Can a philosophical approach among professionals improve and facilitate communication in Health Promotion interventions?

eva.robertson@uin.no
Lao Tsu, 700 BC

Go to the people
Live with them
Learn from them
Love them
Start with what they know
Built with what they have
But with the best leaders
When work is done
The task accomplished
The people will say
“We have done this ourselves “
(in Green&Tones 2010)
A philosophical approach based on practical knowledge

*Practical knowledge is about raising awareness and developing professional practice and the knowledge experienced in professional practice*

Professionals critically reflect upon their own experiences and insights as professionals

The reflections and acquired knowledge is situated and embodied
The world is polyphonic by nature.

The concept polyphonic comes from polyphony (Bakhtin, 1993)

• It is a feature of narrative

• Includes a diversity of voices and points of views

• Creates a dialogic relationships between voices

• We live, feel and recognize our voices, in our bodies with all senses as whole and in relation to other persons in different socio-cultural contexts.
The polyphonic nature is getting lost

The dominance of voices of the experts and the mass media that dominates in society

Exclusion of many voices

HOW to highlight the polyphonic world in interventions?

eva.robertson@uin.no
A philosophically grounded approach

#Awareness about our prejudices
“'I am here to help you’”

“If you are here to help me,
then you are wasting your time.
But if you come because your liberation is bounded
to mine, then let us begin” (Valvarde 1991 in Oudshoorn 2005)

#Attentive and respectful listening, uninterrupted
“to hear what they say and not what I wished-or wanted- to-
hear” (Bateson 1972)
A philosophically grounded approach

# Invitation to polyphonic voices and multi-perspective

“layering of voices within one voice”

# Recognition for what all voices bring to the meeting

“to not be sidetracked in their own narrative”

# Life is relational, people are born into and live in relationships; collaborative relations

”to be is to communicate”  (Bakhtin,1993)
Communication, a relational phenomena “being with”

Context dependent
Include a reflective processes that require both space and time (Bateson 1978, Meløe 1979)

Dialogical communication:
Dialogue as ‘three jointed’ (‘treleddet’) (Skjervheim, 1976)

a problem (sakstilhøvet) (challenge)
A philosophical approach and awareness grounded in practical knowledge can:

- initiate reflections over the knowledge experienced in professional practice
- give us insights from the polyphonic voices to question and ask new questions
- start processes aiming to reduce the gap between each person’s potential and her/his ability to use this potential