

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF CHILDHOOD: WHAT IS WANTING TO EMERGE?

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SUMMARY

This chapter is inspired by the book by Otto Scharmer and Katrin Kaufer (2013) entitled 'Leading from the Emerging Future, From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies'. In the first half of the chapter I will summarise the body of thought in this book:

- Scharmer and Kaufer present an analysis of the current challenges of mankind and the way these could be addressed. They argue that it has become clear that the approach of solving problems sector by sector does not work anymore.
- Another element of their approach is historical and sociological. They argue that throughout our history we as mankind have formed certain types of societies: each new form is more complex and more sophisticated than the previous one. For example, they outline the following types: the 1.0 State-Centric Society, the 2.0 Free Market Society, the 3.0 Social Market Society and the 4.0 Co-creative Society. The emergence of each new type of society was the response to the challenges that had appeared in the previous type of society and each type is linked to a certain way of seeing the world of the people in that society.
- The approach put forward by Scharmer and Kaufer is that we need an ecosystem type of awareness, which goes together with the 4.0 Co-creative Society, to tackle the global challenges with which we are currently confronted.

In the second part of the chapter I have taken the approach of Scharmer and Kaufer and have applied it to the field of children and childhood in general, and as a second step, I have focused on the situation of families. What new insights regarding policies for and initiatives regarding children, childhood and families emerge when taking this path of thought?

INTRODUCTION

The movement that strives to improve the Quality of Childhood can be considered as a stream of a much bigger movement, which aims to create a sustainable and peaceful world where people live in harmony with each other and with the earth. In that context I am constantly looking for people, initiatives and publications in adjacent areas in this broad movement, because intuitively I understand that when the Alliance for Childhood can attune to this broader movement the whole will be stronger than the sum of the parts.

1 OTTO SCHARMER AND KATRIN KAUFER AS PATHFINDERS

In this context in November 2014 at the Antwerp Book Fair I was very lucky to discover the (Dutch translation of) the book by Otto Scharmer and Katrin Kaufer (2013) entitled 'Leading from the Emerging Future, From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies'. The present chapter is based on this book in the sense that in paragraph one I will first summarize the body of thought which both authors present and I will then apply their approach to the domain of children and childhood. What new ideas will emerge through this approach?

The introductory chapter of the book is entitled: “Breathing Life into a Dying System”. In this chapter they reflect on our current civilization, which is based on a “mindset of ‘maximum me’ – maximum material consumption, bigger is better, and special-interest-group-driven decision making that has led us into a state of organized irresponsibility, *collectively creating results that nobody wants* (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013, p.1)”.

Their approach consists of four large clusters of looking and analyzing the global problems and of taking collective action to do something about these:
Cluster 1: Metaphors: the three Icebergs or the three Landscapes of Pathology.
Cluster 2: Looking below the waterline of the Iceberg: structures and systemic limits.

Cluster 3: The Matrix of Economic Evolution and the Mental Models connected with various Developmental Stages of the Economy.

Cluster 4: ‘Theory U’ or ‘Presencing’.

1.1 Metaphors: the three Icebergs or the three Landscapes of Pathology

Scharmer and Kaufer look at the whole picture of problems on our earth, to which they refer as ‘landscapes of pathologies’. We can only clearly see 10 percent of these problems, the other parts are below the water-line as is the case with an iceberg. They distinguish three landscapes of pathology and describe them as follows:

- the Ecological Divide
- the Social Divide
- the Spiritual-Cultural Divide (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013, p. 4 and 5)

The Ecological Divide

The ecological divide is caused by depleting and degrading the ecological capacities of the earth: mankind takes more than the ecosystems can regenerate. This means that these systems are gradually breaking down. Climate change is only one aspect in this context. Humanity cannot continue in this way, or else we will experience all kinds of feedback reactions. With the expression Ecological Divide Scharmer and Kaufer point to the gap between the current behaviour of mankind and the required behaviour that will keep the ecosystem of the earth intact.

