working with transformative learning in school

- Transformation implies a different way of doing things
- Towards pupils' agency
- To elicit social change
- New ways of being
- New ways of how we "do" learning
- Authentic learning contexts



# One example from the Storyline *Tree mutants*



- Action research, 2 schoolclasses, Grade 2 and 6 (year 8-9 and 12-13)
- Storyline, 6 weeks
- Aim: Creating personal relationship with plants
- Preventing plant blindness – Promote ecological literacy
- Becoming trees – a transformation process

# From transforming to transformative learning

- Moving from a *then* to a *now*.
- A change in knowledge and awareness
- Deeper appreciation
- Change in attitude
- Affect, intuition and imagination
- From not noticing plants as living organisms to regard plants as friends and as individuals that live their own lives.

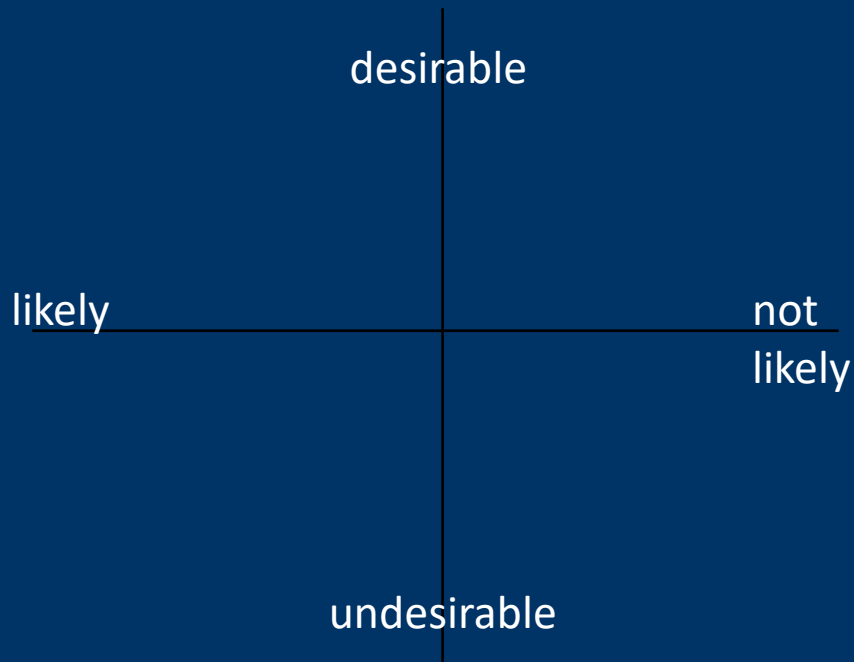


- Opportunities for critical thinking – key questions
- Opportunities to share the transformative process with peers
- Opportunity to act in accordance with their new knowledge and perspective
- Self-reflection crucial in this process
- Pupils' prejudices about trees were challenged
- An inverted anthropomorphization was used – the pupils became trees instead of giving trees human characters
- They became aware of trees' vulnerability and the intertwined relationships between human behavior and the more-than-human world.





# Futures literacy



## Reflection tool

1. There will be no rubbish in the future, only valuable raw materials
2. In the future, adults will work less because they value leisure more than money
3. In the cities of the future, forests and meadows will grow instead of parking lots

Referens: Otto Tähkäpää, researcher at SITRA Foundation, Finland

# Open discussion

- How visible are these issues (transformative learning, futures literacies) in your teaching?
- Name one or more steps you are prepared to take in order to increase the visibility



# Thank you!

Margaretha Häggström  
[margareta.haggstrom@gu.se](mailto:margareta.haggstrom@gu.se)

Ann-Catherine Henriksson  
[ann-catherine.henriksson@abo.fi](mailto:ann-catherine.henriksson@abo.fi)