

Golden moments

Sigurd Ohrem & Michael Noah Weiss

1. Prologue

Sigurd Ohrem and Michael Noah Weiss got to know each other through a teach-the-teachers program called “Philosophical Dialogue and Active Citizenship” (see Ohrem & Weiss, 2019). Sigurd was initiating and organizing this program, inviting Michael and several other philosophical practitioners to train folk high school teachers in different philosophical dialogue formats. In 2013, Sigurd and Michael travelled to Athens for the World Congress of Philosophy, where the two had many informal talks about the relevance of dialogue at folk high school. Visiting this congress together marks the starting point for several projects that the two did together over the following years.

Sigurd was a university teacher and cultural researcher at what today is the University of South-Eastern Norway before he started at Skiringssal folkehøyskole where he worked as a teacher and lecturer for three decades. As an author, he wrote several articles and book chapters on pedagogy, philosophy and cultural studies. Over the years, he contributed with many projects and initiatives to the development work of folk high school pedagogy.

The following dialogue was the first carried out for the present anthology. It took place in 2020, a week before Christmas. In the beginning of this conversation, Sigurd

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shares an experience that at first does not appear to be pedagogical in nature. However, as the dialogue unfolds, a pedagogical attitude is examined that can be compared with the Taoist concept of *Wu Wei*, which is doing by not doing. In the further course of the investigation, the dialogue partners examine how far this concept can foster self-formation in terms of *Bildung* with the folk high school students. In this respect, the term *Golden Moments* is introduced as something that the teachers cannot plan for. Rather, these moments happen incidentally. Nevertheless, they can play a vital role in the students' *Bildung*-process.

2. Dialogue

2.1. Concrete reflection

Michael Noah Weiss: Sigurd, our guiding question for this dialogue now is “What is good folk high school pedagogy?” You are an experienced teacher at folk high school, and you also have extensive theoretical knowledge about this type of school. What I would like to ask you for now is an example, a personal story that illustrates good folk high school pedagogy.

*The jam
session*

Sigurd Ohrem: Since I have been working in these schools for thirty years now, there would be countless suitable stories. However, the best story I can think of right now is from my teaching in a music class called “Rock Band”. When I had the class about five years ago, we once had visitors from the folk high schools' main office in Oslo. They were going to make a new brochure that they would use to market the schools the next year. The reason why they came was because they needed some pictures that would illustrate the life at a folk high school, something like students engaged in different activities and

classes. What was special with this photo session was that these people did not want to stage the situations they were photographing as if they were real. No, they rather wanted to take pictures of real situations as they happened to keep it as authentic as possible.

Before these visitors came into my class, I told the students – they were about seven – that today we would not practice a specific song, but we would just improvise. Since we had never done this before, I was quite curious what would happen. In fact, I did not even know whether they were able to improvise. So, I picked up the bass guitar and started to play a simple theme. Suddenly, the piano player began to groove around the same line. He was quite a good player. Then the drums set in, and after three minutes, everyone was playing. There was also a saxophone, two guitars and a vocalist. It is of course challenging to improvise with nothing but your voice, but the respective student was brilliant, and she managed to put her voice on top of it all.

We were all into the music, really feeling it, when the door opened, and these photographers came in and they started photographing the action.

There were so many motives because our improvised piece of music never stopped. One theme merged into another. It went on and on. With all these people playing, you can imagine how many good motives there were for taking pictures. And it turned out that these students were not shy when being photographed. When you know that you are going to be photographed, then some people tend to take a certain pose, and then it sometimes gets a bit unnatural. These students, however, they did not even seem to think about that, because they were so into the music. Everything felt just natural.

The photographers stayed for maybe fifteen minutes, and shortly before we finished, they walked out silently

again, almost as if they would never have been there. When this fulminant jam session then came to an end, the students and me looked astonished at each other, and I remember one student asking, “What really happened now?” The others shook their heads in bewilderment without being able to give an answer. It was like everybody had the same thought, the same feeling, the same experience. But we had no words. And I did not want to try to make them talk about it immediately. It was an experience – a strong experience – that you never could have foreseen or forced.