The Social Divide

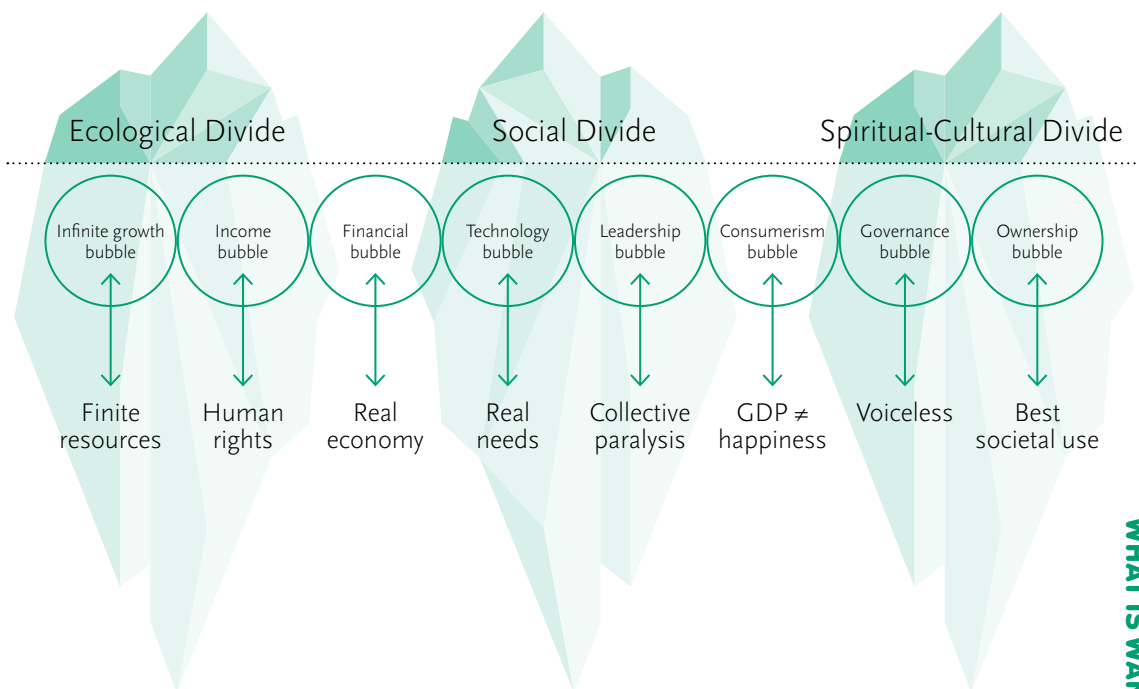
With this expression the authors refer to the gap between, on the one hand the proportion of the world population that lives on less than US\$2 per day, and on the other hand, to the 1% of the global population that owns a substantial share of the total wealth in the world.

The Spiritual-Cultural Divide

With Spiritual-Cultural Divide the authors are referring to the gap between, on the one hand, how a person is at a given moment, and, on the other hand, how that person would be if he or she were to attain his / her unique and greatest potential. Most people hold themselves back for so many reasons: because somebody told them in their youth that they were not gifted in a certain area, or that people do not take a certain initiative because of the perceived risks involved, and so on.

Figure 1 ¹

The Metaphor of the three Icebergs or the three Landscapes of Pathology; the Ecological, the Social and the Spiritual-Cultural Divide. Adapted from 'Leading from the Emerging Future, From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies' (p.7).



1.2 Cluster 2: Looking below the waterline of the Iceberg: structures and systemic limits

Above the waterline we see symptoms, but below the waterline there are structures, that are not directly visible. Regarding the term structures Scharmer and Kaufer (2013, p. 44) say the following:

“... in an organization, a departmental structure defines the division of labor and people’s professional identities. In a modern society, the governmental, business, and non-governmental sectors all develop their own ways of coordinating and self-organizing in a rapidly changing intertwined world. A structure is a pattern of relationships. If we want to transform how our society responds to challenges, we need to understand the deeper structures that we continue to collectively reenact.”

Remaining with the iceberg metaphor Scharmer and Kaufer (2013, p. 45) distinguish another layer, positioned under the structural causes, and they call this the systemic limits. With the expression ‘systemic limits’ Scharmer and Kaufer refer to the underlying philosophy in this context: on a systemic level the solution is to learn to live within the ecological potential of the earth. According to this analysis, increasing awareness of systemic limits in various spheres of life and finding solutions to these limits is the current task of mankind.

1.3 Cluster 3: The Matrix of Economic Evolution and the Mental Models connected with various Developmental Stages

Scharmer and Kaufer (2013, p. 11) discovered that the above mentioned challenges are created by human thinking. In this context they refer to the saying attributed to Albert Einstein which reads as follows:

“We cannot solve the problems with the same kind of thinking that created them.”

