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**Education between recovery and integration in the inclusive  
labour market**

*Paper. Emancipatory Methodologies by John Bertelsen*



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## Education between recovery and integration in the inclusive labour market

*Functional education is an offer for people who cannot cope with an ordinary education program, people without education and people without an ordinary job. There may be several reasons for this: mental disorders or handicaps, brain damage or addiction problems.*

*Many of these people suffer from more than one of the problems as well as from social isolation.*

The format of counselling and learning processes in functional education has been developed together with an two-year training program for employees in the Social organisation of Storstrøm County.

The training cooperation with the clients interested in functional education. The training of counsellors and the functional education itself therefore became two integrated parts of the same project.

The Ressource center for Special Needs Education was responsible for the training of counsellors, including supervision and coaching in the functional education programs.

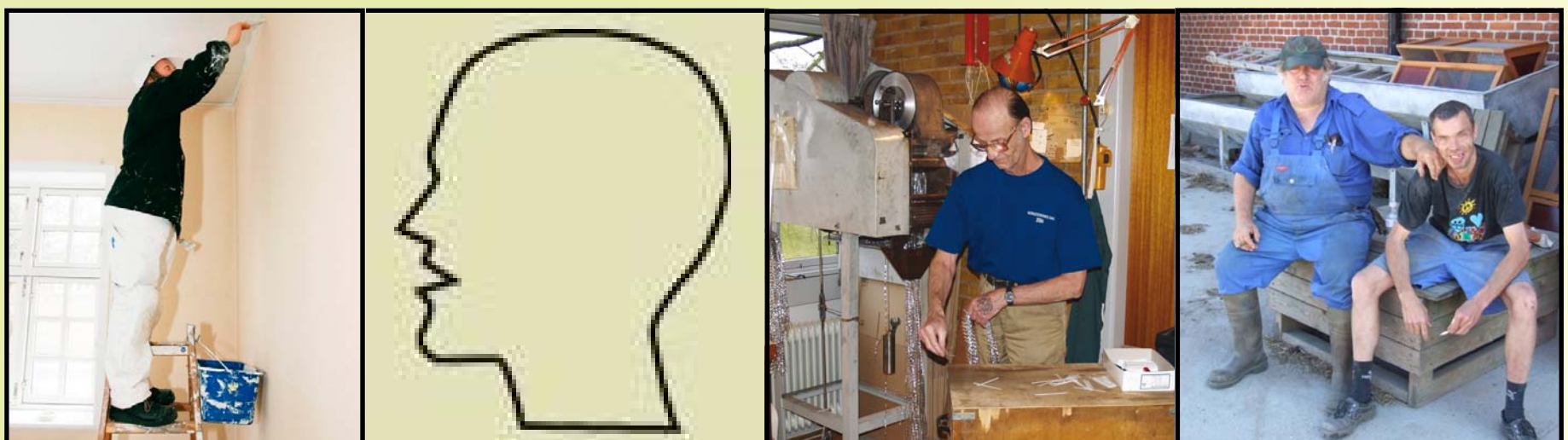
**The concept of functional education** covers a range of meanings. In this context it refers to an individually designs program of education with on-going evaluation. Counselling and evaluation take place in close cooperation between client and counsellor. The individual parts of the program are discribed in detail and a time schedule is agreed upon.

There is a possibility of selfadministration by the client of the individual parts of the program.

The duration of the education program may range from a few months to approximately two years – depending on scope. So far, programs have been carried out in the areas of farming, market gardening, service, workmanship and various types of industrial production.

**The special needs related counselling** is based on the internal perspective, and the development of the learning processes have inspired by situated learning, the new apprenticeship and Vygotskijs zone of proximal development. Relationally, there is an focus on *the rights of the weak* and on the possibilities of establishing meaningful education and important work. At the same time, the education programs contribute to personal growth and self-reflexiveness.

So far, experience from the project indicates that clients experience recovery, that education has a healing effect, and that participation – based on individual ability- in the labour market enhances both personal life and social integration.





## Education of councillors and the functional education programme

In this short presentation I will focus on certain relational aspects of the functional education programme.

Time does not allow me to go into much detail. Some of these relational aspects will therefore take the form of *statements*.