Michael N. W.: When you are saying that this experience was not foreseen nor foreseeable, do I understand you right that this was a unique moment in the sense that it never happened before or after again with that class?

Sigurd O.: Most of these students were clever musicians, but they had never experienced such a moment before because they had been too occupied with rehearsing. For example, when you play the piano, you may learn how to play all the various scales; you know how to play by notes, etc. But if you’re only rehearsing playing techniques, you never learn how to improvise. This you may observe with many other young musicians today. So, after this experience, it was the phenomenon of musical improvisation that these students all of a sudden became aware of. The previously described session happened at the end of the school year, so there were not many sessions left, but I remember that after this experience, it was very easy to work with this group of students. They appeared liberated, to call it like that.

2.2. Critical reflection

Logopedagogy

Michael N. W.: After what you described now, I think I have a pretty good picture of what happened in this situation, but I also understand why you said that you did

not have words to explain what happened. Nevertheless, when it comes to the question, “What is good folk high school pedagogy?”, then listening to your story is somehow an *experience of discrepancy* to me (see Lindseth, 2017: 247). In terms of the story or case, I would have expected something completely different compared to what you were telling now. And this is also what makes your narrative so interesting to me, because in what you were describing, pedagogy appears to be absent, at first sight, at least. However, when I reflect further on your story, then there is one aspect that astonishes me. And that is that all the students in this situation unexpectedly experienced some sort of meaning. There was something that they experienced as highly meaningful. And the term *meaningful* I use, in this case, more in the sense of Viktor Frankl’s Logotherapy, which here turns into a Logopedagogy, so to speak – that is, a meaning-oriented pedagogy (see e. g. Frankl, 2000). Among other things, Frankl claims that meaning can never be given; it can only be found, and in this story, the students all of a sudden stumble upon it. What the students came upon was not simply something that made sense to them. It was more. And that *more* was *meaning*. However, there is also something else. There is also some kind of *togetherness* that comes to the fore in this narrative. An improvised, unexpected togetherness, if you will.

Sigurd O.: I think it is almost a compliment when you say that there is no obvious pedagogy in place here. I am sure you are familiar with the story of Meno’s slave as described in one of Plato’s dialogues. In that story, a slave boy who never received any teaching in mathematics could learn to solve a complex geometric problem, with Socrates only posing questions and not teaching him anything. You could call this the Socratic method of not-teaching. It is al-

*Didactics of
“showing, not
telling”*

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most like the Taoist *Wu Wei*, that is *doing by not doing*. You can compare it with writing a film script, where it is often about *showing, not telling*. Showing is kind of doing what you want to say. You also find this in logic with the distinction between *use* and *mention*; that is, again, you can talk about it or you can use/do it. And folk high school pedagogy, to summarize this, is mostly about *using*, so to speak, also called *praxis*, or performing – in action. What we did in this session was use the tools of music in a proper way to obtain an experience that we had not been able to obtain until then. After eight weeks, we suddenly were ready to do that. It was also provoked by these visitors, who had all this camera equipment with them. The moment they came in, the students felt like rock stars.

Key aspects of the narrative

Michael N. W.: What we identified now were certain key aspects, so to speak. You brought up the term *showing, not telling*. I mentioned the topic of *meaning*, that is, the search for meaning or the experience of meaning. And then we also had the aspect of *togetherness*, where you spoke of a special kind of togetherness.

Now, let me suggest assuming that these three aspects – *showing, not telling; meaning* and *togetherness* – are essential in this narrative of yours for it to represent an example of good folk high school pedagogy.

Sigurd O.: Yes, let us assume that.

2.3. Theoretical reflection

3 categories of existential values

Michael N. W.: If we now go a step further in our dialogue, then let's try to relate these three key aspects with theoretical approaches that might be of relevance.

