Scaffolding Developmental Transformation Among Immigrants in Order to Facilitate Self-Directed Integration: Practices and Theories of Change

Thomas Jordan

Abstract: This article reports findings from an empirical study of six Swedish programs using dialogue-based approaches to bridge gaps in views and norms, support relevant knowledge acquisition and support empowerment of immigrants who are still living on the margin of the Swedish society. The main purpose of the study was to investigate the program theories of the programs included in the study, with particular emphasis on their theories of change and practices used to scaffold developmental transformation of the meaning-making systems of immigrants. Several adult development frameworks and program theory provided the analytical framework for the study.

The analysis of the program theories of the six programs included in the study yielded an inventory of 72 practices used by all, most or some of the interviewed program leaders. A large share of these practices were regarded as very important in all or almost all of the six programs we studied. The inventory of practices can be regarded as a framework that can be used both by researchers in further investigations and by practitioners who want to reflect on and develop their skills and practices.

Keywords: Developmental transformation, dialogue, empowerment, immigrants, integration, refugees, scaffolding.

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1 Thomas Jordan is the sole author of this article, but the article is based on a research project conducted by three researchers, the others being Pia Andersson and Björn Andersson both at Gothenburg university. For this reason the text sometimes uses "I" and sometimes "we". See further the section below on study design and implementation. The author also wants to thank the reviewers for very thoughtful, constructive and detailed comments.
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**Introduction**

This article reports findings from an empirical study of six Swedish programs using dialogue-based approaches to bridge gaps between immigrants and the majority society. The main purpose of the study was to investigate the program theories of the programs included in the study, with particular emphasis on their theories of change and practices in relation to developmental transformation of immigrants from non-Western societies. The motivation for conducting the study was a belief that experienced program leaders have developed considerable skills in creating social processes that scaffold developmental transformations that are highly desirable for a number of reasons. However, most practitioners focus on doing, rather than theorizing about doing. Their know-how is therefore seldom articulated in ways that can be communicated to others. The lack of articulation of their program theories also means that it may be difficult to review, critically reflect on and develop the strategies, as the practitioners are embedded in certain patterns of meaning-making and may not look for potential alternatives.

The article is primarily devoted to presenting the practices and theories of change identified in the course of the analysis. It was not possible in the context of this relatively small research project to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs in terms of measuring the extent to which developmental transformations really happened among the participants in the programs. This is a significant and regrettable limitation of the study we made, but a range of methodological difficulties in measuring outcomes in these types of programs set restrictions to what could be done.

**Framing**

A significant share of immigrants (in particular refugees) to Western European countries grew up in societies with what the World Value Survey researchers call traditional and survival values (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Such value systems emphasize the roles of religion and family ties, deference to external authority, loyalty towards the own ethnic and faith community and distrust in relation to outgroups. In terms of Geert Hofstede's dimensions for cultural differences (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010), these cultures would be characterized as collectivist. The receiving societies are, according to the same researchers, in cultural terms very different: they emphasize secular-rational and individualistic values. Of course, "immigrants" are an extremely diverse category of people, even if delimited to certain nationalities, ethnic identities or religious beliefs. In focus here are immigrants who are to a large degree influenced by "traditional" norms and values and who lack experience with individualistic societies. "Traditional" societies do not provide scaffolding for development of the skills and values that are expected and often required in individualistic Western democracies. On the contrary, there may be a strong social pressure to conform to a rather restrictive set of norms, beliefs and roles, and strong discouragement of the development of independent meaning-making that diverges from the prevailing value system. In the terms of Western ego development theory, this could be interpreted as favoring early conventional meaning-making (however, see the critical objections to this interpretation discussed...
in Appendix 1). An early conventional meaning-making system can enable a person to lead a productive and successful life as long as the received knowledge imparted during early life is fully adapted to the (stable) life conditions in the local society. However, migrating to a society with radically different ways of functioning, both regarding values, beliefs and norms, and regarding how social life operates (labor market, social insurance, educational system, other public institutions, etc.) means encountering a situation one has not been equipped to deal with.

The subtitle of Robert Kegan's book *In Over Our Heads* is *The Mental Demands of Modern Life* (Kegan, 1994). The book title refers to the challenges involved when a society expects and requires its members to function in ways that individuals may not have been developmentally prepared for. Kegan's premise is that the "modern" society makes more advanced "mental demands", in terms of his ego development theory, on individuals than earlier societies did. Kegan's perspective concerns, like other frameworks in the adult development field, *vertical* development, referring to a hierarchical conception of human development where more advanced skills and self constructions build upon earlier levels. It is common in the adult development field (see e.g. Kegan et al., 2001; Cook-Greuter, 2013) to distinguish between vertical and horizontal development, where the latter refers to learning and skill acquisition that does not involve developmental transformation of deeper-lying cognitive and self structures.

Immigrants have a lot of horizontal learning to do when starting to navigate life in the new country. They have to learn a new language and understand and interact with a range of societal institutions, such as authorities, social services, preschools, schools, health care and workplaces. The immigrant may encounter norms for appropriate social interaction that are quite different from the ones that were taken for granted in the home culture. However, immigrants may also meet challenges that require vertical development. One reason for this is that the task of navigating life in a new culture cannot be performed by just relying on conventional patterns of behavior learned in the originating culture, but requires an active process of making judgments about how to navigate in the tensions between different cultural norm systems. Another reason may be that the host society has "higher" mental demands than the society the immigrant grew up in, e.g. expects late conventional or even postconventional meaning-making in various domains (such as in worklife or parenting).4 Our many conversations with leaders of programs working with immigrants in Sweden indicate that the following challenges are relatively common:5

– Your learned way of raising your children may not work in the new situation, because your children experience different attitudes and norms when going to preschool and school in the new country and you are not allowed to use corporal punishment with your children.

– Individuals have far-reaching rights in Western democracies, such as the right to make their own choices about education, work, partner and lifestyle. When children, youth, women and

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3 The critical objections concern to what extent Western ego development frameworks are universally valid across different cultures and whether people can be said to be at a particular general developmental stage, or if levels of development are dependent on varying situational factors, such as domain, task and degrees of scaffolding.

4 Again, see the objections to this line of reasoning outlined in Appendix 1.

5 We have not tried to collect quantitative data on how common these challenges are. Obviously the range of variation is very wide and many immigrants are not significantly affected by the difficulties listed here.
men (e.g. homosexual men) want to take advantage of these rights, serious conflicts can arise within families, clans and ethnic and religious communities.

- Your family structure might be seriously challenged, partly because the children learn the language and practices of the new society more quickly than their parents and therefore often have to guide their parents in contacts with institutions, and partly because women learn that they have rights and could get societal support if they get a divorce.

- You will have to interact with people who do not believe in God or who have a different religion from your own, which might be very challenging if you have a conformist mindset.

- You encounter a culture with different norms and values around gender roles and sexuality. The society you live in provides less collective social control, which means that youth get more opportunities to experiment with alcohol, substances and sex, and might more easily get involved in a criminal lifestyle.

- You may not have access to the social support that in your home society was provided by your extended family/clan and may therefore become dependent on social services and other societal institutions.

- It might be necessary for women to get training and get a paid job, in order to earn enough income to support the family, in a context where there are no cultural precedents for women working outside of the household.

- In worklife in an individualistic society with a small power distance, you are expected to use your own judgment, speak up for yourselves and take responsibility for problem-solving to a far larger extent than in a collectivist society with a large power distance.6

The larger the gap between the society the immigrant grew up in and the host society is, in terms of culture and socio-economic institutions and practices, the greater the likelihood that the immigrant will be facing some or all of these challenges. It may not be possible to successfully establish oneself in the new environment without a considerable ability to make independent judgments and develop new action strategies. This requires awareness, insight, reflection and active grappling with one's path forward in life. The "mental demands" of being an immigrant to a different type of society are high.

Research Questions

As described in more detail in the section on study design below, this article is based on case studies of six programs that in somewhat different ways use dialogue-based approaches to scaffold self-directed integration of people with immigrant background in Sweden. The aim of the study was to elucidate six interwoven research questions:

6 Individualistic/collectivistic and small vs. large power distance refer to the conceptualizations in Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov (2010).
What specific challenges do program leaders encounter when using dialogue groups as a path to bridge gaps between immigrants and the Swedish majority society and empower participants to self-directed integration?

What practices do program leaders use in order to scaffold transformative development for the participants?

What theories of changes, i.e. beliefs about mechanisms for scaffolding desirable change, underlie the approaches used in the programs?

Is there a common core of theories of change and practices among programs using dialogue as a strategy to support immigrants in the tasks involved in integrating themselves in the Swedish society?

Are there significant differences in practices that can be explained by differences in the program conditions, such as differences in target groups, organizational forms or properties of the surrounding community?

Are there significant differences in practices that can be explained by differences in the meaning-making systems of the program leaders, such as problem framing and theories of change?

In the following section several of the terms used above will be discussed further: scaffolding, empowerment, theories of change and practices.

Elements of a Conceptual Framework

Scaffolding

Recognizing that a society might require citizens to live up to certain expectations in terms of competencies and adherence to norms for behaviors, leads to the question of how the development of those norms and competencies is supported. In discourses about learning and skill development, scaffolding is a key concept (Wood et al., 1976). The term scaffolding refers to different types of support offered to an individual (or a collective) enabling the individual to develop and master new skills.7 There are many different forms of scaffolding, such as showing someone how to perform a particular task, giving constructive feedback, facilitated dialogue, written instructions, checklists to follow and facilitated group processes (Jordan, 2014).

