
Against the Resignation in Politics, Business and Society or The Power of Dialogue

Prof. Dr. Barbara Mettler-v.Meibom
c.i.f.-Kongress
July 25th, 2006

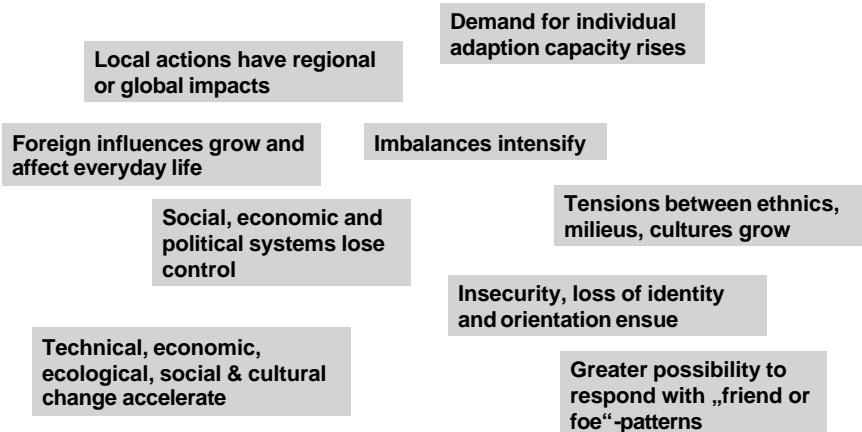
Prof. Dr. Barbara Mettler-v.Meibom

- Professor for political science and communication at the University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
- Director of Communio – Communication and Cooperation Consulting, Essen
- Coaching, training, organizational development, psychosynthesis
- Focus on organizational and leadership training, urban development

Lecture outline

1. Why is an attitude of appreciation more important than ever?
2. What is the relation between mental models, perceptions and actions?
3. What supports an attitude of dialogue and appreciation, and how is it expressed?
4. How can dialogue and decision making reasonably come together?

Consequences of Social and Global Change



The two laws of Appreciative Inquiry

1

The stories we tell about us become our reality, collectively and individually.

2

Whatever we pay attention to, i.e. whatever we put our energy in, increases.

Two attitudes towards change

−

**Resignation
Criticism
Prejudices
Depreciation
Exclusion
Separation
Aggression
Offense
Defense**

+

**Acknowledging Potentials
Positive Attitude
Openness
Appreciation
Integration
Bridge-Building
Coexistence
Cooperation
Synergy**

Mental Models

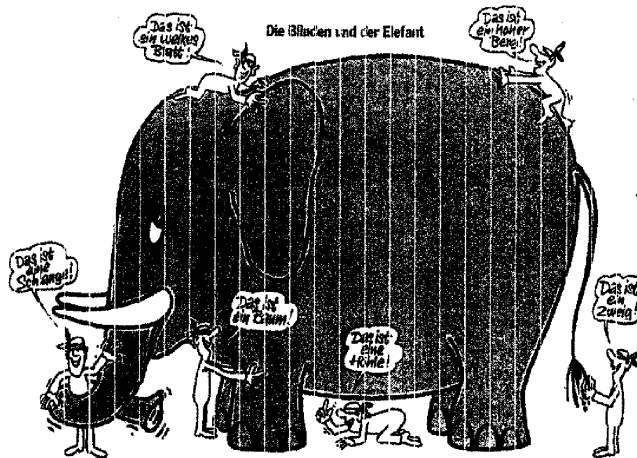
Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action.

Peter Senge



Mental models control our thoughts and acts

The Blind and the Elephant



The 10 dialoguing skills

1 Attitude of a learner

2 Radical respect

3 Heartfelt speaking

4 Openess

5 Listening


6 Deceleration

7 Suspending of pre-
sumptions and evaluations

8 Productive pleading

9 Explorer attitude

10 Observing the observer

 Hartkemeyer, M.&J. / Dhority, L.F.: Miteinander denken. Das Geheimnis des Dialogs. Klett Cotta

Communio • Prof. Dr. Barbara Mettler-v.Meiborn • Grafenstr. 50 • D-45239 Essen
Email: info@communio-essen.de • Tel.: 0201 - 841 99 14 • Fax: 0201 - 841 99 13 • www.communio-essen.de

Large Group Interventions in Business and Politics

- Appreciative Inquiry
- Open Space Technology
- Future Conference
- Community Planning

Communio • Prof. Dr. Barbara Mettler-v.Meiborn • Grafenstr. 50 • D-45239 Essen
Email: info@communio-essen.de • Tel.: 0201 - 841 99 14 • Fax: 0201 - 841 99 13 • www.communio-essen.de

Conventional Change Management and Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Conventional Method

- Identifying problems
- Analyzing causes
- Developing solutions
- Planning steps
- People and organizations are full of weaknesses that need to be overcome

Appreciative Inquiry

- Identifying the positive (the „jewels“)
- Designing what might be
- Creating what will be
- People and organizations have an unexpected potential which can flash up sometimes

Requirements for Building Bridges of Dialogue

- 1 **Leaders need to apply dialoguing methods that provide a climate of mutual understanding**
- 2 **Leaders need to comprehend the complexity of the reality in order to develop win-win-solutions**
- 3 **Leaders need to incorporate as many aspects and views that emerged in the dialogue as possible so as to make „wise“ and stable decisions**



Each one of us can be a
leader, a bridge builder
to understanding