



Philosophy and concept formation in narrative therapy

An introduction for narrative therapists to Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze.

- keynote presentation at

The European Conference on Narrative therapy and community work
Brighton, the 9th-10th of July, 2009.

Allan Holmgren

holmgren@dispuk.dk, www.dispuk.dk

In this lecture I will speak about some of the inspiration I have got from the leading of three exiting philosophers: Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze. You are just going to hear about a very few of their mind-blowing ideas, and I will try to relate some of the ideas to therapeutic practice. Take this lecture as an appetizer to their work.

The French philosopher Jaques Derrida says in a live interview that you can watch on the "You Tube"-website that philosophy is about BEING. He is asked to say something about love, but he refuses to say anything about love. "Ask me a question," he says, "and then I will se if I have something to say." He makes a distinction between loving *who* and loving *what*. I can love you because you are you or I can love *what* you do, he says. One could say that what Derrida does is immediatly to make distinctions in the categories he uses. He unfolds or opens up the category or the concept of love and creates new categories and concepts. He enriches the first presented word, category or concept. He exemplifies what a philosopher does. I think that one of the challenges for us as narrative therapists is to invite the persons we talk with into the practices of philosophy, to let them become philosophers. Derrida is perhaps doing what the German philosopher Friederich Nietzsche is in his last book, his autobiography that he called *Ecce Homo* (which means *Look – a Human Being*) defined philosophy to be all about:

"Philosophy, as I have so far understood and lived it, means living voluntarily among ice and high mountains – seeking out everything strange and questionable in existence, everything so far placed under a ban by morality.... The *hidden* history of the philosophers, the psychology of the great names, came to light for me.

How much truth does a spirit *endure*, how much truth does it *dare*? More and more that became for me the real measure of value. Error (faith in the



ideal) is not blindness, error is *cowardice*.” (Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, Preface).

Nietzsche himself called his own philosophical practice for “doing philosophy with the hammer.”

I am inspired by Nietzsches thinking because much of what narrative therapy is all about is to go against the taken for granted truth's that we as therapist meet both in the sciences, in the cultures around us and in our consultation room.

I would say that Michael White in a way did therapy with the hammer for instance in the way he talked about encopreses. He called his paper about children who suffered from “sneaky-poo” for “*Pseudo-encopreses*” because the children and the mothers to the children with encopreses did not fit into the official characteristics and signs of the diagnosis encopreses. Michael saw loving and caring parents whereas the official categories and textbooks wrote about over-involved mothers. So Michael decided that the cases he worked with obviously couldn't be real encopreses.

I think that Michael White in the first period of narrative therapy lived “among ice and high mountains”. I think that Michael had the courage of a spirit to *endure* and to *dare* to go against the official psychiatric and psychological moral and values. The essence, the spirit and one of the core values of Narrative therapy – as far as I have understood it – is to go against the taken for granted values and ideas that are common in every culture; that narrative therapy is a revolutionary practice and activity. To do narrative practice means to practice politics with a small “p”, as Michael often talked about his therapeutic practice. Nietzsche also writes about his practice as revolutionary: “We can be nothing else but revolutionaries” (paragraph 5 in *Why I am so clever, Ecce Homo*), he says. He was thinking about the milieu in Germany in the 1850's in general, and in philosophy he was thinking about the heritage from the German philosophers Immanuel Kant and Georg Wilhelm Friederich Hegel that celebrated the notion of “the big idea” that could connect everything. Nietzsche went against the idea of God. He declared the death not only of God but of every science and of every philosophy which thought it had any final answer of anything. He wrote that the idea of God, of the big explanation forbids us to think.

Nietzsche has especially been famous for two things: for the unmasking of power-forces and power-relationships and for his notions of life, the will and the vitality. “Life *activates* the thinking, and the thinking affirms life,” Gilles Deleuze writes about Nietzsches thinking. Nietzsches ideal is the playing and the dancing human being. Not the human being who is negative and caring the burdens on his or her shoulders. Not the slave- or the guilt



mentality, but the person who is open for the experiment, for the “YES” to the world.