Societies offer a lot of scaffolding for most (but not all) of its native children, youth and adults to develop the skills and forms of awareness necessary for becoming reasonably competent citizens. However, there is a not much scaffolding available for immigrants coming from a very different socio-economic and cultural background. The six Swedish programs studied in our research aim at facilitating self-directed integration, using dialogue as a core practice for

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7 For critical discussions of the concept, see e.g. Stone, 1993 and Mascolo, 2005.
scaffolding the development of insights, understanding and skills needed for navigating the Swedish society in successful ways.

**Empowerment**

While all of the six programs we included in our study were designed to contribute to transformation of meaning-making and development of competencies needed for self-directed integration of participants with an immigrant background, there are some significant differences in framings. In particular, there is a certain tension relating to the extent to which program leaders want to influence participants in a specific, according to the program leaders, desirable direction. Two of the programs we included (see below) started based on the ambition to prevent honor-related violence. It is clear in these programs that the program leaders want to influence participants to reevaluate what they perceive as problematic norms, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors (if at all present) and identify with forms of meaning-making based on recognition of each individual's right to make his or her own decisions about how to live life. Other programs are more strongly influenced by the idea of scaffolding empowerment on the participants' own terms, i.e. supporting people to build more action competence to establish satisfying life paths for themselves and their families according to their own needs and wishes.

There is a large and differentiated literature on the concept of empowerment (for overviews and critical examination, see e.g. Adams, 2008; Herriger 2014; Cruikshank, 1999; Pease, 2002). Paths to empowering individuals and collectives can be sought in individual development, shifts in social constructions of identities and values, transfer of resources and transformation of societal structures (e.g. discriminatory practices, educational system, barriers to employment, etc.). In this article, the most relevant form of empowerment is related to transformation of meaning-making and individual competencies. While there is a comprehensive literature on empowerment in the field of social work, relatively little has been written about the very concrete practices that might be effective in scaffolding empowerment (outside of psychotherapeutic settings). In the following section, adult development theory will be used to compile a more differentiated understanding of empowerment as related to individual development.

**Dimensions of Adult Development Relevant to Scaffolding Empowerment of Immigrants**

Table 1 below gives some details about what kinds of developmental change might be involved in empowerment processes. Most of the elements listed involve vertical transformation, but a few could be construed as horizontal learning. The list was compiled by the author through reviewing

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8 Readers familiar with Ken Wilber's quadrant framework (see e.g. Wilber, 1995) might think of this as focusing the upper left quadrant, while a more comprehensive approach to empowerment would also consider conditions and processes in the other three quadrants.

9 See, however, the literature on MI, motivational interviewing, which offers a comprehensive set of practices relevant to scaffolding empowerment of individuals (Miller & Rollnick, 2012; Hohnman, 2015). However, MI as an approach evolved in a social work setting, presupposing a counsellor-client relationship where there is a recognized problem that clients need to manage. A core concern in MI is how to support the clients to become motivated to find ways to resolve certain problems, such as substance abuse, obesity or abusive behavior.
the patterns and challenges reported by the program leaders in our case studies and through selecting seemingly relevant aspects of development as conceptualized in key theoretical frameworks in the adult development field. Most of the theoretical frameworks describing adult development take the form of stage models, such as stages of ego development (Loevinger, 1976; Cook-Greuter, 1999; 2013; Torbert, 2004; Kegan, 1994), levels of hierarchical complexity (Commons, 2008; Fischer, 1980; Dawson, 2004), stages of interpersonal understanding (Selman, 1980) and stages in the development of reflective judgment (King & Kitchener, 1994). However, to the extent that stage models represent how adult development actually unfolds, they are only in a limited way useful in representing the rather gradual and piecemeal shifts and insights that might be expected to occur in the kind of programs we have been studying. I do not expect programs like these, even if they are very effective, to lead to comprehensive developmental transitions such as those described between stages of ego development. Still, I believe that the developmental shifts described in different stage frameworks are highly relevant for understanding the direction of small developmental changes that contribute to empowerment and desirable transformations of meaning-making patterns.

The programs we have studied do not overtly frame their efforts in terms of scaffolding developmental transformation as described in adult development theory, even though their motivation is to contribute to more insights, more self-confidence, development of life skills and, in some cases, identification with values and norms respecting individual rights and democratic principles. It is more common among programs like those we studied to frame the approach in terms of "empowerment", and of course there is a considerable overlap between frameworks centered on the empowerment concept and adult development frameworks. One argument in this article is, in fact, that adult development theory can offer a far more differentiated and penetrating understanding of what empowerment actually entails, than can be found in the academic literature about empowerment in the field of social work (see e.g. Adams, 2008; Herriger, 2014).

Table 1. Dimensions of developmental transformation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If a person ...</th>
<th>... then developmental transformation means ...</th>
<th>Theoretical references</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... has a weak sense of self-esteem ...</td>
<td>... a strengthened conviction of being worth to be taken seriously by others.</td>
<td>Transition from Silence/ Received knowledge towards Subjective/ Procedural knowledge (Belenky et al., 1997). Transition from Socialized towards Self-authoring mind (Kegan, 1994).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... feels powerless and dejected ...</td>
<td>... a strengthened sense of hope, belief in own capacity for action and more clarity about own goals for the future.</td>
<td>Transition from Silence/ Received knowledge towards Subjective/ Procedural knowledge (Belenky et al., 1997). Transition from Socialized towards Self-authoring mind (Kegan, 1994).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 See Appendix 1.
| ... lacks a language for articulating feelings ... | ... increased clarity about own feelings and ability to communicate them to others. | Transition from Silence towards Subjective knowledge (Belenky et al., 1997). Increased self-awareness (Jordan, 2001). |
| ... has a weak ability to take own reactions, thoughts, action impulses and interpretations as objects of reflection ... | ... increased ability and propensity to become aware of, reflect upon and regulate own internal processes. | Increased self-awareness (Jordan, 2001). |
| ... has categorical, rigid and intolerant opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards outgroups ... | ... development of and identification with prosocial norms, such as tolerance, respect, nonviolence and empathy. | Transition from conformist/sociocentric towards conscientious/worldcentric meaning-making (Loevinger, 1976; Cook-Greuter, 2013; Wilber, 1995) |
| ... has a weak propensity to notice and reflect on psychological and relational causality ... | ... increased propensity to notice and reflect on psychological and relational causality and thereby increased ability to play a constructive role in different kinds of social relationships, e.g. in parenting. | Transition from Concrete and Abstract towards Formal and Systematic levels of hierarchical complexity in the domain of psychological and relational reasoning (Commons, 2008). |
| ... lacks reflective awareness of the norms, values and social conventions in the host country ... | ... increased reflective awareness of social conventions and an increased ability to manage different types of encounters in the host society: contact with authorities, teachers, colleagues, neighbors, etc. | Transition from pre-reflective towards reflective thinking (King & Kitchener, 1994). Transition from Silence/ Received knowledge towards Subjective/Procedural knowledge (Belenky et al., 1997). Transition from conformist/sociocentric towards conscientious/worldcentric meaning-making |
of beliefs, norms and attitudes, and therefore negatively disposed towards outgroups ...

his or her own, as well as greater openness to reflect on different meaning-making systems.

(Loevinger, 1976; Cook-Greuter, 2013; Wilber, 1995)

... limited communication skills, such as open-ended listening and respectful forms of advocating own views ...

... increased skills in listening actively and with respect for others' views, and in expressing own views and convictions constructively and respectfully.

Strengthened skills in listening and advocating (Selman, 1981).

... weak propensity to notice and try to understand how other people feel and think, and understand their needs and desires ...

... increased capacity for role-taking and increased propensity to develop insight into other people's reactions and needs.

Increased capacity for interpersonal understanding (Selman, 1980).

Program Theory and Theories of Change

In order to lay bare the underlying logic of the programs included in the study, concepts from program theory (Blamey & MacKenzie, 2007; Funnell & Rogers, 2011; Pawson & Tilley, 1997) have been used as analytical tools. Program theory evolved within the field of evaluation studies, in order to enable more stringent evaluations of initiatives, often projects, created in order to solve some social problem, improve conditions or realize visions. Key analytical elements in program theory are the notions of theories of change and theories of action. Theories of change are the conceptions, sometimes poorly articulated, actors have about the causal mechanisms that might be activated in order to achieve a desirable change. Theories of action are the conceptions about what specific and concrete activities might be used in order to allow the change mechanisms to get to work. Program theory also include consideration of problem framing and goals.

Since program leaders often do not have an explicit, considered and detailed discourse about their theories of change, a study such as ours sometimes has to reconstruct underlying theories of change by focusing on what program workers actually do and through probing questions and logical inference work backward to understand and articulate the theories of change that apparently guided their program.11

In our study, the main purpose was to make an inventory of theories of change and concrete practices in six Swedish programs that all used dialogue as a means for facilitating integration of

11 Argyris & Schön (1974) used the distinction between "espoused theories" and "theories-in-use" to point to the possibility that people might say and believe that they operate according to certain principles, but their actual practice might not reflect those principles, but may follow a different logic. It is therefore advisable to focus on what program workers actually do. However, we have not been in a position to conduct participatory observation to any significant extent. The interviews, however, focused on inviting program leaders to describe their actions, rather than their philosophies.
immigrants. Next section describes the design of the study, the empirical data collected and the analytical procedure followed.