Furthermore they state (p. 11): “Thinking creates the world. The structures of yesterday’s economic thought manifest in the structures of today’s institutions and actions. If we want to upgrade our global economic operating system, we need to *start* by updating the thinking that underlies it; we need to update the essence of *economic logic and thought*.”

Within the metaphor of the iceberg Scharmer and Kaufer (p. 11) refer to this type of thinking with expressions such as ‘thinking’, ‘mental models’, or ‘paradigms of economic thought’. We could also speak about ‘lenses’ with which we look at the world.

With our mental models we not only create the world of tomorrow, but also the type of economy that we will live in.

Scharmer and Kaufer (2013, p. 51-57) explain that since prehistoric times mankind has lived in different types of societies and in this context they distinguish the following types:

- State-centric societies. This type of society is governed by a powerful king/leader who takes care of the order in society. The pharaonic states are an example in this respect, but also medieval states in Western Europe fall into this category as do the mercantile states or the socialist state and capitalist state societies. According to the categorisation of Scharmer and Kaufer these are 1.0 type of societies.
- The next phase of development emerges when the free market economy takes off. In Western Europe this occurred around 1500. The characteristics are: a laissez-faire economy with an ego-centric awareness. This phase is called a 2.0 type of society.
- The next phase of development emerges when the societies are faced with the negative consequences for society of this laissez-faire economy: the exploitation of the labourers and their families and the exploitation of the natural environment. Because of these negative externalities people started to organise themselves politically and thus acquired a voice in the decision making process. According to the terminology of Scharmer and Kaufer, the 3.0 Social Market type of economy had emerged, which is characterised by a stakeholder-centric awareness, a dialogue between the most important stakeholders and the emergence of norms for all sorts of processes.
- However, economic developments move on relentlessly and the toolkit of the 3.0 Social Market Society cannot cope any more with the various challenges. A new type of society is necessary to face these challenges. Scharmer and Kaufer call it the 4.0 Society with an ecosystem driven co-creative economy.

We are all aware of these different types of societies and phases in economic development. The new element that Scharmer and Kaufer, and also Don Beck (2006), have brought into this narrative is the notion, that not only added value is created in the economy in a certain way, but also that the type of the economy is linked to a kind of consciousness or awareness of the people in that society.

Regarding the transition from a Society 2.0 to a Society 3.0 Scharmer and Kaufer (2013, p. 65) remark:

“... just as a hundred years ago the crisis of the 2.0 laissez-faire market economy catalyzed a whole new wave of institutional innovations that today we associate with the 3.0 social-market economy.”

Scharmer and Kaufer furthermore make it clear to the reader that each of the above mentioned phases of economic and societal development has its own way of looking at economic questions of producing goods and services and of consuming and investing in them and the distribution thereof. At present mainstream economic thinking is still linked to the 2.0 type of society or the 3.0 Social Market type of economy. They make it clear that the 4.0 type of society, where people have an ecosystem awareness, will bring forth a new type of economic theory. The philosophical basis of this new economic theory is the will to protect the ecological integrity of the earth and the respect for each human being on the earth and the whole of mankind.

Table 1 presents the Matrix of Economic Evolution and the Mental Models connected with various Developmental Stages (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013, p. 74). The text in pink indicates the critical challenge in the development phase in question and in the first column the mental models are described that form the philosophical basis of the developmental stage in question. According to this analysis, co-creation should be a key goal and strategy in our present society while moving from ego-centric awareness to eco-centric awareness.

The key message of paragraph 1.3 is summarised in Table 1 on the next two pages.

Table 1 ²

The Matrix of Economic Evolution.

From 'Leading from the Emerging Future, From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies'.