Let us start with the aspect of meaning. Viktor Frankl came up with what he called the search for and the experience of meaning as an essential aspect of human existence

(see *ibid.*). In this respect, he suggested three categories of existential values (see *ibid.*, 1986: 43f). In the first category, we find *experiential values*. For example, in the situation that you described, meaning was experienced without planning it, without expecting it. All of a sudden, the students experienced meaning together. Another example for experiential values would be to climb a mountain top where you enjoy the sunrise, and you experience this as deeply meaningful because it is so beautiful. The second category is about *creative values*. Something that also plays into the situation you described, as it seems, because the students were creating something together. They were creating an atmosphere; they were creating music. The third category, then, is about *attitudinal values*. And here we can ask, how might attitudinal values eventually play into the situation you described? In this respect, I see some kind of connection between *meaning*, *attitudinal values* and what you called *showing, not telling*, which means, you, as the teacher, went into this situation; you picked an instrument, started playing and the students tuned in. Hence, you were showing them by your attitude how to play music together. You did that without many words; rather, your attitude was enough to show them.

Sigurd O.: I could actually have said, “Now we are going to improvise.” For example, I could have told the pianist, “You have to play this and that tune, in this open or loose manner”. However, it is very hard to tell someone to do something, which that person has never done before. Instead, it is much better to do what you expect them to do. Often, when you work with education, you tell your students a lot. You tell and tell because the teaching situation does not allow you to show, does not give room for using what you are telling, and that may be a challenge.

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*Praxis vs.
poiesis*

Michael N. W.: What you point out here appears to be quite essential to me in order to understand why your narrative is an example of good folk high school pedagogy. For what you just said seems to be closely related to the meaning of the term *praxis*. According to Aristotle, *praxis* is a certain form of activity that is opposed to another form of activity, namely *poiesis* (Biesta, 2015: 14f). *Praxis* is any kind of activity that has the goal within itself, for example, to listen to or play music. *Poiesis* is any kind of activity that has its goal beyond itself, for example, building a house, where the building process is not the goal but to live in that house.

You said that you were doing something, and that doing did not have any further purpose or goal beyond that doing, beyond that action. The goal in your described situation was to play together. The purpose was not to practice and rehearse together because of an upcoming concert or so.

Sigurd O.: I agree, but there is an important distinction here, which maybe even represents the core of that story. It has to do with the photographers that were coming. We wanted to show them something, give them motives for their pictures. In fact, I never thought about it like that, but this was what was really new for the students. The presence of the photographers changed the attitude of the students. All of a sudden, they felt like rock stars.

Michael N. W.: I think by saying that you just uncovered another important aspect in that narrative. And that aspect is about *to be seen*. While they were playing together, the students wanted to be seen.

*Definitional
ceremonies*

Sigurd O.: Yes, that is indeed an important aspect. The students felt seen by somebody from outside. They were provided with a bystander's interested eye. And that eye, so to speak, had not been visible there before. They were seen in a totally new way.

Michael N. W.: Do you think that this can be connected with what Myerhoff called *definitional ceremonies* (Myerhoff 1982: 100), where people are telling personal stories, telling who they are, to outsiders? In this approach, the outsider witnesses are then encouraged to retell the parts of the story, which kind of struck them, or which were essential to them. In short, definitional ceremonies, as you know, are about generating and communicating identity. In the case of your story, it was the students telling the photographers as the outsiders who they are, or at least who they can be, namely amazing rock musicians. And the photographers retold this story, so to speak, by making pictures of this situation.