**Study Design and Implementation**

This article reports on results from a research study carried out in 2017-2019 by three researchers, Thomas Jordan (project leader and author of this article), Pia Andersson and Björn Andersson, all three researchers at Gothenburg university, Sweden. The purpose of the project was to develop knowledge about the theories of change that explicitly or implicitly form the basis of programs that use a dialogue-based approach in order to bridge gaps in views and norms, support relevant knowledge acquisition and support empowerment of immigrants who are still living on the margin of the Swedish society. The study was based on the premise that experienced program leaders probably have developed a considerable amount of know-how about how to make it possible to create a group environment where dialogue, reflection and empowerment can happen. A broader question is how experienced facilitators concretely go about scaffolding developmental transformation when working with this particular group, immigrants from traditional societies. As mentioned in the introduction, the study was limited to making an inventory of theories of change and practices in the programs, leaving analyses of whether these practices actually produced desired outcomes for later studies.

The study comprised detailed case studies of six programs, focusing on the program leaders' narratives, goals, practices and theories of change. In the initial phase of the study, we formulated criteria for selecting programs to study. We wanted the programs to:

- have aims relating to facilitating empowerment and/or integration of immigrants;

- be intending to support transformative change of the meaning-making systems of participants in order to bridge intercultural gaps, and/or reduce problematic differences in norms and/or strengthen the participants' competences in actively integrating themselves in the Swedish society;

- have operated for at least two years and on a scale that warrants the expectation that there is a considerable amount of practical experience and build-up of know-how;

- be led by persons who have been driving forces in developing and leading the programs and who are willing to take part in rather comprehensive interviews.

We also wanted a certain variety of types of principals and target groups. The experience in looking for eligible programs was that rather few programs fulfilled our criteria. Quite a few programs existed only in project form and were discontinued when the project funds ran out. The six programs we finally studied were:

- **Källan**, an interreligious open house center, including conversation groups, situated in Fisksätra, a suburb to Stockholm with a large share of immigrant inhabitants.
– **Att vara förälder i Sverige** [Being a parent in Sweden], a parent support program for immigrant parents, in the city council district Hässelby-Vällingby in Stockholm.

– **Elektra** Gothenburg, offering a leadership development program for suburban youth.

– **Mixgården**, a youth centre in the Gothenburg suburb Hammarkullen.

– **Bygga Broar** in Hörby, a municipality in the south of Sweden. Bygga Broar in Hörby is a branch of a project that aims at preventing honor-related threats and violence, but in Hörby it has been made an integral part of Swedish language courses for immigrants.

– **ENIG** [Establishment program for newly arrived in groups], a program used in several municipalities in the south of Sweden on contract with the Swedish Public Employment Service. The participants were immigrants who have had particular difficulties to enter the labor market and/or learn Swedish through the regular Swedish courses for immigrants.\(^\text{12}\)

For each of the programs, we collected available documentation, such as grant applications, reports, plans of operation and manuals and sifted through them for information about the narratives, goals, theories of change and activities. The main basis for the study, however, was the interviews we made with program leaders. We interviewed the program leaders comprehensively about the background of the program, their problem formulation, goals, assumptions, activities, practices and theories of change. The interviews were transcribed and analysed, leading to the construction of comprehensive tables of the program theories of the six cases. The tables have for columns: **Narrative** (problem formulation, assumptions and values), **Theories of change**, **Practices** and **Goals**. The tables comprised between 2 and 6 pages for each program. The process of identifying and summarizing key elements of the narratives, practices and goals was rather straightforward. The underlying theories of change, however, were only sometimes explicitly formulated by the respondents, and had to be inferred by the researcher. We presented the program theory tables to the program leaders and asked them to comment on formulations that ought to be revised or complemented. This meant that the researcher's interpretations of theories of change were reviewed and confirmed as valid by the program leaders. A further step was to make an inventory of different types of practices mentioned in the interviews and written documentation. A list of 72 practices was compiled (see appendix 2). This list was then presented to the program leaders and they were asked to rate to what extent each practice played a role in their program. This allowed us to gain an overview of which practices were common to all or most of the programs, and which practices were dependent on program-specific conditions or (in a few cases) on differences in theories of change. I also used the program theory tables to identify which practices contributed to which of the three general tasks of establishing relationships and trust, creating an open dialogue climate and scaffolding developmental transformation.

\(^{12}\) After the conclusion of the data collection phase of our study, the two last programs listed have been discontinued for reasons unrelated to their effectiveness.
Tasks and Challenges Facing Program Leaders Working with Integration

Based on the interviews and conversations, as well as document analysis, it seems reasonable to conclude that program leaders who want to create favourable conditions for developmental transformations have three major tasks to handle. The first task is to establish contact and relationships between leaders and the participants, so that participants have enough trust in the leaders to be prepared to engage and open up in the group process. The second task is to create an open and mutually respectful dialogue climate in the group, so participants feel they can express themselves freely, without risking being put down or attacked when they voice what they really feel and think. These two tasks must be minimally achieved before the third and main task can be engaged in earnest: scaffolding developmental transformation among the participants.

It was obvious from the case studies that none of these three tasks is trivial. On the contrary, it may require considerable efforts and skills in order to accomplish the tasks in this particular setting. I have, again based on our case studies, made an inventory of the challenges program leaders may encounter (see the overview in Table 2). Groups and individuals are, of course, very different. In some cases groups present a large number of the challenges listed in Table 2, in other cases conditions are favourable, and the tasks are relatively easily accomplished. In the main section of this article, detailing the different practices found in the analysis or the program theories, the strategies used by program leaders to manage the challenges described here will be discussed.

Table 2. Potential challenges when addressing three tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges program leaders might face</th>
<th>Trustful relationships</th>
<th>Open dialogue climate</th>
<th>Developmental transformations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distrust towards representatives of the majority society</td>
<td>Expectation of hierarchical leadership</td>
<td>Traumatization leading to reduced openness due to strong affects and defense mechanisms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of social services</td>
<td>Group dynamics affected by collectivist norms</td>
<td>Lack of language for articulating own feelings and reactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration and anger</td>
<td>Status hierarchies between different immigrant groups</td>
<td>Lack of experience in reflecting on psychological and relational causality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative preconceptions of the host society</td>
<td>Intolerant attitudes and behaviors toward others’ belief and value systems</td>
<td>Lack of experience of being expected to form and express individual views</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge about how the host society functions</td>
<td>Strong affect in encounters with views that differ significantly from own beliefs, values and norms</td>
<td>Low self-esteem and shame</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive attitude due to low-status position</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong and rigid norms, attitudes and reactions, e.g. in relation to gender norms, sexuality and parenting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recourse to traditional norms and identities due to marginalized status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foundational Theories of Change

I reconstructed a large number, more than 60, of theories of change from the narratives of the program leaders. Some of these are very general and foundational for the approaches developed in the programs, while others are quite delimited to achieving very specific outcomes (e.g. increased ability for parents to really listen to their childrens' experiences). I have selected the eight theories of change that seemed to be both foundational and also shared by all the six programs we analysed (see Table 3). In later sections further significant theories of change found in the six programs will be presented.

Table 3. Eight theories of change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Building relationships with trust and respect makes openness and developmental transformation possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>Relating to people with positive interest and a non-judgmental and accepting attitude is crucial for building trustful relationships, an open dialogue climate and for enabling developmental transformation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical activities</td>
<td>Doing practical activities together, both rather unstructured as well as more organized activities, facilitates contact, communication and the building of relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules</td>
<td>Establishing guidelines and rules for group conversations and interventions to stop dominating, disparaging and aggressive behaviour among participants, facilitates the emergence of a group climate of mutual tolerance, respect and openness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal stories</td>
<td>Sharing and listening to personal stories invites reflection, e.g. about alternative possible views and courses of action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>Skillful use of questions can lead to contact, increased trust, reflection, insight into psychological and social causality and development of more mature values, norms and behaviours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-judgmental response</td>
<td>If adversarial opinions and conflicts are received and responded to in a non-judgmental and inquiring way, they can be fruitful starting-points for reflection and developmental transformation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about host society culture</td>
<td>Transfer of knowledge and understanding of how the &quot;new&quot; society functions, both regarding institutions and culture, empowers immigrants to develop action competence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Articulating theories of change in this way is a first necessary step in a process of developing more well-grounded knowledge about effective ways of scaffolding developmental transformation under different conditions (in this case relating to immigrants with significant elements of early conventional forms of meaning-making). Having articulations of the core theories of change makes
possible a critical analysis of their credibility, and eventually empirical testing of the extent to which they are actually effective.

**Practices**

**Overview**

In the literature on program theory (see e.g. Funnell & Rogers, 2011), attention is focused on what kinds of activities a program comprises. In this study, I found that a more fine-grained approach is needed, as the active ingredients in the programs are less well captured by describing certain types of activities, but are rather found in the ongoing practices of the program leaders. Practices refer here to recurring attitudes and behaviors program leaders believe to be helpful in their work, particularly in group dialogue situations. I believe that a concrete description of such practices is a valuable source of insight into productive ways of scaffolding developmental transformation of such competencies and forms of meaning-making that are necessary in order to handle the mental demands facing immigrants from traditional societies in a modern/postmodern society.