First of all, a brief comment on the *councillor programme* and the *functional education programmes*:

- For the participants in the councillor programme two things have been unusual: the project-oriented proach and the two-year duration of the programme.  
Until now, short courses have been the most common form of training.
- This means that the possibilities of getting back to certain topics and trying things out in practice have been very rewarding.
- The direct participation of students from the functional education programmes has contributed to ensuring genuine practice and presence in the programme.
- Most of the students in the functional education programme have not previously in life had this type of opportunity to take an active part in their own education. Several of them have never had any training at all.
- The individually designed programmes have ensured a focus on the competences and potential of each individual student. The content has been designed to match the student, and each programme has involved compensatory measures relating to special needs pedagogics - as required by the Danish law of compensatory education for adults with special needs.
- After the project period we have continued our cooperation with the Social Organisation of Storstrøm County to contribute to the continued development of the functional education programmes.



## Solidarity and learning

- The functional education programmes involve vocational training as well as an important element of self-reflection.
- Reflection on one's own learning and the right to make decisions concerning one's own education have been key elements in the programmes.
- Reflection on labour and the conditions of labour has similarly been part of the programme. This way, both the psychology of labour and social psychology have been important elements.
- In order to establish a relationship of respect in the learning process it is necessary to focus on the requirements of the profession, including specific concepts and methodologies such as, e.g., a definition of care, and to include the 'weak party'. The 'weak party' is always right.
- Cooperation, dialogue, communication and learning must be seen as key aspects of the relation. They do, however, contribute to the relation in different ways. We have chosen to focus on some of the aspects that are unfortunately not often dealt with. I believe it is necessary to use rather specific or narrow definitions of the individual categories. In addition to this, we must try to include in our understanding values that respect the other party.
- A few remarks on labour: As I have stated above, there is a tendential demand on citizens to support themselves. The Lutheran work ethics of 'pray and work' still dominate the societal ideology. This means that the specific human, general and altruistic aspects of labour are practically forgotten. Labour as a human endeavour is reduced to paid work. Therefore both work and paid work appear in the explanation of relations, cf. the figure.
- The demand on the weak party of autonomy overshadows the special importance of the fact that we as human beings depend on one another. Dependence becomes synonymous with helplessness and is not seen as a basic condition in life.
- Self-administration has been a mantra in education for years. This may be so for a reason, but unfortunately it takes away the focus from the right to 'weakness'. In any learning process it must be a right to 'not be able to'. The joint efforts *to be able to* become the cornerstones of learning.
- The common ideology – and in particular our solidarity – are affected, and the alternative is hardly strong individuals but rather human isolation.
- We have continued our work with the education programmes beyond the project period and continue to develop the educational contents. I believe it is necessary to include an element of criticism of professional didactics, including the conservative views of many trades etc., as this will support the participants' self reflection and right to make decisions concerning their own work processes.



**Relations**  
**- Asymmetric but still with a common cause -**

<b>Work</b>	<p>Hand → brain          Un-self-interested → non-profit ( public utility )          Dispose → yeld          The psychology of work → social psychology          ENGELSTED (1984 and 1989)</p>
<b>Profession</b>	<p>Idea → production (labour) → product → work          Right of disposal ← depent on</p> <p>Care linked to and derived from work and profession          KIRKEBÆK, DUNKER BERTELSEN, BERTELSEN (1992)</p>
<b>Cooperation</b>	<p>Cooperation as 'a categorical imperativ'          KANT KANITZ (1923) BERTELSEN (2000)          The planned cooperation of the many towards a common goal          MARX</p>
<b>Dialouge</b>	<p>Meaningsful dialouge          Friedship. Empathy. Love          JANTZEN (1992)</p>
<b>Communication</b>	<p>'Interaction between persons; exchange of information in order to coordinate and combine efforts in order to establish relations and reach common goal '          LISINA (1989)</p>
<b>Learning</b>	<p>Zone of proximate development          VYGOTSKIJ VERESOV (2005)</p> <p>Scaffolding          COLE</p> <p>Situated learning – new apprenticeship          HEGEL WENGER KVALE /NIELSEN (2003)</p>
<b>Paid work</b>	<p>Specific conditions and logic          Focus on the exchange          Own needs – recognition          ENGELSTED (1984)</p>
<b>'The other'</b>	<p>Dependence vs. autonomy → both          Weakness vs. self administration → both          Common vs. isolation          BERTELSEN (1996) HONNETH (2005)</p>

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