Sigurd O.: I think definitional ceremonies is a great concept in this respect. You and I have written about the relevance of that concept in the context of folk high schools before (see Ohrem & Weiss, 2019: 17f). In general, however, I think that it is challenging to create arenas that allow for definitional ceremonies. It is not something that you just do, like some kind of easy play, because it is something more personal, more serious. The concept originates from Myerhoff's research on Jews in New York after the Second World War. She investigated the situations, settings and arenas where survivors of the Holocaust could tell each other their stories of that time. The main point of this form of storytelling was not the content of these stories, because they all had similar experiences. Rather, the main point of this storytelling, or narration, which often happened spontaneously, was to be seen and heard when you tell your story. The act of telling and being heard helped the listeners to understand who they were. It was an act of defining you – an act of defining your identity. That is what definitional ceremonies are essentially about.

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Also, Nietzsche's idea of *life as an artwork* comes to my mind with respect to the previous story (see e. g. Nietzsche, 1993). In other words, the only thing that matters, according to Nietzsche, is to be the artist of one's life.

What happened in the previous story was the spontaneous creation of an arena for performing in a new way. The students unexpectedly found themselves inside this arena, and the eye of the photographers was what made them seen. It was not my eye, so to speak. It was not me who made them seen. It was this dynamic, this dialectic between the eye of the photographers and what the students were doing together. This is in a way similar to the groups of Jews that Myerhoff investigated that started to tell each other stories. However, a difference may be that the stories of the students, the performing of their narrative, had not been told before, and that it was more immediate and interactive.

Michael N. W.: If I understand you right, then your conclusion is that what happened in that session in terms of a definitional ceremony was nothing else then the creation of an identity-defining or identity-giving arena. Would you agree to that?

Sigurd O.: That sounds quite ostentatious, but I agree; that is what happened.

*Authenticity
and identity*

Michael N. W.: Maybe we could even extend this thought and say that this situation was about authentic identity. What do I mean with that? We are creating and defining our identities all the time, but sometimes we create it according to false assumptions. As an example, I might decide to study medicine in order to become a physician because then I will earn good money. That decision, which indeed is identity-giving ("I am a doctor"), might not be based on the authentic wish to become a physician, however, that is, to help and heal others. In other words, when it comes to

our identity, we are sometimes running around with masks, metaphorically speaking.

In your described case, however, the students obviously experienced meaning, and to experience real meaning, you have to act authentic. You cannot experience meaning if what you are experiencing does not *feel meaningful* to you, that is, it does not work only to pretend. Hence, meaning varies from individual to individual, and it is strongly related to authenticity, that is, to who and how we truly are and want to be (see Frankl, 2000: 14f).

Sigurd O.: I agree, you cannot pretend to experience meaning. You can only pretend to confirm expectations from others, but then you are wearing a mask, you are playing a role. And that does not necessarily give you meaning, of course. *Flow state theory*

However, what appears to be some kind of contradiction in the described case in this regard is that the students actually were playing a role in relation to the photographers. Therefore, my conclusion is that it must be possible to play a role in an authentic way. When you would take a look at one of the photos that were taken in that session, you would see that they were into something. You can see it in their eyes. They don't look like children, even though they were young. No, they looked like jazz or rock musicians who are *in the zone* or *in the flow*, as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi called it in his flow state theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Michael N. W.: I see what you mean, but that makes me wonder whether it really was roles that these students were living authentically, or was it rather that *in* that moment they realized a possibility to live up to an ideal self-image *for* that moment? *The pedagogical concept of Golden Moments*

Sigurd O.: You are right. The concept of roles does not fit properly in this case. The students were not playing roles. *Golden Moments*

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They did something new that resembled rock stars who are improvising.