The analysis lead to the identification of 72 practices (some of them overlapping somewhat) that program leaders described as contributing to accomplishing the three tasks of creating trustful relationships, establishing an open dialogue climate and scaffolding developmental transformations. The 72 practices are listed in appendix 2, which also shows to what extent each practice was regarded as important by the program leaders of the six programs. The practices can be subsumed in 12 categories (see Figure 1, with a further "Miscellaneous" category for some practices that were deemed significant but were not as widely used as the others).

![Figure 1. Overview of 12 + 1 categories of practices](image.png)
Figures 2 - 4 give overviews of the most important practices and how they are explicitly or implicitly thought to contribute to accomplishing the three basic tasks outlined earlier. The underlying theories of change are discussed in later sections.

Figure 2. Practices contributing to establishment of contact, relationship and trust

Figure 3. Practices contributing to establishment of an open dialogue climate
In the following sections each of the categories of practices are described and their functions in relation to the three main tasks facing program leaders are discussed. Also included in the respective section is a textbox listing theories of change articulated by the program leaders in the interviews we made. The items in the textboxes are not straight quotes, but keep close to the formulations used by the respondents.

1. Friendly and Welcoming Climate

The conditions for hosting are very different depending on whether the program has its own premises and an open-house component or if it is a closed group of recruited participants who meet for a series of meetings, possibly in premises belonging to a different organization. In open-house programs people come for different reasons, sometimes simply to meet other people to socialize with, sometimes because they need help with a specific problem they are facing. For casual visitors to an open-house program, the character of the initial contact with the program leaders is a decisive factor for the likelihood that the visitor gets interested and motivated in participating in a more regular and committed way, e.g. to become a member of a conversation group.

The program leaders working in such programs stressed the importance of greeting each and every visitor in a friendly and welcoming way and show that one is happy to meet the person. Asking open-ended and skillful questions (see the section on questions below) is probably the most
important practice for initiating contact and building relationship and trust. The program leader needs to be aware of and sensitive to the fact that visitors may not at all know what to expect from the program leaders, who they are and what role they play (see the section on tasks and challenges above). There may even be a considerable level of mistrust, if the visitor has had negative experiences with representatives of the host society and authorities. All the program leaders agreed that it is very important to have a lot of patience, it may take quite a long time, for very understandable reasons, until visitors or group participants feel ready to open up about their experiences and views.

Again, regarding open-house programs, program leaders stress the importance of quickly learning names of visitors and maybe also learn about their social networks: who they are friends with, family members and other connections. This is particularly important for visitors coming from a collectivistic background, where membership in collectives may be of great importance.

In closed groups, where participants have signed up or been assigned to the group from elsewhere, a friendly and personal hosting is of course also very important in order to build relationship, trust and openness, but the commitment to participate has already been made.

Three of the programs we studied owned or had exclusive use of their premises and were thus free to furnish and decorate the premises according to their own wishes. Program leaders at one of the programs, the youth center Mixgården, strongly stressed the importance of creating a cosy, clean and beautiful environment visitors can feel at home in, identify with and eventually feel proud of. Mixgården also takes care to use symbols in the form of pictures, photos and artifacts from different cultures, in order to create a visibly multicultural environment.

One practice where program leaders had quite different views was the use of physical touch with visitors. Mixgården, the youth center, regard this as a very important practice. They have a massage chair they invite visitors they know well to use. Giving a shoulder massage (with clothes on, of course) creates an opportunity to ask questions about how life is going, build connection and trust that may open up for quite personal conversations. Some of the other programs reported that physical contact is a relatively or very important part of connecting to participants, but then in very mild forms, such as touching an arm or shoulder. But there was also one program leader who avoids any form of physical contact, as it can be inappropriate in some cultures, in particular between men and women. Obviously physical touch can be a powerful means of building rapport, but it has to be used in a very sensitive and prudent way. It is probably far easier for a female program worker to use touch with participants than for a male leader, because of cultural norms about the appropriateness of physical contact between males and females.
2. Practical Support

Some of the program leaders stressed the importance of having been in a position to help visitors/participants in problematic situations, such as handling contacts with authorities, filling out forms and applications, giving advice in difficult family situations or helping people get clothing, dental care or getting other types of basic needs met. The programs we studied have very different circumstances influencing this practice. In the case of Källan, the interreligious center, many of the visitors sought out the center precisely because they had very concrete difficulties: poverty, ignorance of how to deal with authorities or social isolation. At Källan they could talk to people who can give advice, explain letters from authorities, help filling out forms and get warm second-hand clothes for the winter. At Mixgården, the youth center, teenagers can get help with school homework, someone to talk to about family conflicts and other difficulties. In a third program, Bygga Broar, refugees coming to the municipality were received and helped by the same persons who also lead the conversation program that was integrated with the Swedish courses. Also in the other programs, practical assistance was mentioned as a very important factor in establishing contact and building trust, which lowered the thresholds to further engagement.

3. Collective Activities

Several program leaders regard collective activities, doing practical things together, as an easy and effective way of creating trust, building rapport and creating low thresholds for starting conversations about personally significant issues. In the simplest forms this might be offering coffee or tea without having a specific purpose or agenda. Several of the programs also included more organized activities, such as cooking together, making excursions, having story-telling events or dancing.
One of the good things with arranging collective activities is that doing practical things together without having a more specific goal, such as bridging cultural differences or talking about values, is a very natural and easy way to get to know each other. Conversations start in an unforced way, relationships start to form, trust grows and often people gradually open up and spontaneously start talking about the issues that are important to them. Sometimes this might lead to committing to participate in a more structured program, such as a course or a conversation circle.

For open-house type programs, visitors can come and participate in different activities, which might also offer opportunities to develop social skills. Again, at Mixgården, the youth centre, engaging the youth in working in a music studio or in arranging different kinds of events requires them to take responsibility, collaborate, solve problems and develop discipline and patience.

### Theories of Change

- If you do practical things together, you create natural opportunities for people to get to know each other, build relationships and start having conversations.
- If you offer visitors coffee and snacks without a particular agenda, it might be possible to reach people who are not enticed by invitations to participate in a program.
- If you do fun things together, the atmosphere becomes less reserved and more open and relaxed.
- If you arrange activities with low thresholds for participation and if the program leaders are continually available, it becomes easier to get in contact with people and build rapport.
- If participants with different ethnic backgrounds get involved in shared creative activities, xenophobia is counteracted.

### 4. Creation and Maintaining of Rules

All of the six programs use some set of rules for participation in the program, mostly just a few and rather simple ones. Having a set of rules creates an opportunity to talk about norms for communication and mutual treatment and what behaviors are not acceptable in the context of the program. In the cases where there are structured programs with fixed groups, rules are generally introduced in the introduction to the program. Establishing and upholding rules is, of course, especially called for when working with youth, where adults more or less automatically get the role of conveying norms and enforcing compliance with them. When working with adult participants, there is no mandate to be a moral leader in the same way, but having introduced a couple of rules can be an important form of support in situations where a participant gets upset and acts in an aggressive or disrespectful way. In more serious situations, having an established set of rules can make it easier to temporarily ban a participant (mostly applying to youth) and thereby sending a strong signal about what norms apply.
5. Active Leadership

All the programs, in somewhat different ways, include a mandate that the programs leaders are in charge of the group. This role can be used in a number of active ways in order to serve the three tasks described above: create relationships, create an open dialogue climate and scaffold transformation of meaning-making. Being a leader in a group offers the opportunity to lead conversations in ways that ensure that all participants are invited to become active and be open about their experiences and views. The leader may use rounds, where every participant can share what they think, or direct open-ended questions to participants who are shy, reserved or feel unsafe. If the leader notices that there are tendencies for the formation of informal groups that exclude some participants or if there is someone who takes a dominant role or acts in a way that hinders an open and mutually respectful climate, the leader can counteract such patterns by raising the issue with the group, mix up participants in smaller sub-groups for conversations or other activities, or have separate conversations with individuals.

The leadership role is particularly important if someone gets very upset and aggressive, criticize others for their views or in some other way restricts other participants freedom to participate on their own terms. I will return to this issue further below.

6. Positively Interested, Non-Judgmental Approach

The program leaders in all six cases we studied stress, in slightly different ways, the fundamental role of meeting the participants with an attitude of genuine interest, acceptance and non-judgment. This is seen as particularly important when the participant is cautious, suspicious, frustrated or preoccupied by other negative feelings, or advocates views that run counter to the program leader's own values. Instead of entering into argumentation, the basic practice is to listen, trying to understand and asking open-ended questions.
There is a striking similarity between the approach voiced by the program leaders and Carl Rogers (1957) conclusions about what enables a positive transformation in psychotherapeutic processes. Rogers' view can be summarized in this way: *If the therapist is congruent (authentic, sincere), shows unconditional positive regard and experiences empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference and endeavors to communicate this experience to the client, constructive change will follow.* This is a very clearly articulated theory of change, even if it only maintains that a certain approach works, but doesn't explain the mechanisms by which it works. All the programs leaders we interviewed expressed variants of this theory of change.