“Reversing perspectives” is a phrase often used by Nietzsche. Or to quote Gilles Deleuze. “What else is there?” To reverse the perspectives means to be open to the fact that there is nothing but the *interpretation* and the *evaluation*. From my perspective this approach to life opens up a lot of possibilities. I had a therapeutic conversation with a woman the other day, who said that she had a problem with creating confidence to some other people with whom she worked together: “It is damned hard for me to establish confidence,” she said. “Why should you?” I asked her, “when you can see that you cannot trust the person you are talking about.” This woman had the idea that she should establish confidence to all in her staff and saw it as a weakness in her own personality and skills that she could not do this. My question and my comment made her think, made her see her situation in another perspective: “Of course,” she said. This is very relieving to me. But she continued: “I am taking the things that is happening in my life so very heavy; it is difficult for me to take the things in my life in a more easy way.” With this remark she expressed the evaluation that it was wrong to take some of the issues in her life so heavy and as a burden. From my perspective she had good reasons to be worried about some of the issues in her life, and the problem seemed for me that she reproached herself for taken some of the issues in her life too serious. I said this to her, and she said that this perspective was enormously relieving to her. It was relieving and made the burdens she felt a lot easier to carry when it was OK for her to feel burdened.

“Of my Will to Health and to Life I made my philosophy,” says Nietzsche. “Illness may even act as a powerful stimulus to life.” Nietzsche regarded his own illness as a help to see life afresh, to have a new starting point. Although Nietzsche is a very controversial figure in philosophy and although he is doing philosophy with the hammer, turning all values upside down, insisting that everything is based on values and different perspectives, he is a fundamentally positive and optimistic figure. His philosophy has a lot of optimism focusing on the Will to life, on the power to live a life not as a complaining, negative and worried person but as a person living with his or her senses seeing possibilities and having a power to overcome the daily life and the order in the so-called cultural truths - he called it *moral*. Nietzsche invented the genealogical method: What is the origin? How was this or that social practice and idea produced? Or as we say in narrative therapy: “What is the story? How were you recruited into this? Who introduced you to this” Where did you first experience that life could be different? Was there a place where you could sense yourself and not being dominated by responsibilities and worries?”



Nietzsche was not afraid of having ideals about human beings, which I guess we all have – even if we declare that we don't have or don't want to have ideals – *that* can be the ideal, not to have any ideal. Today it might be political incorrect to have any ideals. Nietzsches ideal of a human being was a bit like the ideal of the old Greek school called the stoics: “..an excellent man of this sort gladdens our senses... He enjoys only what is good for him; his pleasure, his desire, ceases him when the limits of what is good for him are overstepped. .. He knows how to turn serious accidents to his own advantage; whatever does not kill him makes him stronger.... He is a selective principle; he rejects much.” Nietzsche speaks about “deliberate pride”. And don't we who are gathered here have many good reasons to feel *deliberate pride* just because of the fact that this conference is actually taking place? Don't we have good reasons to feel *deliberate pride* that we have the possibilities to continue the work initiated and created by Michael White? I think that we who are gathered here have the skills to enjoy what is good for us. I think that we know how to turn the serious accidents that have happened to us to our advantage. Perhaps Michael Whites death last year can make us even stronger.

Nietzsche is the philosopher of the doubt: “Not doubt, but certainty drives one mad,” he writes (paragraph four in the chapter called Why I am so Clever in *Ecce Homo*). I think that it is the doubt and the curiosity that really drives us as narrative therapist.

“For the task of transvaluing values, more abilities were necessary perhaps than could ever be found combined in one individual; and above all, opposed abilities which must yet not be mutually inimical and destructive.” Nietzsche speaks about the necessity for multiplicity. In the English translation multiplicity is called “tremendously various” which doesn't mean anything chaos-like. Our tasks as therapists and as human beings in general could therefore from a Nietzschean perspective be always to be open to new possibilities, to the unexpected, and not to be guided by our concerns and worries. He called the negative, concerned and moralistic attitude for the resentment, the bitterness, the resentment. He called this attitude a slave-attitude. He saw our tasks as human beings to overcome this resentment and to stick to the playfulness and dance in life.