But there is something else, and I think this happened simultaneously. The whole thing was not individual anymore. Normally, I would tell the students which song we would play, like a piece from The Talking Heads, for example. I would also tell and show each student how to play his or her instrument in that song, and so we would practice. In the case of this story, however, I did not tell them which piece of music to play. Also, we did not practice in advance, but still, the students were playing better than normally. That is maybe the strange thing here, that they did it better than all the other things we had done before. So, what happened? What happened was what I define as the Golden Moment; to me a central concept in order to understand folk high school pedagogy (see Ohrem & Haddal, 2011: 17 or Ohrem & Weiss, 2019: 59). A central aspect of such a Golden Moment is that the situation where it happens, does not only consist of individuals doing something, but that they are doing something together. Hence, it is not only about individuality anymore, but there is some kind of communion that comes to the fore, which might eventually best be described with the Aristotelian proverb, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” (Aristotle, 1991: 1045a.8–10). This communion arises from individual capabilities, but it also transcends them and eclipses into some kind of “ritual”, which manifests something that is magical and almost sacred. Though not in a religious sense, of course.

*Communities
of practice*

Michael N. W.: What you are describing here also seems to relate to what is called *communities of practice* as described by Wenger (1998), which is also a key concept for some authors who wrote about folk high school pedagogy (see e. g. Lövgren, 2020). However, if I understood you

right, then even though the concept of communities of practice and togetherness are central aspects of your narrative, it is not only about being with others and doing something together. There is still more to it. For me, in the way you described this situation, it is also about *presenting oneself to others*. And here my question is: If presenting yourself or something you created together with others, is it a central aspect of folk high school pedagogy in general? For example, one class or group is creating something, and then it is presented to the whole school.

Sigurd O.: The answer is yes, because we do that all the time, for example, in the form of project weeks where the students produce something within their main class. The film class would make a film, the music class would write a song and rehearse it, and so on. And then there is a presentation at the end of such a week.

However, in the previously described case, it was not like that. The students of this session did not work on something in order to present it then. I only told them in advance that some photographers would come to take pictures of them while playing, but we did not prepare for that in any way. And of course, all of these students had seen pictures in music magazines before, with rock stars performing, improvising and so on. Hence, the students had an idea of what the photos could ideally look like. Nevertheless, the performance that they then gave, was not planned, it was not choreographed beforehand, not studied or rehearsed. It just happened spontaneously, and that is what made it unique. If I would have told them that the photographers would come again in one week and the students should do more or less the same thing again, I am sure it would not have worked out in the same way, that is, with the same spirit and magic. And maybe that is actually the point with the previously mentioned *definitional ceremonies* (Myer-

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hoff 1982: 100). If you repeatedly do something, it is easier to do it, but the first time is always the best, so to speak.

Michael N. W.: Let me summarize at this point what we have examined so far. In the beginning, you brought up the term *showing, not telling*. We mentioned the term *to be seen*. Also, *togetherness* was a central aspect we focused on, which in this case is more than what Wenger described as *communities of practice* (see Wenger, 1998) because this kind of togetherness was somehow unique and spontaneous. We also had a closer look at the term *meaning* where Frankl's three categories of values have been mentioned, namely existential values, creative values and attitudinal values (see Frankl, 1986: 43f).

My question now is whether folk high school pedagogy – seen from a more general, universal perspective – is about learning to deal with attitudes or, to use Viktor Frankl's expression, *attitudinal values* (see *ibid.*).

*Educational
inertia*

Sigurd O.: In fact, this is what I wanted to come back to. For what is characteristic in this narrative is the attitude of the students. This attitude, for me, is about non-resistance. Though here I don't use the word resistance in a political sense but rather in the sense of inertia, and metaphorically speaking, one can also find some kind of inertia in education – let's call it *educational inertia* – routines, which is not the same as rituals. In folk high school, you have the times for meals, you have the teaching schedules, you have many different structures and rules, and that provokes educational inertia in this school system. Being aware of that, the teachers for example do not have a strict time schedule anymore for when to take breaks. Rather, they ask the students when they want to take a break. If the students are into something, they can continue with that activity. If they need a break, they can have it. A good part of what is going on in the pedagogical everyday life of the teach-

ers at a folk high school is about removing and eliminating the resistance and inertia from the students, that is, all the barriers towards learning. A concrete example for that would be a teacher who chooses not to do the class in a traditional classroom but in a more casual surrounding like the fireplace room, something which often happens, by the way. But still, you can meet the resistance of single individuals. You face their inertia. Especially young people at the age of around 19 years have so many expectations about themselves and expectations about others' expectations, which generates inertia towards letting go and being free in a pedagogical situation. In other words, many students face challenges when invited to engage in an educational activity due to their fundamental ideas and beliefs of what school and education is. What happened in the described jam session was that all of a sudden, all this inertia disappeared.