**Theories of Change**

- If you meet participants with a non-judgmental and interested attitude, you can create psychological safety, and the safer you feel, the more you dare to share.
- If there is a genuine mutuality in the communication, trustful relationships can evolve.
- If program leaders can create a sense of safety in the group, developmental processes become possible.
- If an open and non-judgmental conversation climate is created, participants can articulate their questions and prejudices about Swedes and the Swedish society, e.g. regarding parenting and teen sexuality.
- If prejudice and condemnations are met with openness and genuinely inquiring questions, prejudice can be weakened or transformed.
- If one feels that one is free to say anything without self-censorship, it becomes possible to inquire into the background of certain views and formulate and reflect on alternative views.
- If program leaders listen to parents in a respectful way, the likelihood increases that the parents will listen to their own children in a respectful way.

**7. Recognition/Validation**

Various ways of supporting participants through validation is a common practice in the programs we have studied. The foregoing practice of acceptance and non-judgment in the ways program leaders react, respond and ask questions can be seen as a way to show that one understands and accepts the participant's experience and views. An individual in difficult circumstances might feel incompetent and have low self-esteem. This might evoke defense mechanisms in the form of anger, aggressiveness and a disparaging attitude. Validation in the form of someone else showing understanding for one's feelings, reactions and past actions might normalize the reactions, leading to a greater sense of self-acceptance and a weaker need for upholding defense mechanisms.

Validation can be difficult to practice when a program leader is faced with a participant who states problematic views (see also section below). Validation might here entail showing appreciation for the participant's willingness to be open with opinions and feelings, without agreeing or disagreeing with the content of the statement. One step further is to show one's understanding of the fact that the person has the views he or she has, still without agreeing or disagreeing with the contents. Such an approach might be of great importance in order to create a dialogue climate, where participants feel welcome to be open with their feelings, opinions and thoughts, even regarding issues where there are very diverging views.
A different form of validation, also common in the programs, is to show appreciation and approval of actions participants have taken, for example in their roles as parents. Leaders might also invite other participants to offer positive feedback to each other.

### Theories of Change

- If participants get validation from other participants and/or from leaders for good things they do, their social skills are strengthened.
- If participants' actions are validated, a positive self-image and hope for the future can be strengthened.
- If participants' difficulties are normalized, their prospects for handling crises are improved.

### 8. Sharing of Personal Stories

For programs where groups meet over an extended period of time, the sharing of stories about personal background, experiences and other personal issues is an important activity. The sharing of stories, among participants, but also by leaders, may have several functions. It creates rapport and is a way to initiate conversations about personal experiences and views. The telling of personal stories, and in particular the listening to others' stories, creates relationship, understanding and respect. By listening to others' stories about their experiences, participants have the opportunity to reflect on similarities and differences in relation to their own stories. People deal with and think about situations in different ways, which offers the individual a broader range of alternative ways of interpreting and feeling about significant matters. A particularly important effect can be when someone has an acute challenging situation and by listening to stories of how others dealt with similar situations might get hope and motivation about his or her own challenges.

Several program leaders mention how they, often with some caution and reservations, share stories from their own personal lives with participants. Sometimes leaders share something about how their personal (but not too private) situation is at the moment, in order to set a more personal tone in the conversation. Some leaders also tell participants about their own backgrounds, events they were part of, or experiences that illustrate existential human dilemmas and consequences of different courses of actions. Being more personal creates rapport and contributes to open up the informal norms regarding what is spoken of and how one can talk about personal matters.

It might be difficult for program leaders to know how to act when participants want to know the leader's personal opinions in, for example, political issues, religious beliefs or attitudes to controversial phenomena. Most program leaders have roles in which they feel that they should be restrained in voicing personal opinions regarding contested issues. However, there are situations where it feels appropriate to share personal views, in particular when it might lead to a genuine dialogue about themes that might involve divergent opinions.
9. Asking Questions

Asking questions is one of the most important tools of a program leader. Different types of questions can be used in order to scaffold the attainment of all the three goals mentioned earlier: establish trustful relationships, create a respectful dialogue climate and transformation of meaning-making in order to empower participants. Simple, ordinary questions are a natural way of making contact and start conversations with people. The way questions are asked can convey that you are benevolent, interested and genuinely open to listen to the other person. This creates rapport and trust and is the start of building a relationship that allows conversations about personal and significant issues, including sensitive and controversial themes.

However, questions are also a powerful means of influencing other people in potentially profound ways. A program leader often asks questions not in order to get certain information, but rather to offer the participant an opportunity to reflect on matters that have not been objects of reflection before, at least not from the particular angle the question invites to. Since questions might influence people to think and feel in new ways, asking questions does mean that there is a power dimension in the relationship: the program leader wants and can influence the participant in certain directions without the participant being fully aware of the intention behind the questions asked.

The analysis of the interviews we made led to the identification of nine categories of questions used by program leaders (see appendix 2).

The two first types are used for initiating contact and conversation and for creating a relaxed and respectful conversation climate. Program leaders use open-ended questions about how different daily life themes are handled in the participants' home countries, such as: What did your family and closer relatives network look like at home? Who took care of your children when they were small? What kind of school did the children attend? How did you support the family? What was it like to be a teenager? Some questions are rather innocuous, while other questions might lead to more sensitive themes requiring more of a safe group space, such as questions about differences in parenting styles or questions about how the participants came to leave their homes and travel to Sweden. A particular way of using the same type of questions is when a program leader notices that one or several participants are very reserved and silent, maybe due to insecurity or lack of practice with talking in front of people they don't know very well. In such cases, a program leader can direct innocuous questions to these participants in order to get them to participate in the conversation, such as what they usually had for breakfast, or what kind of home they lived in.

Theories of Change

- If participants share personal stories, mutual respect and trustful relationships are likely to develop.
- If participants get the opportunity to hear others' stories, they can reflect on their own experiences, on causal relationships and on alternative courses of action.
- If participants get to hear how other people have dealt with similar difficulties, they might get new insights about how they can navigate their own challenging situations.
- If a program leader shares stories about his or her own biography and own experiences, it is easier to create rapport, trust and openness.
The other categories of questions found were all used for supporting reflection, clarification and insights. Some types of questions are used at occasions when a participant voices views or emotions that need to be handled in order to maintain an open and respectful dialogue climate, such as when someone makes strongly disparaging comments or is very upset. As already mentioned, in all six programs we studied, program leaders mostly do not start arguing against problematic views, but remain anchored in an attitude of acceptance, curiosity and respect. Exceptions to this basic approach were reported in the two programs working with young participants, where program leaders sometimes feel called upon to challenge participants about problematic speech. Open-ended questions about the participants' personal experiences or other background to opinions and emotional reactions mostly leads to a calming down of the situation and it becomes possible to explore different possibilities for how one can think and feel about different themes. Several of the program leaders reported that they often handle situations when one participant voice problematic views by asking other participants how they think and feel about the issue in order to get a more reflective conversation going.

A particular category of questions are intended to support a person to direct his or her attention towards own emotions, reactions and thoughts, in order to gain more clarity about how one feels, the underlying reasons for one's reactions and not least in order to support the person to find words for describing what is going on in one's interior.

In German literature on conflict management (see e.g. Thomann, 2002), there is a pertinent word for this: Selbstklärung, self-clarification. The word points to the process of developing clarity about how one feels and thinks about a particular issue or experience. Assisting the conflict parties to gain clarity about their feelings, needs, values, thoughts, priorities and what outcome they want can be a crucial element in a conflict management process, and is also highly relevant in this context. Some of the questions asked in order to scaffold such self-clarification are rather simple: How do you feel about this? What thoughts do such situations trigger in you? What is most important to you when such things happen? How would you like it to be? Is there something specific you are worried about?

### Theories of Change

If a program leader skillfully uses questions, outcomes can be:

- increased rapport and trust;
- that participants feel seen and therefore also welcome to participate actively;
- that conversations get started and participants increasingly open up;
- that participants who are upset calm down, talk in a more open-ended manner, start reflecting and make decisions in a more considered way;
- that participants by articulating their feelings, reactions and views gain more clarity about themselves and what is important to them;
- that participants become more aware of other people's reactions, feelings and views;
- that participants gain new insights into causal connections in interpersonal relationships, such as how different parenting styles affect children;
- that participants start reflecting on taken-for-granted views, beliefs and attitudes, and maybe reevaluate them;
- that participants reflect more concretely and realistically about their own and their families' future and what they would like to accomplish.
10. Handling Strong Reactions, Disparaging Attitudes and Conflict

Significant differences in norms, attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and behaviors among participants and between immigrants and the Swedish society are an integral aspect of the programs we have studied, and for some of them the very reason that they exist. These differences can, when they surface, elicit strong reactions and conflict. The encounter with norms and beliefs that are very different from the ones participants have taken for granted and may be strongly identified with can be felt as strongly provoking. In addition, many refugees and other recent immigrants have had frustrating experience with authorities and in other situations in the new society, and may carry along negative and strong emotions and/or have developed a considerable degree of distrust in relation to representatives of the host country. Some participants may also be traumatized by experiences in war-torn regions when fleeing and by loss of relatives or friends. Conversations in a group may activate strong painful emotions, like anxiety, despair and fear for the safety of relatives.