Nietzsche saw life as consisting forces. Our task is to turn the forces of life into an active state, not a re-active state. The will to power is essential. This has often been misunderstood as a will to dominate. It is the contrary. Nietzsche is talking about a will to do something. He wants to show us that we can always do something, we can always go against the moral of Christianity and other systems of thought that works suppressing for our initiatives and for our power and skills of life. I think that Externalising



Conversations can be understood under this umbrella. When we are externalising a problem we are establishing a force and at the same time a counterforce, for instance if we are asking: “What is good medicine or an antidote to depression?” Our forces in our lives show themselves as different voices, as desire, as demands, as self-criticism, as irritation, as disappointment, as excitement, as joy, as affirmation. These forces pull us in different directions: Should I go to this or to that workshop? Should I have lunch with this or that person or perhaps go shopping for new shoes by myself and don’t tell anyone about it? Should I call home and ask how my children are doing? From a Nietzschean perspective we are not using the concept *context*, but the concept *forces*. There are always many forces at play at one time. There are always something at play that we cannot be aware of. “Consciousness is a surface,” as Nietzsche writes. Could this have been one of the inspirations for Jaques Derrida and his ideas about deconstruction? When Michael White talked about “the absent, but implicit”, and when Art Fischer turns this to “the present, but explicit,” isn’t it obvious that there are inspirations and thoughts from Nietzsche that should not be overlooked?

Michel Foucault read Nietzsches work in the 1950’s and after this reading, he said that he couldn’t stay in France no more. Nietzsche wrote about the real power games in the academia – the personal games, about the masks and that there is nothing behind the masks. Like behind the door in the Swedish play-writer August Strindbergs piece: “A dreamplay”. They are all exited about what is hidden behind the magic door – the door of wisdom. But when the door finally is opened they discover that there is nothing behind it. Foucault left France and stayed for three years in Uppsala, Sweden, where he finished his dissertation *The history of Madness*. Foucault was originally trained as a psychologist and he had worked for some years at psychiatric hospitals. He was interested in power and marginalisation; in the history, the genealogy, of how certain groups of people were marginalised with the help from especially the medical sciences and later on from psychology. Foucault showed the narrow connection between knowledge and power. And we see today, perhaps stronger than ever, that the medical, psychiatric and psychological sciences have many power games going in with the intention to conquer the territories of the human soul – the truth about human beings. One of the interesting things from Foucault that Michael White picked up very early was the idea of modern power; the idea that we take on a certain cultural gaze on ourselves believing that others are looking at us with this gaze. We internalize a generalised moral gaze with moral orders and standards that we should live up to. We have ideas of what it means to be a real therapist, a really good parent and a proper person for the culture we live in. Where traditional power has a centre and a hierarchy so that it can be localised, modern power operates from everywhere and has no centre. Modern power consists

of all the unspoken expectations that we are recruited into through the institutions of the modern and postmodern societies. These institutions are the family, the school, educational institutions, fashion, television, magazines etc. The Swiss philosopher and author Pascal Mercier (his real name when he writes as a philosopher is Pieter Bieri) has written a novel called *Night train to Lisbon*. In this he let the main character, Prado, write a failed farewell letter to his mother in which he among other things write:

“You played a trick on me, Mama, and now I write down what I should have told you a long time ago: it was a perfidious trick that burdened my life like nothing else. That is, you let me know – in no uncertain terms – that you expected from me, your son – *your* son – nothing less than that he be the best. Never mind what, just whatever I did had to surpass the achievements of all others and not only surpass somehow, but tower high above them. The perfidy: you never *said* that to me. Your expectation was never explicit, which would have allowed me to take a position on it, to think about it and argue with my feelings about it. And yet I knew it, for that exists: a knowledge you drop into a defenceless child, drop by drop, day by day, without him noticing in the slightest this silently growing knowledge.” (p. 310 f).

This silently growing knowledge that is put into us drop by drop – this is one literary description of how modern power works. What Michael White did with the concept of externalising conversations was to reverse this process and to separate and make difference between the person and the problem. Externalising conversations are the opposite of internalising conversations. In the internalising conversations the verb “to be” bewitches us, as the Austrian-English philosopher Ludvig Wittgenstein said in 1928. The verb “to be” invites is to say that “we *are*” something: I *am* depressed, anxious, not good enough, happy, satisfied etc. From a Foucault and Nietzschean perspective certain forces have us in their grip whenever we feel something. A feeling is therefore always a moral evaluation starting as a sensation.