STAGE	NATURE	LABOUR	CAPITAL	TECHNOLOGY	LEADERSHIP	CONSUMPTION	COORDINATION	OWNERSHIP
0.0 Communal: • <i>Premodern Awareness</i>	Mother Nature	Self-sufficiency	Natural capital	Indigenous wisdom	Community	Survival	Community	Communal
1.0 State-Centric: • Mercantilism • State Capitalism • <i>Traditional Awareness</i>	Resource	Serfdom, slavery	Human capital	Tools: Agricultural Revolution	Authoritarian (sticks)	Traditional (needs-driven)	Hierarchy and control	State
2.0 Free Market: • Laissez-Faire • <i>Ego-Centric Awareness</i>	Commodity (land, raw materials)	Labor (commodity)	Industrial capital	Machines: first Industrial Revolution (coal, steam, railway)	Incentives (carrots)	Consumerism: mass consumption	Markets and competition	Private: exchange of private ownership in markets
3.0 Social Market: • Regulated • <i>Stakeholder-Centric Awareness</i>	Regulated commodity	Labor (regulated commodity)	Financial capital (externality blind)	System-centric automation: second Industrial Revolution (oil, combustion engine, chemicals)	Participative (norms)	Selectively conscious consumption	Networks and negotiation	Mixed (public-private)
4.0 Co-Creative: • Distributed • Direct • Dialogic • <i>Eco-Centric Awareness</i>	Eco-system and commons	Social and business entrepreneurship	Cultural creative capital (externality-aware)	Human-centric technologies: third Industrial Revolution (renewable energy and information technologies)	Co-creative (collective presence)	CCC: collaborative, conscious consumption	ABC: awareness-based collective action	Shared access to services and common resources

1.4 Cluster 4: Theory U and Presencing

In a change process, it is not as essential what is done or how it is done as why it is done. The latter refers to the inner place from which we operate. Learning methodologies traditionally rely on learning from the past, whereas learning from the emerging future has no methodology. Scharmer and Kaufer describe the dependence of the results of a change on the level of the awareness of people promoting the change with a U shape picture and the concept of 'presencing'. The concept of 'presencing' "is a blended word combining the words sensing (feeling the future possibility) and *presence* (the state of being in the present). It means sensing and actualizing one's highest future possibility – acting from the presence of what is wanting to emerge" (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013, p. 19).

The U process starts from the top of the left-hand side of the U with copying superficially what others have said or written. One step down in the U involves seeing the issue with fresh eyes. Going further down in the U brings opening one's mind, heart, and will, and at the bottom of the U, a personal relationship to the matter may result in the question: what could I personally do with this matter? Going up the right-hand side of the U involves creating a vision about the need for a change, developing action plans and finding partners, and on the top of the right-hand side of the U, the execution of action that is internally guided and motivated.

2 LEADING FROM THE EMERGING FUTURE, THE CASE OF CHILDREN AND CHILDHOOD

In the second part of the chapter I will explore what new ideas can be developed regarding children and childhood when we follow Scharmer and Kaufer's approach. The authors urge the readers and the users of their approach to investigate for themselves the Inner Place from which they operate. I will elaborate on this below.

As a second step I will try to explore the contours of families in the various developmental stages, including stage 4.0.

2.1 The Inner Place from where the Alliance for Childhood operates

In April 1997 I decided to start to work on the theme of children and childhood. At that time I had a family with three adolescent boys and in that context I discovered that governmental organisations, including schools, were often not acting in the best interests of my children. Little by little I started to act as an advocate for my own children, and then I realised that so many other children did not receive this type of support and that prompted me to become active in a more general way. In that period I was a senior project manager at the Unico Banking Group for three days a week and for two days a week I ran my own consultancy company. For example, I organised conferences and training events in the Netherlands with people like Lester Brown, Ted Gaebler and Professor Peter Checkland. I called my work at that time: 'learning on the level of society'. At the time I had no clue about how to approach the subject of childhood because every article in the paper and every book on the subject that I read approached the theme differently. So I decided to suspend my judgment, and I just started to collect all press articles and archived them, trusting that at a certain moment it would dawn on me how to approach the task. The labels in my archive were as follows:

- children and families
- children in primary school
- children and alcohol
- migrant children
- child labour
- children as citizens
- child friendly cities
- children as consumers
- children as a target group for corporate marketing
- children and dolphins etc.

And indeed, at a certain moment it came to my mind that I should not only look at children, but also at the various environments of the child and the many relationships between all the protagonists in the life of a child and the child him/herself. At that time I also discovered the book by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) entitled 'The Ecology of Human Development, Experiments by Nature and Design'. This book opened new vistas to me. I understood that we could follow the same approach as the ecologists who study and preserve nature. In our case we would call it 'the ecology of the child', and instead of studying the habitats of animals and plants we would

study the habitats of children and adolescents and work on the preservation and improvement of these habitats.