Michael N. W.: In other words, all of a sudden, the students could change their attitude. With their new attitude in this situation, they could experience meaning. In this respect, it appears to me that experiencing meaning through one's attitude or through one's change of attitude towards the given situation is a signifying aspect of what you called the Golden Moment, as a pedagogically transformative moment. However, would you say that by getting the chance to get rid of all this inertia in that moment, the students could learn a new way of how to deal with their attitude towards life and towards education in general?

*Pedagogical
relevance of
attitudinal
transformation*

Sigurd O.: At least concerning their attitude towards education, because there is usually a great amount of inertia in this kind of group. They have their experiences from traditional high school, and implicitly, they assume and expect such music classes to be traditional teaching. Of course, I don't want them to have such expectations, but they still

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do. What I figured out, though, in this respect is that for some students, it is easier to let go of this inertia if they drop into the music room in a break and just start to jam with me. While they are doing that, they don't even think about it as a jam; they just play. All of a sudden, they can change their attitude and engage in this activity without educational inertia. However, the next time when they come to music class, this kind of free play, this relieved attitude, is not possible again. Then they are back into their old attitude and see the class as traditional teaching.

The students at folk high schools have many expectations, and hence attitudes, that have been created during and due to their former socialization and their experiences with education. And that is understandable. They have been in this system for 12 years, and even longer if you include their time in kindergarten. Therefore, these expectations and attitudes are deeply grounded in them, and it is not realistic nor fair to expect that they will remove these expectations and change their attitudes in a twinkling.

To stand in the open

Michael N. W.: What you are saying here reminds me of Finn Thorbjørn Hansen's description of *the existential* (see Hansen, 2007: 398). That is, "the experience that the world (and one's life in it) is a mystery. It poses questions (like What is the good life? What is meaning? What is love? etc.) which cannot find final answers, but still it exists, and we are experiencing it. The existential is then, by nature, an open place."¹ (Weiss, 2017: 20) What I am wondering about in this respect is whether folk high school pedagogy is essentially about removing or dissolving existential expectations so that the students can learn to experience *the existential*, that is, to learn *to stand in the open* ("*At stå i det åbne*," as Finn Thorbjørn Hansen called it in Danish (2008))? And with learning *to stand in the open* (ibidem), I

mean an attitudinal development towards an authentic and hence wondering being-in-the-world.

Sigurd O.: Yes, I would say so. When you remove those expectations, you go from inauthentic, even worldly expectations that you acquired due to your socialization, towards a more authentic way of life. You are transforming your attitude towards life from one that *makes sense*, towards one that makes you *find meaning*, to say it with Frankl. However, when you “stand in the open,” then you are confronted with existential questions and attitudinal challenges. And if you answer to them, then this is the answer of your conscience. And with conscience, in accordance with Frankl, I mean an inner voice that calls for you (see Frankl, 2000: 59). And in the existential, in the open, what you are responding to is your inner voice, your conscience. Frankl defined the term *responsibility* in this way, that is, when you are responding to your conscience in terms of your actions, you act responsibly (see e. g. *ibid.*: 29 & 41), not very different from Heidegger’s “call of conscience” (Heidegger, 2008: 317). In this respect also, your research project “Daimonic Dialogues” can be mentioned, which sheds an interesting light on learning to listen to one’s conscience as a central educational goal of folk high school pedagogy (see Weiss, 2021).