A program leader must be prepared to deal with situations where participants react with painful emotions or tell stories with horrible and traumatic ingredients. However, in situations when participants express hostile and disparaging views towards other participants in the group, towards the Swedish society or towards specific groups, e.g. homosexuals, the leader's skillfulness in upholding an open and respectful dialogue climate is really put to the test. Some views expressed by participants may feel provoking in relation to the leader's own values, e.g. when someone maintains that it is a good thing to use corporal punishment with their children, or condemns certain categories of people. But even if the leader does not have their own reactions to deal with, there is still a need to handle the group dynamics in order to create and maintain an open and respectful climate.

When emotionally charged situations happen, in particular when a participant expresses problematic views, the program leader will have to choose to what extent these statements should be received with a non-judgmental and inquiring attitude, and to what extent it is called for to challenge the views or even stop a participant from hurting other participants.

Theories of Change

- If strong emotional expressions and disparaging attitudes are met with a non-judgmental and inquiring approach, shared reflection and reevaluation may become possible.
- If participants get support to reflect on conflicts, misunderstandings may be reduced, insight into causes and consequences in social relationships may increase and stereotypical conceptions may be dissolved.

11. Inform and Educate

All of the programs regard sharing of information and knowledge in order to make the new host-society intelligible as an important component of their work. Understanding of causes and consequences in relation to contested issues, such as parenting styles, sexuality and differences in norms and lifestyles, is likewise regarded as a central task. Several of the program leaders stress that it is important and helpful to take care to refer to research results and verifiable facts in order
to gain credibility and legitimacy, as well as providing a good starting point for reflection and dialogue.

Immigrants need knowledge about Swedish laws, rights, institutions and regulations in order to be able to advocate their interests and handle different situations they may find themselves in. Some recurring topics is to explain the taxation system, the roles and principles of the social service authorities, laws, the judicial system, the compulsory school system, etc. Understanding how these systems work can reduce misunderstandings and strengthen action competences.

There is also often a need for understanding a range of phenomena in the Swedish society that are not part of the societal structure, but rather cultural phenomena, such as pervasive norms, attitudes and behavioral patterns, e.g. regarding parenting, sexuality, gender roles and equality, leadership styles, the weak role of religion and widespread patterns of social interaction that may be very different from what participants are used to.

The programs that aim at preventing honor-related violence and promote respect for individual rights include further forms of knowledge dissemination. Specific themes that are part of some programs are knowledge about children's needs, consequences of different types of parenting, risks related to cousin marriages, facts about the hymen and risks related to circumcision.

**Theories of Change**

- If the program conveys knowledge about laws, rights, regulations and about how Swedish institutions function, misunderstandings and anxiousness can be reduced, and participants can better advocate for their interests in the Swedish society.
- If leaders share knowledge relating to potentially controversial themes, such as parenting, the hymen and family violence, it becomes easier involve participants in reflection and possibly also reevaluation of problematic attitudes, norms and beliefs.
- If participants get support in understanding psychological causality (e.g. the mechanisms of shame), the amygdala can be calmed down, the frontal lobe can be strengthened and it becomes easier to mobilize hope and motivation to develop new behaviors.
- If participants gain greater understanding of the challenges one faces when one migrates from a traditional society to a secular and modern society, reorientation is facilitated.

**12. Support for Reflection on Causal Links**

A large share of the participants in the studied programs grew up in social environments that lacked scaffolding for reflection on psychological and social causality. Several of the programs use activities that actively invite to such reflection. One example, used in Elektra and Bygga Broar, is to ask participants to draw "life lines", a line symbolizing high and low points in the biography with marks for specific life events. The line can be used for reflecting on how different events and circumstances in one's biography has contributed to forming one's personality and attitudes. Another example is when program leaders talk about how family structures may be impacted by migration, differences in living in a society in war and a society in peace, and how the difficulties facing immigrants in a society that is very different can lead to shame and avoidance. Here sharing
of concepts and theories are combined with invitations to reflect on causal links in the participants' own lives and predicaments.

A further variation is to invite participants to tell each other how it feels and what other consequences follow in particular situations. One example is how leaders at Elektra have invited girls to tell boys how it feels for them when the boys look at porn. In programs for parents, program leaders may invite participants to imagine how it feels for their children in certain situations and when they are treated in certain ways.

The practice of scaffolding reflection on psychological and social causal links is, of course, a key element in promoting transformation from pre-formal to formal cognition, i.e. from early conventional to late conventional meaning-making.

**Theories of Change**

- If participants are supported to articulate their feelings and reactions, they feel seen and validated and it gets easier to reflect on own experiences and their consequences.
- If parents are invited to reflect on their children's situation and experiences, the likelihood increases of functional parenting adapted to the situation of being an immigrant in the Swedish society.

**Miscellaneous Themes**

In addition to the themes discussed above, there were seven practices that were deemed potentially significant, but were only mentioned in some programs. Some of them are only relevant under specific conditions, such as in programs targeting youth.

**Images.** All six programs reported that they use images for supporting conversations and knowledge transmission, but there were significant differences in how this was done. In Bygga Broar the use of images is central to the whole program. In Bygga Broar a lot of time and effort has been invested in developing a series of 40+ drawings intended to facilitate starting conversation with immigrant parents about a broad range of themes, mostly relating to the situation of their children. Many of the drawings show children in different situations, inviting conversations about children's feelings, parenting, gender roles, family violence, circumcision, etc. The experience in the program Bygga Broar is that the images make it much easier to initiate constructive conversations about potentially charged issues. The other programs often use images as a support when talking about various themes, but not in the systematic way characteristic of Bygga Broar.

**Individual feedback.** Offering individual feedback to participants is a practice that played a role in only a few of the programs, in particular Elektra. Since Elektra essentially is a leadership development program for suburban youth, leaders have a natural mandate to take initiative to have an individual conversation with a participant and offering observations and suggestions regarding behavior in different situations and sharing own experiences and learning about leadership. In other types of programs, the mandate for giving individual feedback is weaker, but may be called for in specific situations.
Training skills. Participation in a group led by someone who is skillful in creating an open and respectful dialogue climate implies in itself training in listening and talking skills, in particular for participants who have little experience with such forms of communication. However, there were not many examples in our case programs of activities that were specifically intended to train particular skills. In the ENIG program, one session is devoted to understand and train validation, i.e. giving and receiving positive feedback, including a homework assignment for training with family members and other people. The program that could be said to offer most opportunities for development of social skills is Mixgården, the youth center. Mixgården offers a range of activities, including, as mentioned above, giving participants responsibility for certain tasks, but also participating in activities that require sustained learning and training, such as dance, recording music or planning and carrying out various types of events. Such activities offer opportunities to develop social skills, such as collaboration, problem-solving, taking responsibility, develop more patience and work discipline, planning and tolerating differences.

Responsibility. A couple of the program leaders pointed out the importance of assigning real responsibility to participants for various tasks, as a way of mobilizing engagement, commitment and development of social skills. This is a very significant part of the youth centre Mixgården's approach. Teenagers in different constellations are invited to assume responsibility for roles like operating the café or the music studio. They also have the practice of picking a number of participants each year to form a group that is given a set of responsibilities over the whole year. In the program Bygga Broar (not so much in the part we included in our study, but elsewhere), immigrant women were invited to take on the role of being cultural interpreters and speak in front of groups of Swedish preschool and school teachers. The program leaders reported that this element of the program had a large impact in generating engagement and commitment, as well as increasing self-esteem and a sense of personal agency. Using the practice of assigning responsibility for real tasks and roles is much easier in programs having a variety of activities going on. It is less easy in programs comprising a series of conversation meetings. However, even in such groups the practice of assigning responsibility can be used to some extent, for example by giving participants homework assignments and ask them to report back on these.

Role models. Some of the programs, in particular Mixgården and Elektra which work with youth, regard working with role models as an important practice. They may, for example, invite guests, such as former participants who have managed to establish themselves in a particular role in the wider society. By meeting people like themselves who have succeeded at getting a meaningful job or becoming an artist, for example, participants get living proof of the possibilities that exist for themselves and their own future.

Referring to religious norms. In two of the programs leaders sometimes referred to religious norms in relation to participants for whom religion has a personal significance. In the cases this was mentioned as a practice, the leaders themselves had a background in Muslim societies and were familiar with the Koran and could therefore with some credibility use relevant quotes. For example, a program leader could say "Only God can judge" when a participant expressed him- or herself in a disparaging way about other people. However, some program leaders also expressed a certain ambivalence about using religious authority as a strategy.

Working with oneself. Practices explicitly emphasising the need for program leaders to work on themselves were not often mentioned in our interviews. Some program leaders, however, did refer
to the importance of working on being aware of one's own state of mind and actively taking care of, for example, strong emotions or particular moods, as well as continuously training on being able to maintain an empathic attitude towards participants.

**Similarities and Differences Among the Six Programs**

Of the 72 practices identified in this study, a large share, about 32, were reported as very important by all or most of the six programs (see details in appendix 2). This means that there seems to be a rather large set of practices that are common to practitioners in this field, even though they have built their programs independently and don't have a background in a particular methodology. However, there were about 40 practices not used by all programs in a regular way. The reasons for this were different. For about 14 of the practices, it was apparent that their relevance was dependent on specific program conditions. Some practices are only relevant for programs owning or having exclusive use of their premises. Other practices are only relevant or important when working with youth. A third type of differences in conditions are between open-house programs and programs in the form of a series of group meetings with a more or less structured agenda. In the former case, different types of activities can be offered, in the latter case teaching about different topics is a common ingredient in the programs.