At that time I read this remark about Bronfenbrenner's book somewhere:

Bronfenbrenner's book is impractical and cannot be used in the real world because as humans we have no possibility to improve the environment of the child or the whole of society. This challenge is too big and too complex³.

My conclusion was exactly the opposite: if we want to help children to unfold and to flourish the best we can do for them is to ensure that the environment in which they grow up is constantly being improved.

From that moment onwards my approach was based on this insight:

- to continuously gather new insights about what constitutes a better quality of the environment of the child;
- what kind of actions can we develop to change our society in this respect and what strategies can we pursue?

This was my moment at 'the bottom of the U'. This was 18 years ago and I have undertaken many activities and helped to organise many conferences since then. In 2006 I left the employment of the Rabobank and Unico Banking Group and was in a position to work full time on the topic of 'Improving the Quality of Childhood', as we have called this ecological movement concerning children since 2007. In 2006 in Brussels Christopher Clouder and I co-founded the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group, which now has 29 members in 16 countries and the Working Group on the Quality of Childhood in the European Parliament (QoC), which has convened 55 times since December 2006. The book series 'Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe', of which this book is the sixth volume, is the flagship publication of the Alliance for Childhood group and the Working Group in the Parliament. The Alliance for Childhood and the QoC form together a learning community in the field of the Quality of Childhood, but it is also a learning community for our own personal development. Together we hold a space where we have a continuous dialogue on the Quality of Childhood, brief each other on important innovations anywhere in the world, and we stimulate each other to carry on with our advocacy work⁴.

In this group we have a culture whereby we look at all aspects of the Quality of Childhood and ask ourselves how these came about, how the phenomena manifest themselves, what the root causes are, and we scan together what is happening in the world to find successful approaches that can be replicated elsewhere.

Scharmer and Kaufer (2013) made the discovery that people act on the basis of mental models. They call them 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0. I made the same discovery but approached it slightly differently (Matthes, 2013). This discovery was that each individual and each organisation has an image of the child on the basis of which he/she/it acts. This view does not say how people and organisations should look at the child, it only aims to increase an awareness of the image of the child which is being held and encourages people to put this into words in

order to facilitate a dialogue with peers. This insight spurred the Alliance for Childhood on to be more explicit about the image that we hold. Please find below our description:

- The child is endowed with his/her inner potential to grow, learn and communicate, and to participate in his/her own way and with his/her own rights in our human society.
- The child is not an object that must be pushed and modeled into a shape that pleases the adult. The child is an agent of his/her own life, but in relation with others.
- Adults who are sensitive to the child's needs help him/her to unfold his/her uniqueness.
- Human development is a process of unfolding an individual's uniqueness in which mutually interacting biological, psychological, social, cultural, and societal factors are involved.

2.2 Exploring the contours of families in the various developmental stages

Scharmer and Kaufer (2013, p. 74) have described the developmental stages of our societies and the underlying types of awareness that correspond to these various stages. In this paragraph I will investigate these stages from the point of view of the family. The nature of my text is speculative, because it is not based on literature research. The purpose of the exercise is to explore the contours of the lifestyle of families with an ecosystem awareness and to look at how the lifestyle of the family has moved from one developmental stage to another.

Elaborating on families with an ecosystem awareness:

Families with this awareness will live in an ecologically conscious way, which means that they will have a limited ecological footprint.

Scharmer and Kaufer (2013, p. 74) indicate that ecosystem awareness is characterised by a co-creative lifestyle, in which collective presencing is being applied. In these collective presencing sessions the children in the family will fully participate and often they will come up with the ideas about what direction to take and which actions to undertake.

The parents will also have the wish to let their children go to a school that is based on a co-creative and ecosystem approach. The parents will be much involved in the school and the way the school is run. The raising of the children will take place in a co-creative way with an elaborate cooperation between the parents, the teachers, the management of the school and the children themselves. Each member in the family will be helped to flourish and to unfold and to live according to the 'Me', or said differently in accordance with the unique potential of the person in question, instead of the small 'me'; i.e. living in accordance with the views of the dominant stakeholders in society.

The families are aware that mankind has to transform its lifestyle quite quickly in order to prevent ecological catastrophes. They will be active participants in all sorts of local, national and international platforms such as the Slow Food Movement, Fair Trade, socially responsible investing, collaborative consumption, but also in the various environmental and human rights advocacy organisations and political parties.