Foucault took the concept of power and the concept of genealogy directly from Nietzsche and developed these concepts in many exiting ways. But especially the last six years before he died in 1984 he was concerned with what he called “the self”. He wrote in a seminar text in 1982:

“Perhaps I’ve insisted too much on the technology of domination and power. I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others in the technologies of individual domination, the history of how an individual acts upon himself, in the technology of self.” (*Technologies of the Self*, edited by Martin, Gutman & Hutton, p. 19.) Foucault turns his interest to the way the old Greeks and Romans lived their life and he made



the famous Greek dictum “Know yourself” useful; Foucault explained that this dictum just means: “Do not suppose yourself to be a god.” (ibid.) Don’t we as therapists have the same interest as Foucault speaks about? Aren’t we interested in the practices, the technologies of how both we ourselves and the persons who consult us produce their own life through their actions? This reminds me of a joke: I was walking down fifth avenue in New York, when I stopped to listen to a man playing the saxophone. He played wonderful jazz standards. Actually I was on my way to Carnegie Hall to buy some tickets for a concert. But I was not sure about the direction so I asked the jazz-musician: “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?” And he answered: “Practice man, practice.” Our actions are the technologies through which we produce the persons we become.

Foucault was not just inspired by Nietzsche but also by the German philosopher Heidegger, from whom he among other concepts took the concept of intentionality. We ask questions about intentions and intentionality in narrative therapy when we try to develop subordinate storylines; when we notice an initiative and action outside the dominant plot and the dominant story we often asked the questions: “What would you call what you did? What was your intention with this action?” The actions and the intentions have to be named and to be linked other actions and events to be a part of a story. This is basic knowledge for narrative therapists, I guess. But what is perhaps fundamental for Foucault is that there is nothing in general. He says in the interview called Space. Knowledge and Power in 1983 that:

“Nothing is fundamental. That is what is interesting in the analysis of society. That is why nothing irritates me as much as these inquiries – which are by definition metaphysical – on the foundations of power in a society or the self-institution of a society, etc. These are not fundamental phenomena. There are only reciprocal relations, and the perpetual gaps between intentions in relation to one another.” (*The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow, p. 247)

I will underline the sentence: *There are only reciprocal relations, and the perpetual gaps between intentions in relation to one another.* The central concept here seems to me to be the concept of intentions, intentionality. And that there are always gaps between intentions. I can feel these gaps between intentions in myself, in my own relation to myself, and in my reciprocal relations to other persons. These gaps can be understood as differences between places. Gilles Deleuze presents the idea that we can never speak with each other or understand each other because we are always speaking from different places. We can only inspire each other as a gust of fresh air.



Foucault was interested in how we constitute our identity through ethical techniques from the antiquity through Christianity and until now. The ethical questions become relevant when we ask: What are we producing together? What am I doing that might have certain effects on you? What are you doing that has certain effects on others? What are my ethical concerns and responsibilities in relation to my actions? What are you doing that has certain effects and what are your thoughts about these questions? Questions like these are often relevant in therapeutic conversations. It is questions about intentions and questions about effects of intentions and actions that focus on relationships. From one perspective the intentions are primary, from another perspective the effects of the actions are primary. But Foucault's perspective is not a pessimistic perspective. It is an activist perspective. Foucault's concept of power is constituted by the concept of freedom. You can always do something. And we *are* always doing something in order to maintain our freedom, our sense of self, or – as Alan Jenkins phrases it – our sense of integrity,. As there is no absolute power, there is no such thing as absolute freedom. Freedom consists of possibilities, of multiplicity. Or as Michael White often said in his seminars: Life is multi-storied. And Gilles Deleuze says: Give me possibilities – or I'll die.

In his book on Foucault, Gilles Deleuze writes that Foucault defines power as

“a relation between forces.” (p. 59) “Force is never singular but essentially exists in relation with other forces, such that any force is already a relation. That is to say power: Force has no other object or subject than force.” (Ibid) When we are working as therapists and social workers (or as I prefer to call our profession: Conversation workers), we are working with forces, we are in the midst of dramas – the dramas of the discourses. The forces show or disclose themselves in the discourses, in the promises of the discourses, in the threats of the discourses. “Foucault's key historical principle is that any historical formation says all it can say and sees all it can see,” writes Deleuze (*Negotiations*, p. 96) Power is the nonformal element that resides in the discourses. Power is the hidden rule that allows something to be seen and said and excludes other discourses. The statements have the primacy over what can be seen and said. This is why it is so important in therapy to investigate the power of the old stories and their regime of statements and their effects of peoples sense of who they are, and to establish new stories with new possibilities, not to give the new and preferred stories any privilege over the old stories – but to create possibilities for resistance. With Foucault we know that any experience is caught up in relations of power (Deleuze: *Foucault*, p. 92. There are no innocent places, as Art Fischer so often has pointed out. The task of the therapist and the social worker is together with the persons he is co-producing with to practice curiosity as care in relation



to the different forces and unmask the effects of them to make it possible for the persons to take a position and to make resistance in relation to these moral forces.