Surprisingly few differences in what practices are used (about 16) can be related to differences in theories of change, i.e. beliefs about what is helpful. None of these represent strongly diverging philosophies. The most significant differences concern to what extent program leaders should try to influence participants in particular directions, such as challenging views perceived as problematic or actively inviting participants to reflect on certain issues. Most differences, however, can be interpreted as differences in emphasis, i.e. what is regarded as more or less important to do.

The remaining about 10 practices, where there were differences between the programs, did not seem to have particular explanations. The respondents simply could not report that a particular practice had been called for, or they had never considered that it might be useful.

Quite a few of these practices may sound very ordinary, almost trivial, but in the programs we studied it was clear that they were practiced mindfully and methodically, as elements in an cohesive "method" or approach.

**Conclusions**

In this paper I argue that it is important to provide scaffolding for immigrants faced with the challenge of acquiring knowledge, skills and meaning-making patterns necessary for self-directed integration in individualistic societies expecting citizens to be self-authoring. Failing to provide such scaffolding increases the risks of growing marginalized groups, forming enclaves with much worse living conditions than the majority population. This might lead to increasing tensions in the

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13 We asked the respondents if they had participated in courses in any particular methodology. Some of them are familiar with MI, motivational interviewing, and have attended shorter trainings in the methodology. However, it was apparent from the interviews that none of them regarded this as a major and formative influence in their approach, but rather a complementary input.
society and increased appeal for young immigrants to join criminal networks, thus not only affecting the immigrants themselves, but also to the stability and dignity of the society at large.

The study reported here aspires to contribute to our knowledge about how developmental transformation can be scaffolded, with particular reference to immigrants from traditional societies. Leaders of the six programs we studied share the foundational theory of change that building trustful relationships is a crucial precondition for creating an environment conducive to empowerment. establishing trustful relationships and an open, respectful dialogue climate under these conditions may require more of program workers than in settings were participants have a similar cultural background.

The analysis of the program theories of the six programs included in our study yielded an inventory of 72 practices used by all, most or some of the interviewed program leaders. A large share of these practices were regarded as very important in all or almost all of the six programs we studied. Some practices are only relevant under certain program conditions (such as having own premises, or working with youth). One might have expected that some differences in what practices were used in the different programs would reflect different profiles of the program leaders' theories of change. However, few such differences could be discerned in this study.

The study did not aspire to measure to what extent the identified practices actually contributed to the empowerment of program participants. We therefore cannot assess if the theories of change shared by the program leaders are effective. However, it can be argued that the practices identified constitute a comprehensive set of "promising practices," worth further exploration, and development. They are the result of the accumulation over time of know-how among program leaders with a considerable experience in meeting and working with people with an immigrant background, primarily in group settings. Anecdotal evidence suggests that practices such as a positive and non-judgmental approach, skillful use of different types of questions, sharing personal stories and support to reflect on psychological and social causality can be powerful forms of developmental scaffolding.

The inventory of practices (see appendix 2) can be regarded as a framework that can be used both by researchers in further investigations and by practitioners who want to reflect on and develop their skills and practices. The identification of a comprehensive set of practices and their underlying theories of change is a first step in an investigation into effective ways of scaffolding empowerment of individuals to increased ability to navigate life in society that expects and requires meaning-making and action patterns corresponding to late conventional stages of ego development.

References


Appendix 1. Theoretical Controversies in the Application of Adult Development Perspectives in Migration and Integration Studies

The writing of this article and the reactions the first version evoked among those who read it (researcher colleagues and reviewers) opened a can of theoretical worms. The contents of the can seem to involve deep-seated differences in perspectives within the adult development field that would deserve to be thoroughly explored. However, the issues involved are too complex to be satisfyingly resolved within the context of this article, which was meant to focus on rather concrete results of a case-based study of scaffolding practices. The feedback I received gave me reason to rewrite the problem framing section of the article to accommodate the critical objections. I am not fully satisfied with the result, though, and I think it is relevant to outline some of the interesting theoretical tensions involved.

My personal problem framing that lead me to design the research project reported in the article were based on assumptions that might be described something like this:

– Adult development theories offer a unique (but partial) interpretative approach to understand and manage important aspects of complex societal problems, such as the integration of refugees and other immigrants from low-income and war-torn countries to high-income, democratic societies.

– Adult development theories describe significant and hierarchically ordered levels of cognitive skills, social awareness, self-awareness and self constructions (e.g. Kegan's subject-object balances).

– Different societies scaffold its members' development up to, but not beyond, a certain expected level. This expected level is different in different societies.

– Some societies actively discourage its members (or some of its members, e.g. girls and women) to develop beyond the wanted level.

– Some societies, or rather social milieus, in the world function according to an early conventional, or conformist, mindset. An early conventional, conformist, society is one where:
  o members are expected to believe in and adhere to a quite narrow and rigid set of norms and beliefs;
  o there is a lack of tolerance towards deviations from these norms;
  o there is a considerable tendency to divide people into Us and Them;
  o narratives about who is good and who is bad are prominent aspects of the worldview;
  o the cognitive world is rather undifferentiated, dominated by black-and-white, either-or thinking; and
  o authority is perceived to be external rather than internal.

Often, but not necessarily, the social order of the society, organizations and families is hierarchical and patriarchal.
Immigrants originating in early conventional societies are a very diverse group, but some have not had the chance to develop beyond the early conventional ego stages. When people embedded in an early conventional (conformist) stage of meaning-making migrate to a society that expects its members to function at late conventional levels (for example be self-authoring and having principled, world-centric values about tolerance for diversity), they are faced with challenges they have not been equipped for. These challenges may for some be very difficult to handle and thereby become obstacles to integration.

If immigrants from conformist social milieus do not adapt to the host society's norms and practices, there is a considerable risk that they will remain outsiders in relation to the majority society, economically (support oneself and one's family), socially (segregated lifestyle) and culturally (rejecting the host society's values and norms, and, possibly, acting out norms that are in breach of the host society's laws and prevalent norms).

Social exclusion of whole groups of immigrants may lead to several social ills, such as widespread long-term unemployment, dependence on social security benefits, increased propensity for young men to be attracted to criminal networks, suppression of in particular girls' and women's rights (according to the host societies legislation) to make their own choices and ethnic conflict. Some of these phenomena may also reinforce tendencies to xenophobia and ethnic discrimination.

It is, for these reasons, a crucial task for the receiving societies to provide effective scaffolding for the immigrants, to facilitate their empowerment and enable self-directed and constructive integration.

The problem framing in the first version of the article was not spelled out in the detail given above, but enough of the underlying assumptions were present to evoke objections from colleagues and reviewers. The most fundamental objections are, according to my interpretation, related to differences in convictions about the nature of adult development.

One objection is based on the conviction that it is fundamentally misleading to describe adult development in terms of individuals developing through a sequence of general stages, as the ego development framework do. According to the view behind this objection, development is localized, i.e. domain-specific and highly dependent on situational factors, such as what particular task the individual is engaged with, what scaffolding is provided in the actual situation and the properties of the social setting the individual is embedded in. Individuals are not "at" a certain stage, but operate on different levels of complexity on different occasions. There is research (e.g. by Kurt Fischer, Theo Dawson and their colleagues) that shows that individuals' performance and developmental trajectories in terms of complexity levels are domain-specific. In the light of this view, it is highly misleading to make generalizations about what stage a person is at.

A second objection is related to the concern that the stages and levels frameworks developed in the adult development field reflect what is valued and regarded as mature in North American and Western European societies. The cultures in these societies are strongly individualistic, whereas large parts of the world have collectivist value systems. However, the theoretical frameworks developed in the Western environment, in particular the ego development frameworks, claim to represent universal developmental patterns. This is deeply problematical and risk portraying...
meaning-making systems based on other cultural values and norms as less developed, thereby also contributing to a deeply misleading "deficit" stereotype of immigrants as a collective. Serious consideration of the variability in forms of social organization, cultural patterns and value systems raises the question if it is at all possible and meaningful to create universally valid theoretical frameworks for adult development.

Two reviewers recommended that I, in the light of these objections, should remove the references to needs for vertical development among (some) immigrants, and frame the challenges involved in terms of a need for horizontal learning about cultural differences. This could still be thought of in terms of developmental transformation, but not in relation to a universally valid hierarchical model of adult development.

Even though I recognize the validity of the objections sketched above, I have been quite reluctant to completely abandon the vertical development angle. I do believe it is relevant and meaningful to apply concepts like early and late conventional meaning-making to collectives that to a considerable degree are communities of shared values, norms and assumptions. However, I have only anecdotal rather than systematically documented evidence to go by regarding the presence of early conventional systems of meaning-making among (some of) the participants in the programs we have studied. There is also, as far as I know, no stringent theoretical framework that would allow us to define the properties of early and late conventional and postconventional societies and "score" particular societies. The objections concerning the potential incommensurability of different cultures of course also call into question if it is at all defensible to develop and use such frameworks. I believe these issues deserve to be explored in depth and with intellectual rigor. That, however, is a task far beyond the scope of the present article.
Appendix 2. Practices: Compilation of Responses from Six Programs

The table below shows how program leaders rated the use of each of the 72 practices found in the analysis.