The internet will play a central role in the lives of these families to enable them to coordinate their activities with so many other stakeholders and actors.

The key messages of paragraph 2.2 are summarised in Table 2 on the next two pages'.

Table 2

The Matrix of Family Evolution in relation to the Developmental Stages. The cells' definitions are based on Table 1 by Scharmer and Kaufer (2013) and relevant texts connected therewith (p.51-57), except for the rightmost column.

STAGE	DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT STAGE	MAIN CHALLENGE ADDRESSED	DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE SOCIETY IN THIS DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE:	DESCRIPTION OF THE FAMILY IN THIS DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE
1.0 State-Centric: • Mercantilism • State Capitalism • <i>Traditional Awareness</i>	Societies with a strong central power like the pharaonic states, the kingdoms in the Middle Ages, but also societies like the former USSR or China.	The challenge for the people was chaos, war, violence, instability etc and by working together they managed to create a better society, characterised by stability and a strong governing hand.	1 Coordination mechanism: central power 2 Institutions that are created: central power 3 Main source of power: sticks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A father figure is the dominant person in the family, and has the power and the authority to punish and to reward. He takes the decisions about the use of the available labour and how and by whom the available output will be consumed and / or invested. The downside of this type of family is similar to that described in column (3). The place of a person in society is mainly determined by his/her birth.
2.0 Free Market: • Laissez-faire • <i>Ego-Centric Awareness</i>	If a 1.0 type of society is successful then , at a certain moment, people will start to strive for more individual freedom, and this ambition will lead to the next phase of development: the emergence of the 2.0 Free Market / Laissez-faire type of society	The 1.0 type of society was for a certain phase of development a good form, but when this society is thriving and experiences a further development then the downside of it is felt: too many rules are imposed on the people, constraining individual freedom and development.	1 Coordination mechanism: the market 2 Institutions that are created: property rights, banking systems, trading and industrial corporations, suburbs, highways and train networks, air travel 3 Main source of power: sticks and carrots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families become upwardly and downwardly mobile. The position of the family in society is determined by the economic success of, in first instance, the father, and later also the mother. The beginning of mass consumption, consumerism, commuting from home to work. This societal shift has a profound impact on family life: the use of time, the holidays, the car, the relationship between the spouses, and between the spouses and the children, the ecological footprint, the perceived meaning of life. Downside: the Ecological Divide, the Social Divide and the Spiritual-Cultural Divide.
3.0 Social Market: • Regulated • <i>Stakeholder-Centric Awareness</i>	In response to the challenge, mentioned in the next column, the people will re-organise the governance of their society by involving new stakeholders in the decision making processes, hence the emergence of the Social Market type of society. The societies in Western Europe and the USA in the 20th century are examples of this.	The full flourishing of a 2.0 type of society will probably lead to the exploitation of other human beings (slavery and underpaid workers) and the abuse of the ecological environment.	1 Coordination mechanism: the market + negotiations between interest groups 2 New institutions: labour unions, NGO's, human rights organisations 3 Main source of power: sticks, carrots and norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of social security systems and old age pensions have a profound impact on family life as do the restoration of city centres, social housing, the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child etc. Downside: the Ecological Divide, the Social Divide and the Spiritual-Cultural Divide.
4.0 Co-Creative: • Distributed • Direct • Dialogic • <i>Eco-Centric Awareness</i>	The natural self interest of the players extends to a shared awareness of the eco-system. Internalization of the views and concerns of other stakeholders. It requires people to develop the capacity to perceive problems from the perspective of others. The result is decisions and outcomes that benefit the whole system, not just a part of it.	The flourishing of the 3.0 type of society has led to a affluent consumption society in many parts of the world. This has led to an exploitation of workers in different places and the disruption of the global eco-system and climate change.	1 Coordination mechanism: awareness based collective action 2 New institutions: the emergences of millions of NGO's that strive for a better world 3 Main source of power: sticks, carrots, norms and collective awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The philosophy of families is a shared awareness of the ecosystem of the whole earth and mankind. Children will be brought up with these viewpoints. Families are aware of the three divides and have strategies to address them. In the text below the theme of this box is elaborated further. Note: the positive outcome of the 'Paris Climate Change Conference of November 2015' is highly encouraging.