With the concept of resistance we have come the last of the exiting poststructuralist philosophers that I want to talk about today and who constantly inspires my thinking and my practice. I talk about Gilles Deleuze. He dares to define life in relation to power and forces. Where Foucault took up Nietzsche's ideas about power and genealogy, Deleuze takes up and develops the vitalistic and creative parts of Nietzsche's work. "Is not life this capacity to resist force?" Deleuze asks (*Foucault*, p. 77). Deleuze quotes Foucault for saying that life is those functions that resists death. This is not a new idea in philosophy. Deleuze often quotes the Dutch philosopher Spinoza (Born 1636 in Amsterdam) for saying that there are "no telling for what a human body might achieve, once freed from human discipline" (*Foucault*, p. 77)

The primary task for philosophy, and for therapy I would add, is to create concepts. This is the way Deleuze defines philosophy. A philosopher, and a therapist as well, I would add, is a creative person creating new concepts. A narrative therapist is not the one who creates the concepts for the persons he works with; it is task of the narrative therapist to make the persons he talks with come up with new words, new concepts about the events in their life, about the forces in their life, about the actions in their life. A new word is like a fresh seed at the ground of discussion, as Ludwig Wittgenstein said. This concept-formation, these concepts, are the building stones, the stepping stones for the stories that carefully and cautiously are created in our laboratories – our consultation rooms. Narrative therapists do not reflect, they think and invite others to think. To reflect is like shopping in a second hand shop. According to Deleuze our task is not to reflect, but to create. He writes: "To think means to experiment and to problematize." (*Foucault*, p. 95) "Creating a flash of lights in the midst of words." (*ibid*, p. 96). Michael White so often talked about the stretching of the mind, about mental gymnastics. This is what we aim at when we try to practice concept formation and scaffolding, when we go from very low distancing where the persons say what "it" is *not*, over low distancing, when the persons can give a proper name to and a concept for their actions and to their experiences to very high distancing, where principles and problem solving and thoughts about what life is all about might take place. We are not interested in reflection, but in concept formation, in the naming of the plots of the many crisscrossing narratives that a life consists of. We are interested in processes of creating something that hasn't been here before. As narrative therapists we are interested in creating processes in which those who are involved are becoming someone else than who they were. Like after we have seen a good film (– like the new film by the Danish Directo Lars von



Trier *Antichrist*) or a remarkable piece of art – like Francis Bacons paintings of faces or a brilliant piece of music – whether it is Pink Floyd, Bach, Eagles or Niels Henning Ørsted Petersen.

You might call Deleuze a philosopher of art, a philosopher of always creating intensities. To him life is not primarily a question about truths, but about intensities and affirmation. He has both of these concepts (intensity and affirmation) from Nietzsche. Life is not about acknowledgement, but about affirmation. Acknowledgement is a Hegelian concept, but affirmation is a Nietzschean concept. Life *consists* of affirmation. **”Everything I have written is vitalistic, I do at least hope so, and is a theory about the sign and the event,”** Deleuze wrote. In the famous book *What is philosophy*, which he wrote together with his friend the French psychiatrist Felix Guattari, they outline what the tasks of philosophy are, and here I suggest that some of these task also are relevant for our narrative therapeutic work. They write among other things, that **“Of course, new concepts must relate to our problems, to our history, and, above all, to our becomings.” (p. 27)** You might ask: what is a concept? They say that a concept has no meaning if it isn’t related to other concepts. And they also say that every concept is related to other concepts that are related to a problem. This gives us a fantastic task as therapist: Our task is to map and document all the concepts and the lines between these concepts and their implications for actions, for living a life. A subject, according to Deleuze consists of many lines that crosses each other.

The point of departure in narrative work is always in a problem, in a *particular* problem. Not in a general problem. This is exactly the same point that Jerome Bruner points out several places in his book *Making Stories: Law Literature, Life*: Great literature is about problems and is not a teaching in problem solving.

The thought for Deleuze is always condensed around a problem; originality has to do with pointing out, seeing, naming the problem. This is what we do in narrative therapy: What would you call the problem with and experience near name?

Any empirical multiplicity that surrounds us can consist of a problem in organising its elements. The first task in narrative work is to formulate the problem and set up the scene for the event that can articulate it.