*The call of
conscience*

However, when I say all this now about expectations and attitudes that are fostered in the conventional school system, then I, in fact, realize that the folk high schools are already facing a quite challenging situation. And I am afraid it will get worse. In our school, for example, we get more and more used to simply applying teaching techniques. We are establishing structured and planned-through didactical systems, so to speak. For the students, this seems to be fine because they are not used to anything else. In a way, we are feeding their expectations and supporting their inauthen-

tic attitudes. However, these expectations and attitudes are incommensurable with what folk high school pedagogy is about, at least for me. Many students think that when they have learned certain techniques, might it be in guitar playing, in filmmaking, in the gym class, and so on, then they have learned all what was there to learn. When they come to this point, the school year is unfortunately often finished. Then there is no more time left to raise the curtain, so to speak. It is too late to tap into the existential and make them aware that a different attitude towards education and towards life in general is possible.

Educational instrumentalism

Michael N. W.: What you are describing here sounds like educational instrumentalism and you find it everywhere in the school system today. It implies that a student can perform outstandingly according to this system, but still he or she fails the essence of education, or better, of *Bildung* (in Norwegian, “*danning*”). In this way, education today seems to be endangered because if we reduce education, or *Bildung*, to the transference of techniques, you never get to the point that you mentioned previously (see also Helskog & Weiss, 2021). Namely, to stand in the open, and then – and only then – you can start to be confronted by your inner voice, your conscience. Here, the difference between learning a profession and following your calling comes to the fore. A difference that appears to be of utmost importance when it comes to *Bildung* (see Hellesnes, 1992). I think that we all have this intrinsic wish to hear and follow our calling, but at the same time, we are easily fooled by the idea that we can find and follow our calling by merely acquiring techniques and instrumentalistic skills.

Sigurd O.: Yes, therefore it seems to be natural that many students think like that. Many are looking for confirmations for what they have reached. It is a bit like role play

games on the internet, where the goal always is to reach the next level.

Michael N. W.: Maybe we could even conclude that several students do everything perfectly right according to the education system, but they fail to live up to their human potential?

Sigurd O.: Absolutely. I perfectly agree.

Michael N. W.: I think we came quite far now in this dialogue, and, in fact, I think that we can round it up. We investigated your described case from quite illuminating angles and perspectives. Thank you very much for the conversation.

3. Epilogue

The previous dialogue started with an experience about a jam session in a music class where something unexpected happened. Sigurd did not plan anything in advance for this session. He just started with a line, and the other students tuned in. Then, suddenly, a group of journalists and photographers came into the room, taking pictures of that session. For some reason, the students played so well together as never before. After the session was over, none of the musicians had words for what has just happened. But they were overwhelmed by this experience because they realized that they had just done something that they did not think they were capable of.

In the course of this dialogue, that kind of experience was called the Golden Moment. In simple terms, such moments are about having a fundamental insight or revelation about oneself. In that sense, they are enlightening as well as *trans*-formative in nature, and hence formative pedagogically.

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As it turned out during the conversation, Golden Moments cannot be planned in advance or arranged for. Rather, they happen spontaneously and are unforeseen – something that can be challenging for a teacher, since he or she never knows when and if such moments will occur. The only thing one can do is to be open for them and prepare the students to be receptive for them too. Hence, though a teacher cannot organize and plan for Golden Moments, he or she can “provide for” them in terms of his or her attitude. In this respect, the Taoist *Wu Wei* was mentioned, which can be defined as an attitude of doing by not doing, so to speak. Such an attitude must not be mixed up with just doing nothing; rather, it is about embracing the given situation and trying to get all involved into a kind of *flow*. In reference to Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theory (1990), getting into a flow-state has not so much to do with doing or making something as with having the right attitude. In this respect, the investigation performed in the course of this dialogue gives the impression that Golden Moments form a vital aspect of good folk high school pedagogy, and the teacher’s responsibility is to open up a space for them to happen without any guarantee that they will.

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