3 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MOVEMENT THAT STRIVES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILDHOOD IN EUROPE

Studying the book by Scharmer and Kaufer has given me the following insights:

- Once again it has made me aware of the different forms of awareness. I had already become conscious of this through the work of Beck (2006). Their work helps us as human beings to gain a better understanding of ourselves in relation to others and of course it also helps us to design change strategies, that take the different forms of awareness into account.
- Another contribution is that they have linked the various forms of awareness with their Theory U. With this they have given us a methodology for 'changing the world'.
- A third element from my perspective is that they have put forward a plausible argument that confirms that we should not try to solve problems sector by sector, silo by silo, but instead work on a change process that encompasses various sectors at the same time. The basis of this change is a global ecosystem awareness.

With these different contributions both authors have given us a new map of the world and a new compass. So how will I use these new insights in the context of the Alliance for Childhood? A few aspects come to mind in this respect:

- I obtained a better understanding of how the Alliance for Childhood is positioned in the landscape and simultaneously of the positions of the organisations that work in the same direction as we do, but also of the positions of the organisations that pursue other goals.
- All individuals and organisations that work out of an ecosystem awareness can be regarded as our natural allies. We should look into how to liaise more with these organisations and undertake combined activities.
- It is important to continue to speak out and to participate in a democratic dialogue with all parties concerned. I think that this will be one of the main ways to help people to look in a new way at their own life and the earth on which they live.
- The authors (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013, p. 23) write that one of the principles of presencing is to hold a space for transforming the fields of conversation from debate to dialogue and collective creativity. They continue:
"Each social field needs a container. Higher-level conversation like dialogue and collective creativity requires higher-quality containers and holding spaces. 'Transforming the quality of conversation' in a system means transforming the quality of the relationship and thought – that is the quality of tomorrow's results". Through the book by Scharmer and Kaufer I realised that that is exactly what we strive to do with the Alliance for Childhood and the Working Group on the Quality of Childhood at the European Parliament: to hold the space for the community that strives to improve the Quality of Childhood in our societies. The remarks by the authors are an encouragement to carry on with this practice.
- Both authors state that each form of awareness brings forth new institutions and a new sector. For the development stages 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 these institutions and sectors are clear to us, but what does it mean for

- the domain of children and young people in a 4.0 type of society? Can we already describe this and develop prototypes? This is a task on which we can work. The same question is valid for the new types of services and products in the 4.0 type of society.
- With regard to the last point I would like to elaborate the implication of an ecosystem awareness for the domain of Human Resources. If we set up a new organisation, or are busy transforming an existing organisation into an organisation with an ecosystem type of awareness then it does not make sense to recruit a new director with a 2.0 or 3.0 type of awareness. But that is what we often see happening and in recruitment procedures it is not yet standard practice to examine the intentions of the applicants. This is clearly an example of a new service in the area of Human Resources.

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BIOGRAPHY

Michiel Matthes was born in 1950 in Bussum, the Netherlands. He grew up in a nourishing family made up of both parents and four children. In 1967 he received his secondary school diploma. He studied Economics for Developing Countries at Wageningen University. From 1976 until 1980 he worked for the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) in Ethiopia and Kenya. From 1981 until 2005 he worked for the Rabobank and the Unico Banking Group, for most of that period in the Netherlands. He married in 1976 and has a family of three sons. He became active in the advocacy field regarding the quality of childhood because of his experience as a father of these three boys.

He discovered that measures taken by governmental organisations, including schools, were often not in the best interest of the child. In 1998 he founded a Platform Group in the Netherlands, and in 2006 he co-founded in Brussels the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group, of which he is the Chairman, and the Working Group on the Quality of Childhood at the European Parliament, of which he is the coordinator, to advocate for the improvement of the quality of childhood in Europe (www.allianceforchildhood.eu). Michiel Matthes is the editor of the 'Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe' series.

ENDNOTES

- 1 + 2** Reprinted with permission of the publisher. © 2013 by Otto Scharmer and Katrin Kaufer, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. San Francisco, CA. All rights reserved, www.bkconnection.com
- 3** I read this statement in a big American reader about pedagogues and psychologists, but I did not buy it and cannot give a more precise reference.
- 4** For the activities and members of the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group in Brussels, please visit: www.allianceforchildhood.eu