Deleuze puts an emphasis on the *accidental*, on what happens here and now – away from the essential.

In stead of the traditional and transcendental concept of Being he speaks about **The Event** (the episode). The Being is always existing through events



of multiplicity and of becoming and has never a fixed meaning. The event doesn't exemplify or show back to some "deeper" meaning or structure, but has a certain vital impulse, a direction or possible movement.

In stead of reason he speaks about **The Movement**, the flight. Deleuze doesn't speak about discourses the way that Foucault stresses this concept, but much more about lines of flight. A concept can be such a line of flight with which we can fly over our landscapes or plateaus of life.

In stead of Truth he speaks about **Intensity**. Intensity can be understood as the force through which the virtual is actualised in the event.

The empirical is not always visible, but all the multiple forces that are at work in what is show themselves in the event, in the actual (all the "voices", forces, longings, strivings, hopes, intentions, norms and promises)

The work of thinking is to create concepts, and concepts are like lines of flight, lines of possibilities. The creation of concepts is like establishing a line or a fold, or it is like folding a line in which I can live; it might take me, fly me to the moon or to planes, plateaus or territories in which I want to live or prefer to live. Or several concepts might clean up or light the place, the territory I am in at the moment.

The forces of the concepts are capable to move us and to change our habits and ways of understanding, and the way we live our lives. It is through the concepts we use that we become the persons we are. Or as he writes **"to catch someone in the act of telling tales is to catch the movement of constitution of a people."** (*Negotiations*, p. 125f)

At this conference we are telling tales. At this conference we are constituting ourselves as a people. In our therapy rooms persons are constituting themselves as "a person". At this conference we are facing several problems: Why should we meet? How to go against loneliness and separation from each other? Where shall we meet the next time? We have to make concepts and explanations that makes sense to us to continue to come to conferences like these. We have to be creative. We have to participate actively and with vitality not to fall asleep, not to die. But, as Deleuze and Guattari writes: **"A concept also has a *becoming* that involves its relationship with concepts situated on the same plane."** (p.18). You might say that we are here at this conference these days because of several problems in the field of narrative therapy. It is a problem that Michael White died last year. And it is a problem for us to go on. But we have no other choice in affirming life in Michaels spirit.



I think that we can say the same about us, about this group of narrative therapists who are here today as Deleuze and Guattari says about the concept: **“The concept is defined by its consistency... but has no reference: it is self-referential; it posits itself and its object at the same time as it is created. Constructivism unites the relative and the absolute.” (p. 22).** If every concept is self-referential and if every network of concepts is self-referential – Deleuze uses here the metaphor of the rhizome (a rhizome is like the roots of a plant, like the grass that creeps in the sand, it is like the network of neurons over the brain) – this explains why it is so difficult to establish understanding and consensus: Where there is consensus there is lie, says the Danish philosopher Ole Fogh Kirkeby. There are only differences.

We are together at this conference and we will probably stick together as long as there is some sense of consistency, as long as we act the same way as Deleuze describes the way concepts act: **“A concept throws out bridges to other concepts.” (p. 26)** This is perhaps the only thing we can do – to throw out bridges to each other. In this sense we can never speak about mutual understanding; we can only speak about the bridges that we have to each other. Perhaps it is these bridges we experience as resonance in the outsiderwitness practice.

Deleuze was never interested in arguing – we are always speaking from different places, he said. I find this very liberating and in full consistency with both Nietzsche and Foucault. Arguing is like fighting. You always argue from feelings of resentment, if you take a Nietzschean perspective. You can exercise the discipline of arguing in the academic world, if you like this practice. But I certainly cannot recommend it. I will in Nietzsches spirit invite you to play and to dance and to experiment both at this conference and in life in general and not to be directed by feelings of resentment, seriousness and worries.

Today I have tried to give you a sense of some of the inspiration we as narrative therapists can get from the philosophy founded by Nietzsche and further expanded by Foucault and Deleuze .- an optimistic philosophy that focuses on forces, power, discourse, play, multiplicity, conflictuality, dance, concepts, lines of flight, complexity and singularity – not on any general law, structure or system – but on the actual lived life. There are enormous reservoirs of concepts and ideas to get into. I do hope that this appetizer have given you some inspiration to go further into these exiting, and sometimes difficult texts. I wish you all a wonderful conference with a lot of playing, dancing, experimenting, movement and many lines of flight.