Explanation of symbols used:

- Not used by us
* Used to some extent
** Relatively important
*** Very important, central for my/our approach

K: Källan; A: Att vara förälder i Sverige; El: Elektra; M: Mixgården; EN: ENIG; BB: Bygga Broar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>El</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>EN</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Basic attitude</strong></td>
<td>1. Being anchored in a curious, positively interested and non-judgmental attitude in the lifeworlds of participants. Listening with an open-ended attitude, rather than advocating or teaching.</td>
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<td>2. Having a friendly, welcoming and inviting way of hosting.</td>
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<td><strong>Friendly and welcoming attitude and environment</strong></td>
<td>3. Taking care to greet each person, learning everyone's name, learning the social networks of participants.</td>
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<td>4. With sensitivity for boundaries using physical touch: shake hands, touching visitor's arm or shoulder, hugs.</td>
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<td>5. Creating a cosy ambience in the premises.</td>
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<td>6. Creating a multicultural ambience by having symbols of different cultures, and learning and using words from different languages.</td>
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<td>7. Being patient that it may take some time before participants are prepared to be open with their experiences.</td>
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<td><strong>Practical support</strong></td>
<td>8. Assist individuals in problematic situations, such as contacts with authorities.</td>
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<td>Collective activities</td>
<td>9. Create relaxed and unpretentious opportunities for talking, establish contact and build relationships by offering coffee or tea, eating together, being available for spontaneous contact.</td>
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<td>10. Arranging activities that create opportunities for contact, conversations, creating rapport, such as cooking together, arranging events, making excursions.</td>
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<td>11. Arranging and/or creating conditions for creative activities, such as working with art, making music, dance courses.</td>
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<td>12. Taking care to have fun together, joking with participants.</td>
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<td>13. Organizing solidarity activities, such as collecting money for aid projects.</td>
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<td>Create and maintain rules</td>
<td>14. Present rules for participation in the program, such as respect for other participants' views.</td>
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<td>15. Require compliance with rules, making sure that violation of rules have distinct consequences, and following up and reintegrate those who have transgressed rules.</td>
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<td>Leading</td>
<td>16. Distribute talking time in order to activate everyone or giving everyone opportunity to speak.</td>
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<td>17. Actively discourage the emergence of informal groupings and informal leaders.</td>
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<td>18. Raise the issue with the group if someone is marginalized.</td>
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<td>19. Taking care to uphold a leadership role - not becoming a friend.</td>
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<td>20. Intervene when a participant inhibits other participants. Request that participants respects others' views. Refer to rules, negotiate contracts.</td>
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<td>Recognize/Validate</td>
<td>21. Welcome when participants express problematic views by conveying that it is</td>
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good that they are open, rather than entering into polemics.

22. Show understanding and acceptance (without agreeing) in relation to participants' attitudes, opinions, feelings and judgments, even when they are problematic (e.g. racist opinions, authoritarian convictions).

23. Show understanding for the challenges and difficulties facing immigrants to a different type of society.

24. Offering validation to participants for the constructive and good things they do, and inviting other participants to offer validation.

25. Conveying that it is OK to be wrong and not knowing everything.

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<tr>
<th>Being personal in the leader role</th>
<th>26. To some extent share personal information, in order to model what can be talked about.</th>
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<td>27. Sharing aspects of own life story and own experiences.</td>
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<td>28. Stating own opinions regarding different issues.</td>
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<td>29. Sharing own experiences of coming to Sweden as a foreigner.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Asking questions</th>
<th>30. Asking open-ended questions about how different issues are handled in the home countries of participants, such as childcare, parenting, freedom and control.</th>
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<td>31. Asking questions, e.g. about the home country, directed to participants who are reserved, in order to activate and include them.</td>
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<td>32. Asking non-judgmental questions that invite to reflection on the background to problematic attitudes (e.g. racism, disparaging judgments of others or moralizing about others).</td>
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33. Asking questions in order to explore the background of strong emotional outbursts, in order to deescalate the situation and/or to support the participant's own insights into the reasons for his or her own emotional reactions. ** *** *** *** *** *** *

34. Asking reformulating questions in order to support insight into own feelings and needs (e.g. "When you say bloody idiot, do you mean that you are disappointed?"). ** *** * *** *** *** *

35. Asking questions that support awareness and clarification of participants' own feelings and needs. ** *** *** *** *** **

36. Asking questions that invite participants to reflect on psychological causality, e.g. emotional consequences of certain behaviors (e.g. "How do you think your children feel when ...?"). * *** *** ? *** ***

37. Asking challenging questions about a participant's opinions and behavior (when there is a relationship that allows for challenging). * * *** *** *** ***

38. Asking open-ended questions about possible future scenarios, such as "what would you do if your daughter don't want to marry the man you parents find suitable?". * *** *** *** *** ***

** Managing strong reactions, disparaging attitudes and conflict. **

39. Being unafraid, open and non-judgmental when participants' have strong emotional outbursts, such as aggressiveness or despair. *** *** *** *** ** ***

40. Support participants in letting other participants feel and express emotions without trying to distract them. *** *** *** *** *** ***

41. When someone expresses categorical and disparaging views invite other participants to talk about their experiences and life stories. * *** *** *** *** ***

42. Return to and clarify conflict incidents: what happened? *** *** *** *** *** ***
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Using mediation situations for supporting awareness of underlying feelings and needs. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Consistently protect and convey values. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Making time for talking through or return to charged issues until the participants have arrived at a natural conclusion. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Inquiring into underlying reasons when some has a negative attitude. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Calling into question and challenging a participant with problematic views, attitudes or behaviors. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Conveying research based knowledge about relevant topics, such as the effects of different types of parenting, facts about the hymen, or homosexuality. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Inform about Swedish laws and about how authorities and other Swedish institutions function. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Inform about and explain citizen obligations and rights, such as paying taxes, notify the social insurance agency, housing allowances. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Inform about widespread views, values and norms in the Swedish society and explain their background. \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Explaining aspects of Swedish political conditions (e.g. about the Sweden democrat party's views on immigration and their influence on policies). \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Using own experiences and own competence to explain possible consequences of different actions (e.g. regarding parenting or interactions with authorities). \end{itemize}</th>
<th>\begin{itemize} \item Inviting external speakers, arranging study visits in order to elucidate relevant topics. \end{itemize}</th>
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**Informing**

|48. | Conveying research based knowledge about relevant topics, such as the effects of different types of parenting, facts about the hymen, or homosexuality. | * | ** | *** | ** | *** | * | ** |
|49. | Inform about Swedish laws and about how authorities and other Swedish institutions function. | ** | *** | ** | *** | * | ** |
|50. | Inform about and explain citizen obligations and rights, such as paying taxes, notify the social insurance agency, housing allowances. | ** | *** | * | ** | *** | * | ** |
|51. | Inform about widespread views, values and norms in the Swedish society and explain their background. | ** | *** | ** | *** | * | ** |
|52. | Explaining aspects of Swedish political conditions (e.g. about the Sweden democrat party's views on immigration and their influence on policies). | ** | * | ** | *** | * | ** |
|53. | Using own experiences and own competence to explain possible consequences of different actions (e.g. regarding parenting or interactions with authorities). | * | ** | *** | ** | *** | * | ** |
|54. | Inviting external speakers, arranging study visits in order to elucidate relevant topics. | ** | *** | ** | *** | * | ** |
55. Repeating issues that have been treated at earlier meetings and control for understanding. 

56. Informing about how to apply for grants for certain initiatives and about how one might influence political decision-making.

** Offering possible interpretations of causal connections **

57. Pointing out emotional or other consequences triggered for other participants when someone expresses condemning or disparaging views.

58. Teaching about models that describe different types of societies: traditional, modern.

59. Teaching about levels of validation: how to give validation to others.

60. Teach about how feelings of shame arise and what consequences they have (e.g. avoidance of exposure to situations that might trigger shame).

** Offering individual feedback **

61. Offering individual feedback and advice about personal patterns observed, perceived needs for training and suggestions of strategies and effective behaviors.

62. Individual sharing and explanation of the leader's own strategies in different types of situations, in order to clarify leadership in concrete situations.

** Training skills **

63. In due time and scope assigning real responsibilities to participants for various tasks.

64. Training validation and invalidation.

** Working on oneself **

65. Being in touch with own state of mind. Noticing own reactions in the present moment in order to be able to take responsibility for managing one's reactions, e.g. by sharing with others what is going on for oneself.
66. Being aware of and sensitive in relation to power differentials between leader and participants: the leaders are established in the Swedish society, the participants are not.  

67. Train own ability to remain empathetic.  

** Other themes **  

68. Being **transparent**: taking care to inform concerned individuals about contacts taken with authorities or other actors.  

69. Using specifically designed and selected **images** as support for conversations about charged issues.  

70. **Using established relationships** in order to get in touch with new participants.  

71. Introducing realistic **role models**, e.g. by inviting former participants to the program.  

72. Referring to **religious** norms: e.g. using quotes from the Koran or Bible in order to reinforce desirable norms and behaviors (e.g. "Only God can pass judgment").